

A Righteous Husband

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Preacher: Matthew Capone

[0 : 00] I'm the pastor here, and it's my joy to bring God's word to you today. As you can tell, I'm a little stuffed up, so bear with me. It's going to slow me down a little bit, which is probably going to be good news for some of you who are telling me I need to talk slower.

A special welcome if you're new or visiting with us today. We're glad you're here, and we're glad you're here not because we're trying to fill seats, but because we're following Jesus together as one community, and as we follow Jesus together, we're convinced that there's no one so good that they don't need God's grace, and no one so bad that they can't have it, which means that God has something to say to everyone in his word.

We're going to jump right in like we did last week into 1 Peter chapter 3. We've got three principles that we've been looking at in a variety of different situations. Remember, Peter is writing to churches in the first century.

He's writing to them that live in Asia Minor, and these churches are in duress because they're feeling out of place in the world as Christians, and they're facing opposition from the world because of their faith in Jesus Christ.

And so we have these three principles that he's given us that I reviewed last week. First of all, these believers in Jesus are priests, and that means that they represent God to the world, that people learn about God's character through the way his people live their lives.

[1 : 17] Second of all, the chapter 2, verse 12 principle, they should have honorable conduct. And so the way that they live in the world should cause people to bring honor and glory to God, and in fact, may bring some people to have faith in God.

And then finally, the principle in chapter 2, verse 17, of honoring everyone, that whatever we do, we seek as we live to bring honor to someone, whether they agree with us or not. And so we've been looking at those three principles applied to all sorts of different situations.

We looked at the principle that applies to living as a citizen of the government. We looked at it as it applies to, in Peter's time, being a slave, or in our time, being an employee. And then last week, we started the discussion of how this applies to marriage.

And I'll just start by saying this is, of course, a timely and sensitive topic, and it's timely and sensitive. I know that for a fact because this sermon last week generated more conversation than I think I've ever seen in this church about one sermon.

And I've received more calls and texts and emails about it than I have in the past. And so it just highlights that this is something that's both real for us as we live in the world, and it's also something that can be tender and sensitive.

[2 : 24] And we're going to continue that conversation this morning, and we're going to turn from wives to husbands. And as we do that, I'll say, on the one hand, women, you're off the hook.

On the other hand, there's a sense in which you're not, because this is a tender and it's a raw topic for many people. There's a sense in which this might bring up memories for those of us who have had experiences with men who were not honoring and did not live in an understanding way.

And so as those memories come up, I remind you, as I do from time to time, that God's with us, most importantly, that he's for us. And there's a certain vulnerability, right, that we're going to talk about that comes with living in the world in ways that are different between being a man and a woman.

If you're a parent, you know that you worry probably less about who your sons will marry than who your daughters will marry. Most moms don't say to their sons, well, she's going to have to come home and meet me first while I'm cleaning my guns.

That's not a thing, right? Because there's less of a fear because there is a certain vulnerability that happens in marriage. So on the one hand, women, you're off the hook. On the other hand, you're not.

[3 : 39] Now, there's also another way we can fall off the bus. I talked last week about the fact that there are two errors. One, to talk about the roles in marriage and turn it into something strange or abusive. And the other way to fall off is to make it mean nothing.

And there are some other ways that we can fall off when we talk about husbands. It's no one will ever criticize a pastor for coming in strong on men, right? But if you say the wrong thing about women, you know, people will come and they'll let you know.

And so there's a tendency in the evangelical church when you come to passages like this in the American church to just shame men. And so we can fall off on that side as well. And that's not the goal of Peter.

And it's certainly not my goal this morning. And so I say all that just to name that we're continuing to have a hard conversation as a family, as a church, together. And also a hard conversation in this portion of the scripture.

And so we need God's grace. And that's what we ask for when we pray to him every Sunday when we come to his word. And so with that introduction, we are in 1 Peter. And we are looking at one verse.

[4 : 43] We're in chapter 3, verse 7. And as we come to this, remember that this is God's word. And God tells us that his word is more precious than gold, even the finest gold. And it is sweeter than honey, even honey that comes straight from the honeycomb.

And so it's for that reason that we read now verse 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 invite you to pray with me as we come to this portion of God's word. Dear Father in heaven, we thank you that you don't shy away from hard topics.

