

Spiritually Extravagant

Wives and Husbands Part 2

1 Peter 3:1-6 11-10-2012 & 11-11-2012

Summary: Submission is not blind agreement or passive acceptance or subservience, nor is it demeaning. It is taking your God-ordained place in the home, which brings honor to both your husband and you. And it strengthens your husband. Tip #2 is purity (godliness) that comes from fear of God. Tip #3 is a gentle, quiet spirit. And all of this is powered by borrowing joy from future experiences of God's presence. This decks you out with spiritual extravagance in the sight of God.

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1 Peter 3:1 Wives, in the same way be submissive to your husbands so that, if any of them do not believe the word, they may be won over without words by the behavior of their wives, 2 when they see the purity and reverence of your lives. 3 Your beauty should not come from outward adornment, such as braided hair and the wearing of gold jewelry and fine clothes. 4 Instead, it should be that of your inner self, the unfading beauty of a gentle and quiet spirit, which is of great worth in God's sight. 5 For this is the way the holy women of the past who put their hope in God used to make themselves beautiful. They were submissive to their own husbands, 6 like Sarah, who obeyed Abraham and called him her master. You are her daughters if you do what is right and do not give way to fear. 7 Husbands, in the same way be considerate as you live with your wives, and treat them with respect as the weaker partner and as heirs with you of the gracious gift of life, so that nothing will hinder your prayers.

Introduction

With capability comes responsibility. If God created you with the capability to do something, that means He is holding you responsible not to squander that capability, but to use it for good purposes that glorify Him and benefit His people. And that includes the capability to become more beautiful.

We are studying verse-by-verse through the book of 1 Peter, and last week we began chapter three where Peter teaches women how to become more beautiful. He gives three beauty tips for women – three ways a woman can develop the kind of beauty that is capable of winning a man’s heart, not to her, but to God. When a husband is disobedient to God’s Word, this kind of beauty can win him over to repentance.

The Source of Beauty: The Heart

And the first thing we found was that the source of this beauty is not anything you do to your body.

3 Your beauty should not come from outward adornment, such as braided hair and the wearing of gold jewelry and clothes.

Fixing up the way you look on the outside will help attract him to you, but not to God. It is fine to use hairstyles and makeup and clothes and jewelry to *enhance* your beauty, but those things must not be the *source* of your beauty. The source must be on the inside.

4 Instead, it [the source of your beauty] should be that of your inner self

Literally, the **hidden man of the heart**. When your beauty comes from the outside, first of all it only attracts men to you and not to God, and secondly, it does not last long.

Unfading

It fades. We make all our frantic efforts to hold off the aging process with anti-wrinkle creams and surgeries and everything else, but age catches up to all of us eventually. If you are attractive according to this world’s standards you will not be that way very long. So if that is all there is to your beauty, then when it fades you are left with nothing but ugliness.

Proverbs 31:30 Charm is deceptive, and beauty is fleeting

Beauty that comes from the outside is fleeting, but if the source of your beauty is internal, then your beauty and attractiveness can persist beyond the time when the external fades. Look at verse 4.

4 [your adornment] should be that of your inner self, the unfading beauty of a gentle and quiet spirit, which is of great worth in God's sight.

This kind of beauty does not fade – it grows. Women with this kind of beauty keep getting more and more attractive. They do not get depressed about aging, because the aging process in the kingdom of God is a beautifying process.

Beauty Tip #1 – Submission

OK, so how does a woman get this kind of internal, unfading, soul-winning beauty? Peter gives us three ingredients — three beauty tips that will make any woman beautiful. The first one we looked at last week: respectful submission. And we discovered some very interesting things in this passage about wifely submission. Peter knocks down some very common misconceptions.

