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SPRING SERIES 2022 – WEEK 6

1 Peter 3:1-7: Unpredictably Practical

*But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation,
a people for his own possession, **that you may proclaim** the excellencies of him
who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light.*

– 1 Peter 2:19 ESV

- **Practical proclamation**

proclaim – ἐξαγγέλλω (*exangellō*)

to show forth, divulge, make known

*...you can **show others** the goodness of God... – NLT*

- Their **behavior** mattered
- Their **profession** had to become **practical**
- Their **testimony** had to become **visible**

*Be careful to **live properly** among your unbelieving neighbors. – 1 Peter 2:12 NLT*

*...**they will see** your honorable behavior, and they will give honor to God. – 1 Peter 2:12 NLT*

- **Invisible** faith is **unconvincing** faith

*Now someone may argue, “Some people have faith; others have good deeds.” But I say,
“**How can you show me your faith if you don’t have good deeds?** I will show you my
faith by my good deeds.” – James 2:18 NLT*

- **Do good**

- Their new lives in Christ were to be marked by “**doing good**”

*...by **doing good** you should put to silence the ignorance of foolish people... – 2:15*

*...if when you **do good** and suffer for it you endure, this is a gracious thing in the sight of God. – 2:20*

*...to **this** [doing good] you have been called, because Christ also suffered for you, leaving you an example, so that **you might follow in his steps**. – 2:21*

- Follow the example of Jesus: Do good!

***Be subject** for the Lord’s sake... – 2:13*

*Servants, **be subject** to your masters... – 2:18*

*Likewise, wives, **be subject** to your own husbands... – 3:1*

- Jesus submitted to:
 - His Heavenly Father
 - The Roman government
 - The high priest and the Sanhedrin
 - Pilate and Herod
 - The Roman guards

*“No one can take my life from me. **I sacrifice it voluntarily**. For I have the authority to lay it down when I want to and also to take it up again. For this is what my Father has commanded.” – John 10:18 NLT*

*While Jesus was here on earth, he offered prayers and pleadings, with a loud cry and tears, to the one who could rescue him from death. And God heard his prayers because of his deep reverence for God. Even though Jesus was God’s Son, **he learned obedience from the things he suffered**. – Hebrews 5:7-8 NLT*

- **A word for wives**

*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... – 1 Peter 3:1-2 ESV*

likewise – ὁμοίως (*homoios*)

...in the same way, equally

- Christian wives were to submit just as Jesus did
- He was the Son of God in human flesh
- They were daughters of God in human flesh

- Wives, be subject...
 - Context is everything!
 - Peter is writing to Christians living in Asia Minor
 - Predominantly a Gentile audience
 - Living under Roman rule
 - But according to Hellenistic (Greek) customs

“The subordination of wives to husbands reflected in this passage must be seen against a background of the general status of women in the Hellenistic world of that time. Dominant among the elite was the notion that the woman was by nature inferior to the man. Because she lacked the capacity for reason that the male had, she was ruled rather by her emotions, and was as a result given to poor judgment, immorality, intemperance, wickedness, avarice, she was untrustworthy, contentious, and as a result, it was her place to obey.” – Paul J. Achtemeier, *Hermeneia, 1 Peter*

- Women could not vote or hold office
- They were prohibited from taking oaths
- They could not plead a case in court
- They could not serve as legal guardian of their own minor children

- Peter was not a **radical** or **revolutionary**
 - Any more than Jesus was
 - He wasn't an **abolitionist**
 - Nor was he a **feminist**
 - But Peter, like Jesus, was an **extremist**

“God blesses those who are persecuted for doing right, for the Kingdom of Heaven is theirs.

“God blesses you when people mock you and persecute you and lie about you and say all sorts of evil things against you because you are my followers. Be happy about it! Be very glad! For a great reward awaits you in heaven.” – Matthew 5:10-12 NLT

- The entire Sermon on the Mount is a call to extreme living
- Faith you can see
 - ...when they **see** your respectful and pure **conduct**. – 1 Peter 3:2 ESV

- Once again, this is about **behavior**

conduct – ἀναστροφή (*anastrophē*)
manner of life, behavior, deportment

pure – ἁγνός (*hagnos*)

From *hagios* – “holy” or “set apart”

respectful – ἐν φόβος (*en phobos*)

with reverence for God

“It must be noted, however, that this passage intends to say nothing about the subordination of women to men in general, not even with Christian marriage, but intends to be understood primarily within the context of a Christian wife married to an unbelieving husband.” – Paul J. Achtemeier, *Hermeneia*, 1 Peter

- Cultural context

- A woman was required by law to adopt her husband’s religion
- This placed Christian women with unbelieving husbands in a real bind
- Was Peter suggesting they deny Christ and stay married or divorce their husband?
- Peter would have agreed with Paul

*...if a believing woman has a husband who is not a believer and he is willing to continue living with her, **she must not leave him**. For the believing wife brings holiness to her marriage... – 1 Corinthians 7:13-14 NLT*

Don’t you wives realize that your husbands might be saved because of you? And don’t you husbands realize that your wives might be saved because of you? – 1 Corinthians 7:16 NLT

- **Looking good**

*Do not let your **adorning** be external—the braiding of hair and the putting on of gold jewelry, or the clothing you wear—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. – 1 Peter 3:3-4*

- Inner versus outer beauty

- He is stressing that which only God can see
- Our inner condition is invisible to men
- And our outer appearance is deceiving

