



*Picture of a Godly Husband*  
**1 Peter 3:7**

7 Husbands, likewise, dwell with them with understanding, giving honor to the wife, as to the weaker vessel, and as being heirs together of the grace of life, that your prayers may not be hindered.

Here's a question for you *What makes a man a Godly Christian Husband?* I want you to be thinking about the answer to that, as I am preaching. And I want you to be fairly sure that you know the answer by the time I'm done.

Next Sunday tens of thousands of American men will become Christians. I don't mean that they will all be converted, a few will as they are every Sunday, but that's not what I'm referring to. I'm referring to the phenomenon that happens on the Lord's Day that many churches observe as Easter of ordinary husbands who normally spend their Sunday morning golfing, fishing, working around the house, or going to see sporting events, or simply sleeping in suddenly getting up and accompanying their wives and families to church. For many of them this will be their first visit to Church since December 25<sup>th</sup>.

Now if you asked these men if they are Christians, many if not most of them would say yes. That's the box they would tick on an official form. But is it true? Can a man reasonably claim to be a true Christian, if the only time he is visibly Christian is on two Sundays out of fifty two and the occasional Wedding or Funeral? I know most of you would say *No, that isn't even close to biblical Christianity.*

Now, the men themselves might be incensed if you told them that they weren't real Christians, but lets say you showed one of those men who happened to be a real hardcore Nascar fan someone who only watched the two most widely publicized and attended Nascar races of the year and didn't really pay much attention during those, and then asked you him *"Is that man a Nascar fan?"* What do you think he would say? "WELL OF COURSE NOT! He doesn't go to the races, he doesn't follow the drivers, he may know that the cars go round and round on an oval track a certain number of times, but he doesn't really have a clue about the sport and can't talk intelligently about it, or teach anyone anything worthwhile about it. That guy doesn't really care about Nascar.

So he is condemned by his own standard, if a man normally forsakes the assembling of the saints, knows next to nothing of the faith, and frankly couldn't care less about it, he's clearly not a Christian.

But let's go a little further, being a Christian man doesn't only consist of going to church every Lord's Day does it? No. If I'm only a Christian at church I'm not really a Christian. To paraphrase Jonathan Edwards, *a man is who is at home. If he is not a Christian there, he is not truly a Christian anywhere.* Peter tells us that a Godly Christian husband is a man who is submitting to Christ's Lordship in the **home** as well.

That is why, immediately after telling wives to serve Christ in their marriage by submitting to their husbands, he starts off by addressing husband in verse 7 – *Husbands Likewise, or “In the Same Manner”* Husbands, you too need to need serve Christ by submitting to his will. In your marriage you will show your genuine love to Christ by *denying yourselves, taking up your cross daily, and following your Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.*

Some of you husbands may be thinking at this point, well I love my wife, I even give her flowers sometimes. So I’m doing what I’m supposed to. Well it’s good you love your wife, but if you want to be a Godly Christian husband to her and I hope you do, there is much more to it than that.

Peter says that there are two critical ways that a Godly Christian husband will follow Christ by serving his wife:

***The first way is to dwell with her with understanding.*** Now that dwelling or living is not simply to cohabitate, it implies an intimate relationship, in fact the most intimate of all human relationships, after Christ she should be the most important part of your life. Not your buddies, not your hobbies, not your job, not even your kids, ***her***. And your life with her must be with understanding, that is understanding both of your calling before God *and* understanding of your wife.

You see you need both of those together. As a Shepherd in God’s church, God has given me a flock, and he expects me to minister to them according to His Commands. Now to do that I need to know 2 things, first I need to know God’s Word, and Second I need to know God’s Sheep. If I know the word, but not the sheep, how will I know how they need that word to be applied? If I know the sheep but I don’t know the word, then I have nothing of any eternal value to give them. In the same way, husbands God has given you your own little flock to Pastor, and you have to know both his word, ***and your own wives***. Christ has given you to her, to minister to her. Therefore you have to know her needs, their strengths, their weaknesses, their feelings, you have to know them. And that takes time and effort, it requires getting close to them, and really talking.