What Submission is Not

Not blind agreement

It is remarkable that Peter talks about submission in a context where the wife is a Christian and the husband is not. In that culture, the wife was expected to follow whatever religion the husband

followed, and if she did not, it was a huge embarrassment to the husband. And yet Peter not only does not tell her to follow his religion; he tells her to win the husband over to her religion! So obviously biblical submission does not mean mindlessly agreeing with your husband on everything. This is a case where the wife disagrees with her husband on the most important, most fundamental issue there is. He rejects the gospel and she believes it with all her heart. It is impossible to have a bigger disagreement than that. So clearly submitting does not mean agreeing with him on everything.

Not passive acceptance

Nor does it mean passively accepting everything he does. Peter is teaching women how to win their husbands over to Christ. Sometimes marriage counselors will say, “Don’t try to change your spouse – just worry about yourself.” But Peter is teaching us that changing him is the whole point! Of course you should try to change your spouse. You should try to change everyone you know. This is what we do – function as a godly influence on the people around you.

So the issue is not whether or not you should try to change your husband – the issue is two things – your motive and your method. If your motive for changing your husband is to make life more pleasant for yourself, that is the wrong motive. And that is the natural motive of the flesh, so it is a constant battle to fight against that in your soul. Most women try to get their husbands to change so the husband will stop causing her pain or anxiety. “I want him to stop hurting me,” “I want him to start loving me,” “I want him to help me more with the kids,” “I want him to stop this behavior that bothers me” – those are all selfish motives. The goal is not to conform him to your desires for yourself; the goal is to conform him to God’s desires for God’s glory and your husband’s highest good.

So it is crucial that you have the right motive, and also the right method. Methods like yelling at him, or using the silent treatment, or being cool toward him to teach him a lesson, or moving out for a while to get his attention – that is sinful manipulation.

So using sinful techniques like that to get him to adjust to your preferences and comfort is wrong. But how about this – what about using submission and respect to get him to go along with your preferences and make your life more pleasant? That is also wrong. If you submit to him and show him respect and give him the things he wants in order to get him to love you better, that is selfish manipulation, not godly influence. Godly influence is when you try to bring your spouse to greater holiness for the sake of the good of your spouse and the pleasure of God.

So the motive must be righteousness for God’s glory and your husband’s highest good. And the method must be inner beauty.

Not slavish subservience

So submission does not mean blind agreement, it does not mean passive acceptance, and third, submission is not slavish subservience. There are some men who think submission means it is the wife’s role to serve him. That is completely backwards. Jesus made it very clear in Matthew 20:25-28 that in the Kingdom of God, the norm is for the one in authority to serve the ones under authority. In the world the underling holds the door and gets the coffee for the boss. In the kingdom, the boss holds the door and gets the coffee for the underling. That is why Jesus washed the Disciples’ feet – He was the highest authority in the room, so He was the most logical candidate to do the menial serving.

So should wives serve their husbands? Of course – they should serve their husbands just because they are fellow Christians, and all Christians should strive to serve one another. But in the race to be the first one to serve, the husband should win most of the time, because he is the leader of the home, so he is to be the greatest servant.

Not demeaning

In the world we tend to think of the one in charge as being more important than those under him, or better than them in some way. But in the Kingdom of God that is not the case at all. And if you doubt that, just realize for a moment that God the Father is the head over God the Son.

1 Corinthians 11:3 Now I want you to realize that the head of every man is Christ, and the head of the woman is man, and the head of Christ is God.

Man is the authority over woman. Christ is the authority over man. And God the Father is the authority over God the Son. God the Son is not of lesser importance or lesser dignity than God the Father. God the Father has no attribute in greater measure than God the Son. They are one in essence.

If you think the one who submits to authority is of lesser importance than that authority, consider this: according to Luke 2:51 Jesus was submissive to His parents. You tell me, were Joseph and Mary greater than the Son of God? Were they better, or more important, or more significant? No. They were infinitely less important and less significant. They were not better than Him in any way. They were infinitely worse than Him in every way. Yet it was His role to be submissive to their authority and He gladly did so. Authority and submission have nothing to do with importance or dignity.