We thank you that you don't just tell us things we want to hear, but you also tell us things that we don't want to hear. And we confess that we, in a sense, are all weak vessels, and we need your help this morning as we come to your word.

And so we ask that you would give it to us, that you'd give us your grace, that you'd give us your wisdom, and you'd give us your spirit, that we would be able to hear and understand and believe everything that you have for us in your word.

[6 : 00] We ask these things, and we have confidence that you'll give them to us, not because of what we have done, but because of what Jesus has done for us. And so we ask this in his name.

Amen. Now, this debate was raging more a few years ago than it is now. It's more of a settled issue in our country, but there was a time when I followed the gay marriage debate very closely, partially out of just personal intellectual curiosity, partially because of my love for the church and my knowledge that it would affect things for us as a church as we move forward in this society.

And so I'd follow some of the arguments that were made on both sides as people would discuss this topic. And one of the statistics that would get thrown around is this. Heterosexual couples have so much to learn from homosexual couples, and they have so much to learn because statistics show that gay and lesbian couples have way less conflict in their marriages than heterosexual couples.

And so there's something that these gay couples have figured out that heterosexual couples have not figured out. And in fact, maybe there's something that heterosexual couples could learn from them. What do we say to that as people who are faithful and following the Bible and what it teaches about human sexuality?

What's our response? It's the scholars. The scholarly response would be, duh. Of course, of course, two men are going to get along much better than a man and a woman.

[7 : 34] And of course, two women are going to get along much better than a man and a woman. Tell me something else that I wouldn't have known without research.

Right? You can't compare the two. They're not the same thing. Part of what is both glorious and difficult about marriage is that it's the institution in society that forces a man and a woman to figure out how to get along together.

And big surprise, we wouldn't have known this without statistics and research, it actually can be very challenging for men and women to get along together. And so there's one principle here.

I'm going to lay out several principles for you as we're coming to this, and that's the first one. Part of what is wonderful and beautiful about marriage, one of the things that makes marriage such a great gift from God is it's the one place where you can't get away without resolving the differences between the genders, right?

That's just a basic principle up front. We have to have that principle to look at this passage. I'm going to say something really scandalous. Men and women are very different.

[8 : 44] Don't quote me on that, okay? And it's not just that there's just generic differences between specific men and specific women, but there's broad differences, right?

There's things that are generally true of women and things that are generally true of men. I mentioned last week the research of John and Julie Gottman, who are a couple who have done a lot of other research based on how marriages can be healthy and people can get along, and these are not Christian believers in any way, as far as I'm aware.

If you go to their website, you look on their Instagram feed, you'll find out very quickly they don't share our convictions about marriage, about human sexuality, and yet they look into this. They've tried to figure out how can we help men and women get along.

So principle number one, men and women are different. Principle two, there's specific ways in which they're different. So John and Julie tell this story about a couple named Lynn and Mike, and Lynn and Mike had been struggling in their marriage for about 20 years.

They couldn't figure out how to resolve their differences. They'd gotten to a point where they felt like they couldn't understand each other, and so kind of as a final ditch effort, Lynn convinced Mike to go to this workshop about helping men and women understand each other.

[9 : 52] And so this workshop started out. It was run by a woman, and she starts by asking a question. She said, I'm just going to ask the men this question, so I only want to hear the responses from the men. And raise your hand if you don't have to do this.

This is just the story, right? Raise your hand if you've ever feared for your life or your physical well-being. Raise your hand if you've ever feared for your life or your physical well-being. There's an awkward pause, right?

And a few men raise their hands. One of them's a vet. He says, you know, I was in Vietnam one time, and when I was in Vietnam, there was this one moment when I feared for my life. Another man shares a story from several decades ago when he was in a fistfight, and he thought, maybe this could be the end of my life.

None of the men could name a single incident that was within the last 10 years. So it was over 10, 20, 30 years ago that they had feared for their life. The woman running the workshop then said, okay, women, how many of you have ever feared for your life?

Every single hand went in the air. And then she got even more specific. How many of you have feared for your life in the last six months? Every hand stayed up in the air.

[11 : 07] How many of you have feared for your life in the last month? Every hand stayed up in the air. How many of you have feared for your life in the last week? Every hand still remained in the air.

