

Part 6: Hope for Marriage

Intro (Section Header)

Hello // glad you are here // online

1 Peter teaching us who Christians are:

[Sojourners/pilgrims].

[this is not our home land]

[citizens of heaven ... live by different values]

Learning how to live *toward* our hope.

That is the way of Jesus.

Not easy to do ... So many things drive us to live life on our terms, for our benefit.

But when our eternal hope grows in us it changes what we live for .

Most importantly it changes WHO we live for.

When we do that we lived surrendered to God ... to His will ... for His glory.

And that changes the way we live our lives as they intersect with politics and work.

Part 6: Hope for Marriage

And today we are going to look at how this brings hope into marriage.

And we need hope for marriage.

A band of my youth wrote these lyrics ...

*“I was always taught that boy meets girl,
fall in love, get married, and forget the world.
Nine months later, sweet baby’s on the way,
kiss ‘em on the cheek and life’s okay.”*

The irony is the name of the song is “Ball and Chain”.

And many of us grow up with this concept of marriage being
“And they lived happily ever after.”

Then we get married ... OH BOY!

Marriage is more like John Mayer’s “Heartbreak Warfare.”

It’s a battle of wills. Who is going to overcome the other and win supremacy?

Part 6: Hope for Marriage

Many of us have been in a marriage like this. OR are in a marriage like this OR grew up with parents whose marriage was like this.

Easy to become jaded toward marriage.

Start to think that is where love goes to die.

OR

DK how to fix the problems in your marriage.

But the Gospel gives us hope for marriage. [and healing]

So Peter gives hope for marriage by addressing each part of the marriage union: husbands and wives.

And he starts with wives first ... not b/c he thinks they need the most work.

1 Peter 3:1-2

1 Likewise, wives, be subject to your own husbands, so that even if some do not obey the word, they may be won without a word by the conduct of their wives, 2 when they see your respectful and pure conduct.

Part 6: Hope for Marriage

Hope in marriage requires me to surrender my will.

That sounds crazy right!!!

Seems like turning yourself into a doormat.

But, let me have a chance convince you that it is not that at all.

You can live this way and still be fully satisfied and fulfilled.

Even though it is not the way of imposing your will/desires/dreams through force.

We have to figure out what we want more ... to win arguments or win a person?

The pathway to winning over a person begins with laying down the belief that your rights and your way are most important. [true for husbands too]

Different to how we live today.

Winning is everything!

Winning means getting my way!

Relationship conflict and dysfunction starts with an unchecked attitude of 'I have to win this argument.' 'I have to overcome this objection.'

Part 6: Hope for Marriage

We are instinctively motivated that way b/c we are creatures with desires.

James 4:1-3

1 What causes quarrels and what causes fights among you? [good question!!!]

Is it not this, that your passions are at war within you? 2 You desire and do not have, so you murder. You covet and cannot obtain, so you fight and quarrel. You do not have, because you do not ask. 3 You ask and do not receive, because you ask wrongly, to spend it on your passions.

Now, having a desire doesn't make us bad people.

The problem is what we do when we DON'T get what we want.

Everyone always tries the nice approach first. "I said please..."

But, when that doesn't work we fight and quarrel to get what we want.

We enforce our will to win in one of two ways.

'Might or Manipulation.'

Part 6: Hope for Marriage

→ Might ... threaten with aggression ... fists and words are expressions of strength.

- people don't act the way we want ... scare them into it.
- Not just hitting ...
- Words can wound the soul ... woman can do this just as good as men.
- Giving constant criticism and nitpicking at everything is an act of verbal aggression.
 - It is a way of making people give in to your will to make it stop.
- See this too much in Christian marriages.
 - I never hit/physical abused ...
 - Words aren't the same ...
 - Except the Bible likens them to swords and clubs.
 - The most common instrument of abuse isn't our fists ... it's our tongues.

→ Then there is Manipulation ... not exclusive to women.

- Manipulation can be playing the victim in order to get what you want.
 - If you do this ... then I know you love me.
- It can also withholding something to get what you want.
 - Quiet treatment ... no physical intimacy

Whether it is might or manipulation the goal is getting what you want.

It's imposing your will on the other person.

Part 6: Hope for Marriage

We try to force our spouse into submission like a UFC opponent.

Doesn't take Nostradamus to predict this won't produce a loving marriage.

It builds distance ...

It fosters resentment ... bitterness ... jealousy.

You may win the moment but you end up losing the relationship.