“The LORD doesn’t see things the way you see them. People judge by outward appearance, but the LORD looks at the heart.” – 1 Samuel 16:7 NLT

“The “secret person” in this context refers not so much to the general inner aspect of the human being as it does to the person who **is determined by a faith that is visible directly only to God**, and that is apparent to other human beings only by way of external acts.” – Paul J. Achtemeier, *Hermeneia*, 1 Peter

- See it to believe it
adorning – κόσμος (*kosmos*)
 harmonious arrangement, order, adornment

external	vs	internals
braided hair		a gentle spirit
fine jewelry		submissiveness
expensive clothes		trust
		righteousness

- Holy women of hope
*For this is how the **holy women who hoped in God** used to adorn themselves, by submitting to their own husbands, as Sarah obeyed Abraham, calling him lord. And you are her children, if you do good and do not fear anything that is frightening.* – 1 Peter 3:5-6 ESV

- Why does Peter use Sarah as an example?
- There's only one place in the OT where Sarah refers to Abraham as “lord”
lord – ἄρτι (*āḏôn*) – master

*Now Abraham and Sarah were old, advanced in years. The way of women had ceased to be with Sarah. So Sarah laughed to herself, saying, “After I am worn out, and **my lord** is old, shall I have pleasure?”* – Genesis 18:11-12 ESV

- Peter states that “Sarah obeyed Abraham” (3:6)
 - She didn't always **understand**
 - **She** didn't always **agree**
 - But she never **disobeyed** him
 - And she stayed **committed** to him
- “do good” and “do not fear”
 - Sarah was an alien and a stranger in Canaan
 - She faced all kinds of obstacles and difficulties
 - But she learned to “do good” and “not fear”
 - She learned to trust God

*By faith Sarah herself received power to conceive, even when she was past the age, since **she considered him faithful who had promised**.* – Hebrews 11:11 ESV

- **Are you man enough?**

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. – 1 Peter 3:7 ESV

likewise – in the same way

- Men are also expected to “be subject” and “do good”
- Show her honor
 - Treat her with value and reverence
 - Hold her in high esteem
 - She is of great value to God
 - And she is a co-heir of the grace of life
 - She is like a fragile, priceless vase
 - And God holds you responsible for her

“The seriousness with which God takes the necessity of men to treat women as equal heirs of God’s eschatological grace is shown in the final phrase: lack of such treatment means that men’s prayers to God are hindered and so have no effect – God does not listen to them.” – Paul J. Achtemeier, *Hermeneia, 1 Peter*

- **Discussion questions**

Why would Peter warn that God does not answer the prayers of a man who fails to honor his wife? What’s the connection between the two?

Look back at 1 Peter 2:16. What does our living as servants of God have to do with all this talk about submission, showing honor, and doing good?

Read Matthew 5:10-11. In what ways is Jesus calling us to a life of extremism?



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SPRING SERIES 2022 – WEEK 7 HOMEWORK

1 Peter 3:8-12: Subjection, Suffering, and Sanctification

Here, Peter widens his focus and addresses everyone in his audience. Subjection was to be a universal reality for all believers, and it was to show up in tangible ways, especially within a local body of believers. Peter discusses such topics as unity of mind, sympathy, brotherly love, and having a tender heart and a humble mind. These characteristics were to mark the lives of believers and were to be exhibited through their interactions with one another. These are some of the characteristics he outlines in his second letter to these very same people. He describes them as supplements to their faith (2 Peter 1:5-7).

Part of what Peter is addressing is the misguided expectation that many of these believers held. Each of these people had come to faith in Christ hoping that they would experience a joyful and prosperous life. But instead, they were having to endure persecution and rejection. They were facing trials and tribulations of all kinds, and the natural tendency was to react with anger, resentment, and even hatred toward those who were the source of their problems. But Peter calls them to refrain from speaking evil, to speak truth rather than lies, and to do good rather than evil. In no way does Peter suggest that their trials are going to go away as a result of doing these things. His reference to “happy days” is not intended as a promise of a trouble-free life. But by reacting to their unpleasant circumstances in a Christlike manner, they could experience true joy.

- Read 1 Peter 3:8-12. Write down any thoughts that jump out at you from these verses.

- Set aside some time to read pages 49-52 of Ken’s Devotionalary™ on 1 Peter.

- In verse 8, Peter lists five characteristics of that he expects believers to exhibit in their corporate lives. Why do you think he chose to emphasize these five?
- Look closely at 3:9 and then turn back to verses 21-24 of chapter two. Why do you think Peter used the exact wording he did and what is the point he is trying to make?

What kind of “blessing” do you think Peter has in mind at the end of verse 9?

- In verses 10-12, Peter quotes virtually verbatim from Psalm 34:12-16. When you read the words, “love life and see good days,” what comes to mind?

Do you think Peter is offering us the promise of the “good life?” If not, then what could he be talking about? (Compare Paul’s words with those of Jesus in John 10:10).

According to verse 11, what is the key to seeing “good days?”

Read Galatians 5:19-26. How does this passage compare with what Peter states in verses 10-12 of 1 Peter 3?

According to verse 7 of this same chapter, Peter states that God refuses to hear the prayers of a man who fails to honor his wife. How does verse 12 take this to another level?

To “do good” can literally be translated “do what is righteous really well.” And the phrase “do evil” can be translated “do what is wicked really well.” How does this change how you think about these two options? And why does Peter put so much emphasis on the first one?