How many of you have feared for your life when you came in from the parking garage to come to this workshop? Every hand stayed in the air.

Mike realized something for the first time. He had no idea what it was like for his wife to walk through the world as a woman. And the reverse was also true.

At this point, Lynn had never thought about the fact that her husband never feared for his life. And this was kind of a watershed moment in their marriage, the way that John and Julie tell this story.

And they tell this to illustrate some of the differences between men and women in marriage and how they understand each other. They say this, Mike was stunned. He had no idea Lynn experienced fear.

[12 : 09] He wasn't afraid, so he assumed she wasn't afraid. That one example explains Mike changed everything between us. I realized I had been assuming she viewed the world through the same lens I viewed the world through.

And it was eye-opening. Lynn was just as astounded that Mike had not felt fear for his physical well-being in 30 years. They go on to tell another story about some research done at that great Christian conservative bastion, the University of California, Berkeley, where they had done some research on responses to gunshots.

And so they'd put these test cases, and they'd have an unexpected gun go off behind them. And men and women had kind of a similar response in terms of the way they immediately responded to it, but they had a different emotional response.

Men, by and large, were very, very angry, and some of them desired to have revenge on the person running the experiment. Women, on the other hand, by and large, were very, very afraid.

So one instance, two different responses, right? I highlight all of this because this is what we're looking at here in verse 7. Likewise, husbands, live with your wives in an understanding way.

[13 : 27] And now they break it up here in this translation, but actually the understanding way in the Greek comes right before the phrase weaker vessel. There's a sense. Principle one, right? Men and women are different.

Principle two, there are specific differences. There's a sense in which men are like Mike, right? Mike had never thought about the fact that his wife viewed the world in a different way than he did.

And so Peter is simply saying this. As a husband, come to know, work to know and understand what it is like for your wife to live in the world as a woman and understand how living in the world as a woman is very different than living in the world as a man.

And so there's certainly a physical component to this, right? The weaker vessel here, vessels the way. It's talking about the body. So there's a physical component to that.

That's what I've highlighted with this story with Mike and Lynn. The knowledge here, that's what's meant by understanding. Live in a way, and this live word, by the way, is the word that's used of people who share a home together.

[14 : 34] So share a home together in a way that includes your knowledge. And it's your knowledge, specifically, of your wife. And it's your knowledge of your wife in the sense of what it means for her to be a woman in a way that's different than you're a man.

So seek knowledge. Grow in your knowledge. Mike grew in his knowledge of Lynn, right? He grew in his understanding of what it was like for her to experience the world as a woman. Now, there's certainly a physical component to this.

There's certainly a social component to it as well. The point of this sermon, by the way, is not to say that men are strong and women are weak. Certainly, both men and women are strong and weak in different ways.

The point is for men who have strength in a certain way to begin to understand how that's different from the way their wives experience the world. So as I said, there's a physical component, but there's also a social component.

We've just, last week, read a passage about wives submitting to their husbands or being subject, as the ESV translates it. And so there's not just a physical differential. There's also a power differential.

[15 : 45] I had someone reach out to me this week in response to last week's sermon. And I received permission to share this, so I don't just share things people send to me right from the pulpit. But I asked, can I share this?

I think it would be really helpful. Asking about, last week, the part about Sarah not fearing anything frightening. And this is a single woman who reached out to me. She said, that actually sounds quite terrifying.

Trusting someone, that is some other human, to take care of you, that is the wife, and having to trust his judgment and follow his lead, that, all caps, sounds terrifying.

Men don't really have to think about that kind of stuff, so may not realize how terrifying it could be. And I thought, yeah, we don't.

Men don't naturally think about how terrifying that is. And so that's part of the reason that this passage is so important. Right? If you're married, you have a husband, there's many decisions that he makes that affect you, that you're vulnerable to.

[16 : 47] There's financial decisions. There's parenting decisions. There's things that affect you that can have a terrifying impact. So I say all that to say, again, two principles.

One, men and women are different. Two, they're different in specific ways. And three, that means the responsibility, as Peter puts it here, is on men. And the responsibility is on husbands to proactively seek knowledge about their wives.

To seek knowledge about what it's like to live as a woman in the world and what makes that different from living as a man. And I'll say this, for their application, you can't have knowledge if you're not a student.