Turn in your bibles to Eph. 5:25

***25 Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself for her,  
26 that He might sanctify and cleanse her with the washing of water by the word,  
27 that He might present her to Himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing, but that she should be holy and without blemish.  
28 So husbands ought to love their own wives as their own bodies; he who loves his wife loves himself.  
29 For no one ever hated his own flesh, but nourishes and cherishes it, just as the Lord does the church.***

That is your responsibility, to love your wives, sacrificially as Christ loved the church. And before you say, yeah well that gonna be hard because my wife isn’t always as loveable. As loveable as the church? Do you really think the church is easy to love? Or worthy of Christ’s love? The church has never been *worthy of Christ’s love!* The love you are called to is agape, a love for the utterly unworthy, a love which proceeds from the God who is love, it is love lavished upon others without a thought of whether they are worthy. You are called to see your wives as Christ sees them. They are the objects of his love for whom He died.

Your desire therefore will be daily to sanctify your wives, God gave you to her to see that she grows in grace, you need therefore to be daily taking her and the rest of the family to the word, even if they DON'T WANT TO GO, teaching them, building them up, praying for them. **Husbands are you doing that?**

**The second way is to give honor to your wives as the weaker vessel and as being heirs together of the grace of life.**

Husbands you have to honor your wife because as Calvin puts it *“nothing destroys the friendship of life more than contempt; nor can we really love any but those whom we esteem; for love must be connected with respect.”*

You will treat her with honor and respect only if you remember those two things he mentions and act accordingly:

1) *You need to remember that she is the weaker vessel* – Husbands God wants you to remember your wife is not a travel mug or a tin cup, she is like fine china or a champagne flute. And as Matthew Poole puts it *“weak vessels must be gently handled”* She is not weak in intellect, but in constitution, and she needs to be treated with what used to be called chivalry. She is not as physically strong as you are, and God hasn't made her to bear the same kinds of burdens he has equipped you for. Emotionally, handle her roughly and brusquely or uncaringly and eventually you will crush her.

Husbands don't break your wives, they are indispensable to you. There is a reason that Peter uses the analogy of vessels, and I don't believe it is just because they are the ones who carry children. She is called a vessel because she does not have merely ornamental value, but a help to a husband and a family. *Have you considered how often you use vessels in a day? You can't get through a single day without using one.*

2) *You will only give your wives the due respect she deserves if you remember that you are heirs together of the grace of life:*

Now you have been appointed to be her head, and she had been called to voluntarily submit. But one of the worst mistakes you can make is beginning to think of her as somehow not equal. Remember the great analogy for the Christian's submission is the submission of Christ and his submission to the will of the Father is not because He is less than the father. So wives are not lesser beings than their husbands. Yes husbands you have a federal headship over her, but women were created from a rib to show basic equality. The difference is only to roles not being.

Before you will remember that I read from John Bunyan to show that the idea that Christianity denigrates women in the same way that Islam does is baseless, well here is Alexander Nisbet on the same subject in 1658:

*The difference of sex or outward condition among the Lord's people does not hinder their equality in the participation of spiritual and eternal privileges which free grace bestows without respect to these differences*

*Gal. 3:28 There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus.*

*For here husbands and wives are called heirs together of the grace of life. The consideration of this equality should strongly move superiors to make conscience of duty toward their inferiors, considering that because of this equality their inferiors are no less dear to God than themselves, and that they are fellow-heirs with them of that which is much better than anything of a temporary concernment wherein they do excel them: for this is here brought as an argument of husbands' dutifulness to their wives, That they are heirs together of the grace of life.*

Mutuality of that relationship  
True and intimate friendship

Finally Husbands, those of you who think this is all dispensible. Even those of you who think you can serve God and grow in grace and knowledge without tending to your duties to your wives. Hear the grave warning of scripture. Your access to God in prayer depends in large part on your relationship with your wife. Peter warns that access to him can be hindered in two senses:

- 1) indisposed to join together in prayer
- 2) God will not be inclined to answer those prayers favorably

Please NOTE *YOU ARE SUPPOSED TO BE PRAYING TOGETHER*

Only a foolish man is content to cut off divine blessings.

I hope now you have a better idea of what makes a Godly Christian husband,  
Now those of you married men need to ask the critical question – AM I living up to that calling?  
Actually YOU NEED TO *Ask your wife that question.*

If not, then some of you are going to be repenting making some changes. Others may need to ask a more basic question. Am I really a Christian? Would I fail the Christian version of the Nascar fan test?  
Have you closed with Christ by faith?