Okay, ... so ... God says if we don't get what we ask for // we don't get to take it through might or manipulation.

But what is our option?

What chance do we have to win them over?

What chance do we have for happiness?

The Gospel gives us another way.

When we can't win people over through our words ...

We can win them over through witness of our life.

Part 6: Hope for Marriage

A submitted life can be more persuasive than a wise word.

Now, before we take this the wrong way ...

The motive Peter is getting at here isn't you winning your husband to get your way. [not new car]

The motive is winning your husband to God's way.

The hope for a good marriage isn't getting the stuff we want.

The hope for a good marriage is making God the center of it.

That hope is what is meant to be the primary drive for both the husband and wife.

Husbands we will get to you next, but first we are talking to the wives in these verses.

Little tip ... resist the impulse to say 'Amen.'

1 Peter 3:1-2

so that even if some do not obey the word they may be won without a word by the conduct of their wives, 2 when they see your respectful and pure conduct.

Here is some hope for you ladies.

Do you have a husband whose ears seem to be clogged sometimes???

[Guys ... you can 'Amen' here]

That doesn't mean shout louder ...

Your best hope for a good marriage is a husband that believes and obeys the Gospel.

And if you don't you still have hope.

You have the hope that the Gospel can still get into his heart through his eyes.

Your life is a living witness to the power of the Gospel when you live by it.

This passage isn't saying wives need to be silent and submissive at their husbands beck and call.

Part 6: Hope for Marriage

**It's saying that if your gospel proclamation isn't working
... you still have the hope of gospel demonstration.**

Let me say this ... even us Christian husbands need our wives to do this as well.

We need your proclamation AND demonstration ...

That builds us up!!!

And when we are pig-headed and difficult and won't listen [ladies put the hankies away] ... we need your gospel demonstration to wake us up.

And if that is true for Christian husbands how much more for husbands who aren't.

This is a high calling ladies!!!

If you are in a marriage where the spouse isn't a believer you have even MORE incentive to demonstrate the Gospel.

You live on the frontlines of mission.

This takes patience and trust in God.

Sometimes guys learn better through their eyes ...

Part 6: Hope for Marriage

okay ... most of the time.

We need as much help to get through our hard heads ... need visual aids.

Now, all this talk about demonstration can lead us to put all our emphasis on behaviors.

Actually, Peter isn't saying that.

The most important thing isn't "What you are doing."

Rather, its "Who you are becoming!"

This is true for wives ... but really this is true for every person in the room.

Submission begins in the heart before it works itself out in the marriage.

Before there can be Gospel demonstration there has to be Gospel transformation.

1 Peter 3:3-5

3 Do not let your adorning be external--the braiding of hair and the putting on of gold jewelry, or the clothing

Part 6: Hope for Marriage

you wear-- 4 but let your adorning be the hidden person of the heart with the imperishable beauty of a gentle and quiet spirit, which in God's sight is very precious. 5 For this is how the holy women who hoped in God used to adorn themselves, by submitting to their own husbands.

What this verse ISN'T saying is that external adornment is bad.

Holiness for women isn't the equivalent of entering an ugly contest.

I grew up in an era where this verse was used to shame women from using makeup and dressing in contemporary fashion, dying their hair.

God is okay with a hairstyle different to a tightly worn bun on the head.

Ladies ... you are free from "bun-dage"!

God is okay with external beauty.

In the Bible Sarah was a stunning woman.

She had looks men would kill for apparently ... (On a few occasions Abraham was scared for his life b/c of Sarah's beauty).

Beauty isn't bad ... but putting your hope in it is.

If your value is tied up in your beauty ... that is bondage.

Husbands, we can fight for our wife's here.

Part 6: Hope for Marriage

[Your wife is your standard of beauty. Not culture/mags/movies.]

The point here is don't put hope on what can be seen.

Almost everything we can behold with our eyes is a fading glory.

So don't build your hope on them.

Singles ... here is something important to learn ...

If you think God is calling out of singleness into marriage ... three important things to know and consider before 'I do'.

1. Character
2. Calling
3. Chemistry

(Don't sacrifice a one)

- Does this guy have character ... proven character ...
- Calling ... do we share the same core values. Faith, family structure, career, where to live.
- Chemistry ... two parts: 1. Friendship, get along well ... 2. Attraction.

Whether you are married or thinking about getting married ...

We tend to put all our eggs in the Attraction basket.

Before marriage we think this lust that we mistake for love will conquer all obstacles.

Part 6: Hope for Marriage

But lust is shallow. Character, calling, chemistry that runs deep.