That's the only way you get knowledge. I quoted a man several weeks ago who said Christianity's not revolutionary, but it's radical. The same individual says this about this passage.

Husbands are scientists with a narrow field of inquiry. Husbands are scientists with a narrow field of inquiry. Live in an understanding way with knowledge is what that means.

[17 : 51] Live in a way that demonstrates your knowledge of what it's like to walk through this world as a woman. And you're going to get that knowledge by being a student.

Working on understanding, by the way, is not natural. This is probably part of why Peter's bringing it up. It's not natural for people in power. So if you have authority in some way, whether you're a boss, maybe it's your pastor, maybe it's your husband and a father, you don't naturally think, what is it like to be someone who has to follow my leadership?

That takes an extremely high level of self-awareness. And it's easy to be unaware of the privileges that your power gives to you, the ways that it benefits you, and you may never realize it unless you ask someone who actually has to follow you.

And so part of this is just a general principle for people who have power, that there's a certain privilege that comes with it. And you want to use that privilege in a way that actually lifts people up and honors them and helps them.

And so it's actually, there's a sense in which it's the responsibility of the person who's in power to find out the needs of the person with less power. That's not just a principle in marriage, that's a principle across the board.

[18 : 59] If you want to be a good boss, your job is to go to your employees and ask them, okay, I have the power in this situation, you have less power, so it's my job actually to initiate the conversation about what I can do to make things better for you.

That's just the way power and authority work. That's the way good power and good authority works. And so Peter's saying, okay, wives are subject to their husbands, husbands have more authority and power in this situation, therefore it's their responsibility to go and gather the information.

It's your job to go to your wife and say, help me understand more about what it looks like to be a woman in this world. Or even more scary, help me understand what it's like to be married to me.

What are the ways that I interact with you that are really helpful? What are some ways that I interact with you that are not so helpful? Having knowledge means that you're a student.

You know what makes your wife sad. You know what makes her rejoice. You know what makes her happy. That is knowledge that you have. By the way, this is knowledge you use, right? It's actionable knowledge.

[20 : 08] There are some men, husbands, who find out things about their wives, and they might think, well, that's extremely interesting but irrelevant. Peter's saying it's extremely interesting and also actionable.

This is knowledge that affects the way that you live. And so, again, it's hard to have knowledge if you're not a student. It's hard to be an understanding husband if you're not a curious husband.

And so, if you want to, I'll say that again, it's hard to be an understanding husband if you're not a curious husband. So, if you want to jump in the deep end, you could ask your wife, okay, and don't ask general, right?

That's not helpful. Okay, what's it like? Well, it doesn't give us a scale. On a one to ten scale, where are we at? By the way, counselors will tell you that men and women always rate their marriages differently, almost.

So, generally, women will rate a marriage lower than the husband will. So, if you ask a man and a wife, okay, rate your marriage on a scale of zero to ten, the man says it's an eight, the wife is probably going to say it's a six.

[21 : 14] The man says it's a six, the wife might say it's a three. The man says it's a nine, the wife might say it's a five. I had a friend one time, I was on the phone with him, and he told me, you know, I went, and I checked in with my wife, and I was going to ask her, I asked her, how are things going with us?

And I was preparing, because I knew in my back of my head, like, I'm asking this question, and I need to, but things aren't going well, and, like, it's going to be a hard conversation. Well, he asked her, and she said, we are thriving right now.

I said, man, you go, because if she says that, then you can trust it, right? Like, if you think it's thriving, I don't really know. If you called me and told me it was going great, it could or could not be going well, right?

So I said, man, wonderful, praise God, like, your marriage must be doing well, since your wife says it's going well. All to say, hard to be understanding if you're not a curious husband.

Second of all, I want to, we talked last week about ways we can fall off on either side. One way we could fall off last week that we discussed is the idea of, okay, being subject to your husband doesn't mean you can't say no.

[22 : 26] There were times that Sarah told Abraham no. There were also times that Abraham needed to tell Sarah no, and he didn't. One way to abuse this passage is to say, therefore, as a husband, it means you have to always say yes.

Wives can say no, and husbands can say no. Being an understanding husband doesn't mean that you're a doormat.