Submission is Taking your God-Ordained Place

Submission is simply taking the place God ordained for you in the home. God designed roles for every human being, and your greatest dignity will come in relation to how well you carry out your role. If he made you a hand, there is no dignity in trying to behave like a head. And it is not demeaning to a hand to respond to signals from the head. Nobody looks at a concert pianist and says, “Look at those pathetic hands – just doing nothing but taking orders from that big, ugly head that does nothing but sit up there on the shoulders.”

The fact that those hands are so responsive to the head is what gives both them and the head dignity. We are impressed with people like that. If there are hands that make their own movements, apart from the direction of the head, we call that a spasm. And when someone has spastic body parts, we do not say, “Oh, good for those body parts – they are achieving independence!” No, we feel sorry for the whole person.

Strengthening your Husband

Submitting to your husband is not only the biggest favor you can do for him; it is the biggest favor you can do for yourself and your kids. It makes the family function the way God designed it to function. And if you say, “I would love to follow my husband’s spiritual leadership, but he never leads” then all the more reason to be even more submissive, because if you are married to a weak man who just wants to be wimpy and passive and fails to provide leadership in the home, a man like that really will not ever take leadership if he has a wife that is hard to lead. What he needs is not someone to take over for him; what he needs is someone to strengthen him. And no one can do that more than you, his wife.

It is amazing the ability a wife has to strengthen her husband. And it is amazing the ability a wife has to take away all his strength. No one on the planet can weaken or strengthen your husband like you can. A man who is normally very bold and strong and courageous, but whose wife treats him like a child, belittling him, and dishonoring him, becomes a cowardly pile of mush. If she constantly beats him down with his past mistakes, withholds forgiveness for days at a time, manipulates him with her moodiness so he is afraid to say no to her when she really wants something – she will drain every ounce of strength out of him. Men like that end up sitting on the couch eating potato chips all day because they lose all their strength and drive.

But on the other hand, I think most women have no idea how much power they have to strengthen their husbands. If he knows you are behind him, you are supporting him, you look up to him – he can

go up against the whole world. If you ever see a man who fears nothing, a man of great courage – nine times out of ten you will find out he has a wife who encourages, strengthens, and supports him. Instead of nagging him, she finds the key to his heart and motivates him. Instead of everything being a tug-a-war in decision-making, she gives him wise counsel the best she can and then says this: “I’ve given you my opinion, now the decision is yours to make before God. I just want you to know that whatever you decide, I will support it. And if it ends up being the wrong decision and we end up in the bottom of a pit somewhere – we lose our house, we lose our savings, we lose our children, we lose everything – still, on that day I will be right there by your side and we will climb up out of that pit together.” Say that to your husband and it will be like giving spinach to Popeye. Just stand back because buttons will be popping off his shirt and he will be filled with strength to lead the family and overcome obstacles that would normally stop him in his tracks.

And it will also give him a heart to give greater consideration to the advice you did give. And most importantly, it will make you so beautiful to him that over time his heart will tend to become softer toward God.

Beauty Tip #2 – Reverent Purity (v.2)

OK, so beauty tip #1 – submission. Beauty tip #2 comes in verse 2. The husband will be won over by seeing **the reverence and purity of your lives**. Here is a literal translation:

1 ... they may be won over without words by the conduct of their wives, 2 having seen the in-fear purity of your conduct.

I thought about making fear and purity two separate points in my list because they seem to be two fairly separate things – fear of God and purity, but the grammar really ties them together in a very tight way. Disobedient husbands will be won over by means of the beauty that comes from purity. But not just purity, but specifically this **in-fear** kind of purity. What is **in-fear purity**? In Peter, the good kind of fear is always fear of God, so this is a purity of life that arises out of fear of the Lord.

Purity

We tend to use the word “purity” in the context of sexual purity. That connotation is not part of this Greek word in the New Testament. It can be used for sexual purity, but only if the context requires that. Otherwise it just simply refers to being innocent of wrongdoing in general. A wife will be able to attract her husband to Christ when her life is blameless.

