

**The Perspective of Men in Roman Times Concerning Marriage:** a) Love is unimportant in marriage. b) The wife's family would pay a dowry to the man. c) Divorce was easy and declared in public or in writing of dissolution. d) Marriage was monogamous, but a man could have any number of concubines and slaves. e) Women were mistreated. f) Marriage was for legal and political purposes.

- The impact on children was significant. Caesars enacted laws to help society deal with all the divorces.
- At the time of the apostles, Jews had an one-flesh mindset, but Paul (1 Tim. 3:2) was dealing with the issue in the churches as he was considering elders and deacons. Gentiles would have had a Roman view of marriage and no moral compass- quite different from God's design.
- The curse of Gen. 3:16 to the woman was that she would desire authority over her husband and that her husband would "rule over" her. A woman would fight the tendency to resist submission and a man would fight against the tendency of being abusive and oppressive towards her.

**There is Necessary Resistance to Cultural Christianity:** A "good" husband is not a man that does whatever their wife wants. Men are not their wives' helper. Men aren't to be workers at home, the wife is. Culture sees a man that should be tender, an emotional companion, and effeminate like a woman to be "good." Those ideas are not found in Scripture.

#### **6 Don'ts for Husbands:**

1. **Don't Treat Your Wife Like a Man:** 1 Peter 3:7, "in the same way," is not that a man should submit to his wife (1 Cor. 11:3 speaks again of authority), but the command to love God's people and obey the Lord is for wives and husbands. Christ is our example of obedience and holiness (Ch. 2:21-25).
  - a. What is the "weaker vessel?" a) It is not intellectually. Men and women have the mind of God and are created in His image. b) It is not emotionally either. In Scripture emotions aren't necessarily a sign of strength or weakness. c) It is not morality or spirituality, men and women have both failed in all areas of life. d) It must be referring to physical weakness, generally, and because of vulnerability in the roles and nature of a man and woman.
  - b. Husbands are to be in a place of protection and provision for their wives.
  - c. Men are to consider the concept of chivalry in the sense that they protect their wives from harshness in the world whenever possible.
2. **Don't Forget that God is Tracking You:** V7, are not direct commands of the Lord in this verse, but certainly with verse 8-12, if a husband reviles and berates his wife, God will not answer his prayers, and the man is left in a dangerous place, opposing God. 1 Peter 3:7 speaks of prayer in the relationship of marriage. 1 Peter 3:12 speaks of the wicked man whom God will not hear. 1 Peter 4:7-8 speaks of the individual living properly in the world, so they pray with sound judgement. V8-9 says that they love others and are kind and hospitable. The life of a believer whose prayers are answered result from humility and love towards others.
3. **Don't Use Reviling to Control Your Marriage:** Colossians. 3:19, the word "embittered" (LSB) or "harsh" (ESV) or "bitter," (NKJV) is similarly used 8 times in the NT and 3 times in the OT.
  - a. **OT:** 1) It means to curse, intimidate, 2) blaspheme, taunt, to hurt; 3) disdain, dishonor, treat as an enemy.
  - b. **NT:** 1) scolding, reproach, insult, 2) abuse, speak evil, slander. 3) speak against, like blaspheme of God, mock or make a mockery of, abusive speech. 4) threaten with physical harm. 5-7) reproach, insult, the person who does it (1 Cor. 5:11 & 1 Cor. 6:10).
  - c. **Col. 3:19:** "embittered" is a sharp, hurtful, unkind, callous, sudden anger towards his wife. This is a man who doesn't love his wife and won't get what he wants so he reviles and intimates her to force her to give him what he wants. He is abusive and controlling.

4. **Don't Submit to Your Wife for the Sake of False Peace:** 1 Cor. 11:3, the head of every man is Christ, man the head of a woman, God the head of Christ. Men can 1) Stand up and pay the price. 2) Give in and give her what she wants.
  - a. The authority of man over his wife is not earned, it is not substitutional, there is no loss of the right, he doesn't stop being the head, there are no stipulations.
  - b. The biblical response: To graciously not submit to his wife. If she digs in her heels strongly, then a man should reasonably consider all the facts and listen to her. But if a decision needs to be made, after consideration, the response, "I love you, but no!"
5. **Don't Leave Your Wife Out of Decision Making:** She is your helper and companion as God made her to be. She can be a great help in big and small decisions. Big decisions should take time and allow for prayer, study of God's word, and discussion. The Holy Spirit and the Word of God will bring unity to the husband and wife to make a decision both can live with.
6. **Don't Insult or Belittle Your Wife to Yourself or Others:** Prov.31:23, "her husband is known in the gates when he sits with the elders of the land." V29, he has boasted of his wife's value and blessing to him to the men of the city.
  - a. Prov. 18:22, he who finds a wife finds a good thing, and obtains favor from Yahweh.
  - b. Wives are a blessing from the Lord. To revile and belittle her, offends the wisdom and grace of God towards you.
  - c. Song of Solomon 5:16: The wife is the great love and friend to the husband.

### Further Discussion and Application

The issue of hindered prayer can be a shocking revelation in Scripture. 1 Peter 3:7, 12, & 4:7 show the type of prayers that God won't hear. A man reviling his wife and being harsh to her won't be heard. The one who does evil, will not be heard. The one living like the Gentiles and not having a sound mind unaware of the times, will be lacking in his prayer life. Do we understand the truth that believers know the will of God, but if they aren't showing love and honor in their relationships, that their prayers are hindered, and judgement and consequence is coming? How must our relationships be in the body of Christ? How must we treat others? What is fervent love towards another?

From the Don'ts that Steve has preached in this sermon, what are the characteristics of a godly man? What are the characteristics of a godly woman?

What list can you share with a younger man or woman about the type of believer they should be to be ready to steward the grace of God in their life in marriage?

Everyone knows the tongue is a fire set on fire by hell (James 3:6). From James 3:13-18, contrast the results of wise speech and demonic speech. Why is our heart plainly shown in our speech?