Being a wife who's submissive doesn't mean that you're a doormat. I was listening to a podcast recently. You guys know I've mentioned in the past, I'm a big podcast guy, and this was an interview with a woman named Christy Wright, and this is a strong, accomplished woman.

So she's an entrepreneur, and she trains other women how to be good entrepreneurs. And she's talking in this podcast all about her business tips and tricks and the effective way to run a business and the non-effective way, and she gets to a point where she's talking about how, as a business owner, sometimes you have to tell people no.

And in the middle of this podcast, she goes off, she just stops, and starts raving about her husband and how good he is at saying no to her.

[23 : 37] And then she gives this example. She talks about how she's very creative. She's this entrepreneur, so she's constantly coming up with home remodeling projects. And of course, her husband can't say yes to all the home remodeling projects, right?

But her husband has found a way to say it in an understanding way. So he'll say, man, I just, I love the fact that you are so creative, and that just blows me away. I'm not sure we have the bandwidth right now for another project, but like, I just, man, you have so many great ideas, and I just, I'm just in awe of that.

The answer's no, right? We don't have the bandwidth right now to remodel the kitchen a second time. And yet, he does it in an understanding way. Say no in such a way that your wife raves about you the next time she's interviewed on a podcast.

Okay, there's another way we can fall off the bus on this. So there's a big conversation right now about men in the church and the question about why there aren't more men in the church and why there aren't more masculine men in the church.

By the way, we have many masculine men in this church. Praise God. It is not saying that you have to be a weak man, right? The last thing we need is more weak or soft men.

[24 : 59] We need, in our society and in the church, we need strong men. We want strong men who are gentle and kind and tender.

We don't want weak or soft men. We want strong men. We want strong men who are gentle and kind and tender. And, you know, kill bears when they need to kill bears.

You don't want weak men leading a church, right? If there's something that needs to be dealt with, you want men who are going to get in and deal with it. You don't want a weak man leading your family. There's an issue that needs to be dealt with.

You want a man who's going to deal with it. And so, there's a temptation on the one hand to say, okay, last week's sermon, maybe that was a little patriarchal. This week's sermon, maybe it's a little feminist.

The Bible doesn't always fit into our neat categories. It doesn't always fall into the lines that our culture wants us to fall into. So, the Bible teaches both in a sense.

[26 : 00] I mean, what are you going to do, right? Cut 1 Peter 3, 7 out of the Bible. I did have a few men suggest to me that it would be okay if we skipped this passage. Okay, moving on.

So, we've got kind of three things going on here. One, live with your wives in an understanding way. Point one. Point two, showing honor. By the way, the showing honor comes after the weaker vessel than the Greek.

So, I put that under the understanding way. Then we've got showing honor as heirs with you of the grace of life. These folks receiving this letter are living in a culture and an economy where women and men are not equal.

And they're living in a culture and an economy where the woman is supposed to honor her husband. Peter reverses that or at least subverts it.

No, actually, remember, you're a holy nation, 2-9. That might be how things work in the Roman world. That's not how things work in God's nation.

[27 : 07] In God's nation, men and women are actually equal. And in God's nation, disregard the customs of the Roman Empire.

in God's nation, it's actually your job as a husband to show honor to your wife. And so, it's subversive here in 1 Peter in multiple ways.

Women are actually equal to you. Don't treat them as if they're not, even though that's what's common in the society around you, right? Women are taught to show honor to their husbands.

Guess what? In your household, since you're a Christian man, that's not your concern. Your concern is actually the opposite, that you're showing honor to your wife. Again, as I said, patriarchal and feminist at the same time.

The Bible's not gonna meet our expectations in every way. By the way, you're showing honor to your wife even as you may feel dishonored by the fact that she is not a Christian.

[28 : 18] If you look at this translation, it says, since they are heirs with you of the grace of life. That's one way to translate it. You could take it as show honor because they're heirs with you of the grace of life.

You could also take it as show honor as if, in other words, pretend like they're heirs with you in the grace of life. Remember, we're talking about how it is that Christians are supposed to interact with non-Christians.

The Greek here could go either way. I think it's probably more likely, now both should be in mind, right? It actually doesn't matter which one we fall down on. But if we're talking about places where Christians show honor to non-Christians, it's very likely that this is a Christian man who's married to a non-Christian woman.