Blameless, not Perfect

And by blameless I do not mean perfect. No one is perfect, but some people are pure.

1 Peter 1:22 ...you have purified yourselves by obeying the truth...

When you obey God’s Word you do not make yourself perfect, but you do make yourself pure. Being pure (or blameless) means: You are resolved to do what God’s Word says to do in every area of life through faith in His promises. You are fighting hard, by faith, against every area of sin in your life that you can find. When you do fail, you repent. If those three things are true of you, then you are blameless. You are living a holy, righteous, obedient, pure life. That is what purity is.

That is your best shot at winning your husband’s heart to Christ, because if you are doing that, that means you will be continually increasing in love, humility, patience, kindness, compassion, integrity, joy, peace, trustworthiness, self-control, wisdom, etc. And that will make you and your God attractive to your husband. The more you develop those virtues, the harder it will be for your husband to keep hanging on to his arguments against Christ. Purity is attractive, and when someone who is living a pure life invites you to live in purity, there is a powerful, powerful draw.

But any kind of spiritual *impurity* in your life will work the other direction – especially impurities related to the marriage. If you are selfish, or your words or attitudes are disrespectful, if you are not submissive to his decisions, if you try to seize control of the home, if you order him around or talk to him like a child– those kinds of impurities will really destroy your influence.

In-Fear

And if fearing God sounds like a bad thing to you, you need to understand there are two kinds of fear – a good kind and a bad kind. The bad kind of fear of God would be if you were afraid that God will harm you or do something bad. That comes from a distorted view of God. The good kind of fear of God means loving God so much that you care more about His approval or disapproval than you care about anything else in the world. The more you love someone the more you care about both their approval and their disapproval. That kind of fear is always a function of how much you love the person. If a random guy on the street is disappointed in me, that means very little. If my wife is disappointed in me, that bothers me because *she* is important to me.

So what Peter is saying here is the wife must have a purity of life that comes from fear of God. She cares deeply about God’s assessment of her –more than she cares about anything else. It means if she had to choose between God’s approval or her husband’s approval, she would choose God’s. If she had to choose between being looked up to and respected among her friends or coworkers, or being pleasing to God; she would forgo the praise of men and choose to be pleasing to God.

You will have this kind of soul-winning inner beauty if you are afraid of nothing but God’s displeasure. It is ironic – because if you strive to have purity and goodness as defined by your husband’s ideas of what purity and goodness mean, that will not win him. Your unbelieving or disobedient husband has a certain idea of what a good life really is. And if you try to conform to that, it will not win his heart to God. It probably will not even win his heart to you, because the result of that will not be beauty. It will be ugliness. The things he thinks are the ingredients for beauty, if they do not match up with what is in God’s Word, will in reality turn out to be ingredients for ugliness. That is why Peter specifies – not just anyone’s idea of purity and goodness, but the purity and goodness that come from fearing God.

Cannot Obey Commands to Sin

And that is another reason why submissiveness never includes following your husband into sin. If you suspect your husband is not seeking God’s will, or he has not prayed about the decision, or is doing something foolish – you still submit. (Obviously – since that is always going to be the case with unbelieving husbands.) But the moment he wants you to do something that God’s Word expressly forbids you to do, or your husband forbids you from doing something that God’s Word commands you to do, then you must obey God rather than men. We know that because if godly submission means maintaining your purity and holiness, you cannot have purity and holiness if you are following your husband into sin. Following your husband into sin is not biblical submissiveness, because biblical submissiveness is pure with a purity that comes from fearing God above all.

Long Term

Obviously this is not an overnight kind of fix. The way Peter phrases this in the Greek, he says it this way: After having seen your purity, your husband will be won over.¹ So the idea is he observes a life of purity. It is not something you do in a month or year. But it is something that, over time, works.