And God points that out.

Ladies you are WAAAAAYYYY more valuable than your body.

The most exquisitely wonderful part of who you are is what is happening on the inside.

The beauty on the outside fades.

I'm not a beautiful person ... but I used to look a lot better than this ... age ... can't beat it.

Those who try to beat it (Joan Rivers) ... well they end up looking like Joan Rivers.

But there is a beauty that doesn't fade.

That's where we should be spending our time.

Not two hours primping, pruning, pulling, painting to get ready for the day.

Spend time with the ONE who adorns your inner person with beauty.

Part 6: Hope for Marriage

This is so different to the way our cultural moment says to get your way.

It's either use your beauty to make men beg ... they'll give you anything.

Or wear them down with words (arguments).

Neither way leads to winning people over. Just winning for the moment.

The better way is a gentle and quiet spirit.

You might get the impression that this is weakness.

Today's understanding of power doesn't allow room for gentleness and meekness.

[Nice guys finish last ... right?]

If you want something you gotta do whatever it takes to get it ...

But this is the antithesis of the Gospel.

The Gospel doesn't start with taking for yourself ... it's established in receiving grace that you don't deserve.

So God's way starts with receiving grace. [submission]

Continuing in God's way is still receiving in grace.

Part 6: Hope for Marriage

It's not bad to have desires and want things.

But the Christian doesn't bully and manipulate to get them.

[True for every Christian ... not just wives].

Life-giving / meaningful relationships are based in a mutual giving and receiving for the benefit of the other person.

This flows from hearts adorned with gentleness and peace.

This is precious in God's sight.

But it's not easy ... you might even think it impossible.

But it's been done before ...

We are not without examples.

Here Peter points to the life of Sarah.

And Sarah's life points to submission fueled by faith in God.

Submission is a free choice fueled by faith in God.

1 Peter 3:6

as Sarah obeyed Abraham, calling him lord. And you are her children, if you do good, and do not fear anything that is frightening.

Sarah was the wife of Abraham, the “Father” of our faith.

He lived toward the hope of God’s promises.

That meant leaving his home country and living like a sojourner/pilgrim in a foreign land.

But you know what, Sarah went with him.

Not b/c she had to ... b/c she also had faith.

Abraham did not make her go ... She had the freedom to choose not to go.

But she went!

Their journey’s brought them into dangerous moments, incredible miracles, patient enduring.

But they did it together.

Abraham had Sarah next to him the whole time.

What held her there wasn’t co-dependence on Abraham.

It wasn’t b/c she was an oppressed woman who slavishly followed her husband.

Part 6: Hope for Marriage

She was firmly fixed in God's calling b/c she possessed her own faith.

And by the end of her life she had walked a long journey of faith with her husband.

And it was here that we see Sarah calling Abraham "lord".

Guys dream on...

Genesis 18:10-12

10 The Lord said, "I will surely return to you about this time next year, and Sarah your wife shall have a son." And Sarah was listening at the tent door behind him. 11 Now Abraham and Sarah were old, advanced in years. The way of women had ceased to be with Sarah. 12 So Sarah laughed to herself, saying, "After I am worn out, and my lord is old, shall I have pleasure?"

I think Peter's point here is much bigger than Sarah calling Abraham lord.

This was the one time she used it and it is in the middle of a thought that edged upon mockery, pain, and disbelief.

Part 6: Hope for Marriage

Sarah was near the end of a long life of trusting and waiting for God's promises.

But they didn't have the most important thing to show for it.
No son.

So she calls Abraham "lord", but it's when she is laughing to herself and calling him "old".

Her fear in that moment caused her to laugh.

"Now, I'm going to have a child ..."

But even though she didn't handle the moment perfectly she overcame fear with faith.

Hebrews 11:11

"By faith Sarah herself received power to conceive, even when she was past the age, since she considered him faithful who had promised."

This is the big point here.

The call to submission to any husband isn't easy.

At times there will be fear ...

Part 6: Hope for Marriage

But you fight fear with faith ...

Sarah in that moment showed she didn't believe she could conceive.

But that isn't where she stayed.

She put her eyes back on God.

She trusted in his faithfulness ... instead of giving into fear.

That is how a life of submission is lived. Not weak!!

Alright husbands ... now it's our turn!

1 Peter 3:7

7 Likewise, husbands, live with your wives in an understanding way, showing honor to the woman as the weaker vessel, since they are heirs with you of the grace of life, so that your prayers may not be hindered.