If that's the case, Peter is saying, treat your wife as if she's a Christian even though she's not. And remember, I talked about last week, in this society, there was an expectation that the wife would automatically worship whoever the husband worshiped.

And so here's a man who's being dishonored by his wife. She refuses to worship his gods. People could look around him and say, man, those Christian men, you know, they're just so weak.

[29 : 34] Their wives won't even worship their gods with them. And that Christian man could be tempted to think, in frustration, act out in that way against his wife, right, man, I can't believe that you won't convert and you won't follow my God, Jesus with me because you know, in our culture, everyone knows that the wife worships the God of the husband.

And in fact, Peter says quite the opposite. Instead of being frustrated by the fact that you're not being shown honor, reverse it. Pretend as if she is a Christian and subvert the system in the same way that he tells Christian wives to subvert the system.

Show even more honor to her as she dishonors you. Now, if it's the case that he is talking about Christian wives of Christian men, the point's still the same, right?

Okay, in this society, you may think that they're worth less than you. But guess what? In the holy nation, you guys are both heirs of God's grace. God's not giving more grace to men than he is to women.

And so in God's eyes, you're equal. Act in that way. Behave in that way. Behave in a way that it's clear to your wife that you think that you're equal with her in the sight of God.

[30 : 50] And so use your power and your authority in this system to build your family up and to build your wife up rather than to build yourself up. You are seeking in whatever way you can to use your position and your power to show honor to your wife.

because God and Jesus died, his blood was as much for her as it was for you. And so act in that way.

That should be the way that you behave. we've seen first live in an understanding way. Second, showing honor.

And then finally, there is a sobering warning that this passage ends with. There's a purpose clause here. When it came to the wives, the purpose was that they might win their husbands to follow after Jesus.

Here, and that was a positive, right? That was the carrot. Now we have a stick for the men. Your behavior should be in such a way that your prayers are not hindered.

[32 : 04] In other words, if you are not living in an understanding way with your wife, if you're not listening to your wife, God's not listening to you.

Now this might seem strange at first because of course our understanding is that everything is by grace, right?

We don't earn favor from God. God saved us from our sins. We would say God hears our prayers because Jesus mediates for us, right? So in what sense would God not hear our prayers?

The assumption here is that this person is a Christian, right? So why would God not hear the prayers of a Christian? Jesus died for this person. He's mediating for them.

And maybe we could say God hears the prayers, right? But he's not answering them because he's not answering them with a yes. How can we understand God's grace and both his discipline?

[33 : 00] And I want you all to think about it like this. So you know that I try to get out as much as I can and run and hike. And if you run and hike in Colorado, there are trails that will take different routes.

And if you go out, like I did recently in Cheyenne Mountain State Park after it snowed, there's going to be certain parts of the trail that still have snow on them and certain parts that don't. Why? Certain parts of the trail are highly exposed to the sun and certain parts are not.

when you walk into the shadows, don't be surprised when the temperature drops. When you walk into the shadows, don't be surprised when the temperature drops.

That doesn't mean you earned the sun in any way. Okay? God's grace, you don't earn it, you don't merit it. When I walk out into the sun, I didn't merit that sun by my behavior.

However, I put myself in the place of the heat of the sun. And when I walked in the shadows, I chose to remove myself from the heat of the sun.

[34 : 16] There is a way as a Christian husband to remove yourself from the heat of God's blessing. God will not be mocked.

And he is not interested in providing blessing and answer to the prayers of harsh and insensitive husbands. Doesn't negate his grace.

But it also shows how serious God is about disciplining his children. And so there's also several principles here.

First, authority goes with responsibility. And responsibility goes with accountability. And so husbands, you have more authority in the family, guess what? That means you have more accountability.

Husbands will answer to God for how they treat their wives and their families. And Peter intends for that to be sobering for the people reading this letter.

[35 : 23] This is not just some fluffy marriage advice for people who are more sensitive. But Peter is warning them that this is the behavior that brings God's favor.

And the inverse is also true. By the way, this is a principle in other parts of Scripture. In the book of James, it says that teachers are going to have a greater accountability before God for what they teach.

And so there's a principle, an authority, right? I said earlier, if you're someone in authority, the responsibility is on you to take initiative, to see how you can help the people who are under you.