If your husband is not responding to your words, do not revert to badgering or haranguing or nagging. Do not tape Bible verses to the bottom of his beer cans or leave copies of Disciplines of a Godly Man on his pillow. When he is open to talk, talk. If he is interested in your book

¹ That would explain why Peter uses the Aorist ptc. here rather than the present ptc. like he used in 2:12. In 2:12 the emphasis is on the fact that the change comes by means of the seeing. Here the emphasis is that the change will come after having seen.

recommendations, offer them. When he is not, then just be submissive and just keep living out a pure, holy life that rises out of a fear of God.

Look for This Kind of Spouse

And by the way, I hope you single men who want to be married hear all this and think, “Wow, I want to find a woman like that.” I hope this is what you are looking for in a wife. The best wife you could ever find would be a woman who loves God more than she loves you. And you single women – look for a husband who is attracted to that. The best husband you could ever find would be a man who wants to play second fiddle to God in your life — a man who wants you to love God more than you love him.

Beauty Tip #3 – Selfless Gentleness (v.4)

So beauty tip #1 is respectful submission. Beauty tip #2 is a pure, holy life that arises out of fearing God and only God. Beauty tip #3 shows up in verse 4.

4 [your beauty] should be that of your inner self, the unfading beauty of a gentle and quiet spirit, which is of great worth in God's sight.

Gentle

The word translated **gentle** is the word *meek* (as in “**Blessed are the meek, for they will inherit the earth**”). It means “not insistent on one’s rights” or “not pushy or selfishly assertive” or “not demanding one’s own way.”² Meekness is a great virtue for anyone to have, and we should all strive for it, but it is an especially important ingredient for a woman’s beauty.

Selfishness and pushiness are ugly. A strong woman – that is a wonderful thing. A domineering woman – not a good thing. It pushes the man toward more and more unresponsiveness, and it throws cold water on the fires of his love. But meekness is delightful, and it functions as a crucial component of a woman’s beauty.

Quiet

The other word is translated **quiet**. When you think of an attractive woman you usually do not picture an obnoxious, boisterous loudmouth.

Proverbs 9:13 The woman Folly is loud; she is undisciplined and without knowledge.

Now, do not think of this mainly in terms of volume. The word translated **quiet** here, has more to do with attitude than volume. A better translation would be “tranquil” or “calm” “at peace.” The only other place it is used in the Bible is in 1 Timothy 2:1.

1 Timothy 2:1 I urge, then, first of all, that requests, prayers, intercession and thanksgiving be made ...2 for kings and all those in authority, that we may live peaceful and quiet lives

He is not saying, “Pray for the government so you won’t have excessive noise in your life.” It is talking about peacefulness – lack of strife and contention. And in 2 Thessalonians 3 – it is the opposite of being a busybody.

2 Thessalonians 3:11 We hear that some among you are idle. They are not busy; they are busybodies.

² Grudem, 140.

That word **busybody** means “To bustle about uselessly, to busy oneself about trifling, needless, useless matters, used apparently of a person officiously inquisitive about others' affairs.”³

12 Such people we command and urge in the Lord Jesus Christ to settle down

That word translated **settle down** is the noun form of this same word translated **quiet** in the phrase **gentle and quiet spirit**. So this is the opposite of being an anxious, hurried, busybody.

This is a woman who is unruffled by the dangers and threats of life. Nothing rattles her. That is why Peter summarizes in verse 6 by saying **You are [Sarah's] daughters if you do what is right and do not give way to fear**. That word for **fear** is a rare word referring to agitation and inner turmoil. She does not get worked up.

The popular term for that right now in our culture is the word *drama*. If someone calls you a drama queen – that is not a compliment. If there is a group of young women living in a dorm together, it would not be uncommon for one of them to leave and say, “I just had to get away from all the drama.” That is this word. Emotional crisis after emotional crisis. Lots of tears about temporal things, lots and lots of words, lots of anxiety.

Should a woman be emotional? Of course. God is emotional. Emotions are good. But when they get blown out of proportion, and everything is a crisis, and there is no trace of any kind of stability of inner peace – that is a woman who lacks this quiet spirit.