I know ladies ... your thinking "What's this weaker vessel stuff."

Peter obviously never met Rhonda Rousey.

It's not implying women are incompetent or incapable.

Part 6: Hope for Marriage

Specifically, in that day men had more physical and social power.

And they used it to mistreat women.

If you were a women in that context, you were in a place of weakness and vulnerability.

But Peter is saying to the men ... you don't take advantage of that!!!

True masculinity doesn't dominate the weak. It empowers the weak.

Just look to Jesus.

He came to lay down his life for the poor and powerless.

He used his power to be a blessing.

And he calls us to be like him.

He says, "Honor your wives as co-heirs of grace."

Co-heirs!!! Not lesser than heirs.

Part 6: Hope for Marriage

Our value before God is equal.

This was a radical difference to how they valued women in that day.

They were valued for what they did, not who they were.

And if they didn't perform to expectation they were treated poorly.

God says, "Nope...men in my Kingdom don't act that way."

Don't stand back and treat your wife like your servant.

This phrase 'live in an understanding way' ... what the heck does that mean?

Well, it's not yelling at her and then rolling the eyes b/c she is upset ... "Why she gotta be so emotional?"

The problem isn't "she's emotional ... your a jerk!"

God is saying to the husbands, "Get to know your wife ... I didn't make her like you on purpose."

What are her likes, hates, fears, loves, dreams?

What makes her feel special and cherished and valued?

Part 6: Hope for Marriage

With this knowledge comes great responsibility.
Knowledge is dangerous in the wrong hands.

But husbands, we don't use knowledge to shame and judge.

God says get to know them and show them honor.

What we learn about our wives ... it should make us more amazed at who they are.

Especially those things that are different to us.

In our honoring

- we put them first.
- we value how God has made them.
- they are our standard of beauty.
- we protect/pray/provide for them.
- we listen to them to understand

And God takes this seriously.

The way we treat our wives not only affects our relationship with them, but also our fellowship with God.

Part 6: Hope for Marriage

God says, “You CAN’T expect me to hear your prayers if you treat your wife poorly.”

Another passage says that without love our prayers and praise sound like an irritating gong to God.

And the prophet Malachi tells Israel that God rejected their worship b/c of how they are mistreating their wives.

This is serious stuff.

Men, is your wife flourishing or fading under your leadership?

If fading ... how is Jesus calling you to change? [surrender your will]

The best example to look for husbands isn't Sarah. It's Jesus.

Ephesians 5:25-27

25 Husbands, love your wives, as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her, 26 that he might sanctify her, having cleansed her by the washing of water with the word, 27 so that he might present the church to himself in splendor, without spot or wrinkle

Part 6: Hope for Marriage

or any such thing, that she might be holy and without blemish.

Husbands our calling isn't to domineering leadership.

“I'm the man ... so submit!!!”

[if you have to pull that card ... your in a bad place]

It's a different kind of leadership.

[SLOW] It's is a call to lay down our lives for our wives.

That might mean sacrificing “guys-night” for date night.

That might mean shutting off the phone/tv/video games to spend time learning who your wife is.

That might mean scaling back on your hobby-time and to get more wifey-time.

It's more than just to have peace in the home.

It's about a marriage that glorifies God and points to Jesus' love for his church.

Your marriage should put the Gospel on display.

We want people who aren't Christians to look at our lives and say, “We want that ... tell us more.”

Remember 1 Peter 2:12 'see our good works and glorify God..'

Part 6: Hope for Marriage

Everything we talked about today ...
wives and husbands.

We don't fight against each other ... fight for each other.

We don't live to win ... we live in submission to the other in
love, humility, and honor. [not imposed // freely
given/received]

It is a life of sacrifice that points to the greater sacrifice of
Jesus for us.

Response

Not A Christian:

Marriage is important to God.

The Bible starts and ends with a marriage.

The final marriage is a picture of Jesus coming to be with
his bride, the church.

This Savior, Jesus, came to win us by dying for us. [not
dominate us]

He won the war we could never win against sin and death.

Through the cross we are forgiven, set free, and called to
believe in Him. [surrender your will to him today]

Part 6: Hope for Marriage

Christian:

The Gospel is our hope for marriage.

If your marriage isn't in a great spot ... the Gospel is the hope for the healing of your marriage.

But it starts with our hearts being transformed.

We stop fighting to win.

We surrender our wills to God ... we submit to him first; then we submit to one another.

Some of you need to repent to your spouse before coming to communion.

PRAY