If you're in authority, God's discipline is real. It tells us in Hebrews chapter 12 that his discipline is a way that we know that we belong to him.

And so it doesn't mean that these husbands aren't Christians. In fact, quite the opposite. They're children of God who are being disciplined for being harsh and unloving to their wives. Now, it's tempting to take this passage for some people and just say, well, the point is don't abuse your wife.

[36 : 30] Actually, that's not the point. That's the assumption. The assumption of this passage, as I mentioned last week, is that abuse is off the table. No, this is saying that the standard of a normal Christian husband is that this is the kind of man who's seeking understanding about his wife and looking to live in a way that honors her.

And so, it's not just what someone doesn't do. It's not just, oh, I don't abuse my wife, I'm off the hook. But what someone does do, right, the husband of consideration and care. And so, God disciplines people.

Men who are harsh with their wives should expect God's discipline to fall on them. God is not amused, and he will not be mocked.

God is not going to do it. And so, as Peter writes this letter, he wants them to understand how important this is for them as they live as a holy nation.

And of course, what is their motivation? Their motivation is that they would do the very same thing that Jesus has done for them. Jesus is someone who has had all the authority, right?

[37 : 46] In Philippians chapter 2 talks about how he gave it all up. He laid it down. He sacrificed it for the good of his people. And he did it when they were, right, rebelling against him.

As this Christian husband potentially married to a non-Christian woman might feel like it's happening in his marriage. And yet, what did Jesus do? He used his power and his authority not to build himself up, not to exalt himself, but to lift us up and exalt us.

And so that's why that passage in Philippians ends by saying that Jesus is going to be given the name that's above every other name. He's going to be high and lifted up. Because that's the logic of the gospel.

And so this logic is being applied as it has been applied to everyone else in these situations. It's applied to husbands. So they lose their power to lift up rather than tear down. And that God would have, has been the goal of all of these passages to tremendous honor and glory.

Just as the hope was that non-Christian men would look at these Christian wives last week and say, man, there's a lot of hard things about having a spouse who doesn't worship the gods with me, and there's times when I really wish I had a Christian wife.

[39 : 00] Same is also true that women would look into the church and see Christian husbands and think, man, there's some things I'm not sure about, about Christianity, but those Christian husbands, if I could get one of those.

That part of this point of 1 Peter is that as this new nation, they're modeling to the world, as I've said before and I said in Nehemiah, that people would look and they would see what it looks like when God's people walk in God's ways.

ways. One of the ways that God's people show the world a different way of living is when men and women walk together in ways that honor each other and have peace with one another.

And so this is part of the vision that Peter has for this Christian community, that they would be a light to the world in the way their marriages work. And so we've been asking this question of how husbands fulfill these principles of being a priesthood, of glorifying God, of honoring everyone.

We see it with two ways in one warning. First, they live in a way that's understanding, knowing that their experience of the world is very different from the experience of their wives.

[40 : 11] Second, they live in a way that shows honor, not acting as if somehow they're more worthy as a man, but looking to show their wife how worthy she is. And then finally, there's a warning that God's discipline is real for husbands who fail to honor and live with their wives in an understanding way.

And so while that's the stick, we also have the carrot and the model. Remember, we were told earlier, a couple weeks ago, that Jesus is our example. And so we do this following after Jesus because we know that for us and for his church, he was the husband that sought to be understanding and to sacrifice for his church.

church. And he was the husband who gave up his honor to give tremendous honor and glory to us. And so we praise God for that that he's given to us, that we could walk in his ways and that everyone would look and see a different way and a different kind of marriage in this church and in God's church.

And so it's with that hope and that admonition that I invite you to pray with me. Dear Father in Heaven, we again thank you for your word. We ask that you would use it in ways that are purposeful and powerful in our lives.

We ask for the marriages in this church that you'd continue to build them up and strengthen them. That our husbands would more and more love their wives like you love the church.

[41 : 42] And our wives would more and more love their husbands in the same way with your love honoring them as they try to lead. And that together we would be able to give you tremendous honor and glory.

We ask that you'd send your Holy Spirit to do it and you'd empower us because of the sacrifice of your son. And we ask it knowing that we have not earned it but that you have earned it for us. And so we ask it in Jesus' name.

Amen.