Does this mean it is more spiritual to have a reserved, introverted, quiet personality type than an energetic, bubbly, extroverted personality type? Very often women who have a real outgoing personality type read this verse and feel like they need to change and try to become more introverted. I do not think that is what Peter is saying. If you were an energetic, bubbly kind of woman when your husband married you, I do not think being transformed into an introvert is going to do anything to win him to the Lord. This is not talking about personality types. It just means that instead of being obnoxious, restless, disturbed, anxious, or rebellious, she is calm, poised, no excess drama, self-controlled, with inner peacefulness.

And that does not mean she is sitting around dormant or silent. The issue is not whether there is speech and activity – it is what kind of speech and activity. Instead of the chaotic, impulsive, overly-emotional speech and activity, it is speech and activity that is under control, driven by wisdom, and not just impulse. And that is not matter of personality type. Any personality type can have this gentle, poised spirit. There are women with gentle, quiet spirits who are quiet and subdued, and there are women with gentle, quiet spirits who are lively and bubbly and have a lot to say.

And there is a reason these two terms go together. When a woman lacks this inner peacefulness, she also tends to lack meekness. Women who get worked up all the time tend to also be very self-focused, easily angered, moody, and selfish. And when someone is self-focused like that, being around her means you are going to be constantly hurt and mistreated. She will probably have no idea she is even doing it, because she is so self-absorbed she is not paying attention to you at all. But you will walk away with scratches and bruises on your soul again and again when you are around her. Not an attractive kind of woman.

Now, if you have read the New Testament at all you know that gentleness is a quality that all Christians, male and female, are required to have. There is nothing particularly feminine about gentleness or meekness. Part of the majestic strength of Christ is His meekness and gentleness.

Matthew 11:29 Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls.

So there is nothing uniquely feminine about this virtue. What is feminine is the beauty that results when women have this virtue. Both men and women are to strive for the virtue, but for women it is a factor in their beauty.

³ Thayer.

Powered by Hope in God

OK, beauty tip #1 – respectful submission

Beauty tip #2 – reverent, God-fearing purity

Beauty tip #3 – gentle meekness

Last week I told you there were four beauty tips. But the more I studied this last one, the more I realized this is not really a fourth item in the list. It is really the power source that makes all the others possible. Some of you, after the last two sermons, might be thinking, “I don’t know who this woman is who is actually like this, but it isn’t me.” I agree – she would be quite the beautiful woman if she existed, but who can live like that? One thing we all know – it is not going to happen because you wrote down three great points in your sermon notes. Because the kinds of things husbands do to make this hard for wives – make it humanly impossible. You do these things and it is not reciprocated, it is not appreciated, it is taken advantage of – maybe even mocked and ridiculed. How do you have the power to just keep living this way? Peter gives the answer in verse 5.

5 this is how the holy women of the past, who put their hope in God used to make themselves beautiful

That is how they did it. All of these virtues come from hope in God.

The biblical concept of hope basically is this: Hope is when you borrow happiness from the future. Any time you feel happy right now because you are anticipating something good in the future – that feeling you have, the Bible calls hope. God designed us so that we need a certain amount of happiness in order to keep going in life. And there is not enough happiness that comes from the present. Most of the time there is not much going on right in the present to give you enough happiness. The only way to have enough happiness to keep you from dropping into depression is borrowing joy from both the future and the past. You need a continual stream of happiness flowing into your life from the past, present, and future. You get it from the past through memory, you get it in the present by experiencing God’s presence, and you get it from the future by setting your hope on something really delightful, and really certain. In order for it to make you happy right now, it has to be something you know is for sure going to happen, and it has to be something you know for sure you are going to really enjoy when it happens.

Everyone sets their hope on something. When they are down in the dumps, they start looking forward to seeing someone they really love, or to their next vacation, or to the weekend, or whatever. The holy women of old were able to have all these traits of soul-winning beauty because whenever they wanted a boost in their happiness they would look forward – not to some earthly pleasure, but to a future experience of the presence of God. They put their hope in God.

And that is what enables all these other virtues. How do you get that gentle, quiet spirit? How do you become meek, so that you are not pushy and you defer to your husband? By placing your hope in God. The reason you are tempted to be pushy is because you think joy will come by getting your own way. That is putting your hope in your own way. But when you see God as the source of your joy that frees you up to defer to others. You do not have to push for your way because your joy is not dependant on that.

How do you develop a calm, peaceful, poised spirit? By putting your hope in God. If God is your hope you have nothing to worry about, and so you can be calm even in the most threatening circumstances. Nothing frightens you because the Source of your joy is untouched by circumstances.

How can you come to the point of willing, glad submission in those times when it seems like your husband is going in a direction that is going to be a train wreck? But putting your hope in God. When your hope is in God, there is no fear.

No Fear

Look at verse 6 – Peter says you are Sarah’s daughters (meaning you will be beautiful like her), if you do not give way to fear. Literally, you do not fear any terror or frightening thing. Nothing scares you. Women who put their hope in their marriage are easily frightened, because as soon as their marriage is threatened, their joy source is at risk. Women who put their hope in being physically attractive are afraid of the future because that mirror keeps reminding them of the signs of aging. Women who put their hope in maintaining control of everything will be scared to death whenever they are not in control. Women who put their hope in money, a nice house – anything in this world, they will be frightened when that hope is threatened, which will make them live with a priority of protecting that hope. And that is a life of ugly selfishness, inner turmoil, and lots of drama. In other words, her life will be impure because she fears something other than God.

Submitting to a sinful, fallible, fallen man is a very scary thing to do. It takes tremendous courage, and the only way to get that much courage is to put your hope in God so that nothing your husband could ever do could threaten the source of your joy.

Then you will be like that amazing woman in Proverbs 31, who laughs at the future.

Proverbs 31:25 She is clothed with strength and dignity; she can laugh at the days to come.

It is a very attractive thing to see that kind of strength in a woman. It is an unattractive thing for a wife to be constantly flustered and anxious and worried and fretting over everything. People have a lot of different tastes and preferences in what kind of woman they are attracted to. But no one is attracted to complainers and worriers. And for sure no one is going to be attracted to God by that kind of women. Why entrust my life to a god who is so unreliable that his followers have to constantly worry and fret?

Spiritual Extravagance

But the woman who fears nothing but God’s displeasure, and whose joy comes from anticipating future experiences of God’s presence – that woman will have such a stately, poised, dignified elegance about her that even the Creator Himself will see her as beautiful. That statement at the end of verse 4 is one of those statements in God’s Word that you would never believe is in the Bible if you did not see it with your own eyes.

4 ...the unfading beauty of a gentle and quiet spirit which is of great worth (precious) in God's sight.

It makes you beautiful *to God!* Earlier in 1 Peter when you see the word “precious,” it is a Greek word that emphasizes intrinsic value as opposed to market value. And that is what I expected when I looked up this word translated **great worth** (your Bible might say **precious**). I found just the opposite. This is the word that emphasizes *market* value – something that is worth a lot of cash. It is a term that speaks of lavish, extravagant, ostentatious, over-the-top adornment. In fact, on the outside of your body this kind of dress is forbidden in the church.

1 Timothy 2:9 I also want women to dress modestly, with decency and propriety, not with braided hair or gold or pearls or expensive clothes.

That word translated **expensive** is this same word. Probably the best translation of that word is the term *extravagant*. In the church, it is a sin for a woman to wear extravagant clothes, because it draws attention to her rather than to the Lord.

How expensive does a dress have to be for it to be considered extravagant or lavish? I don’t know. Cindy McCain wore an outfit to the Republican National Convention once that was worth \$300,000. I am thinking that would qualify as extravagant. Extravagant is when your clothes or jewelry is so expensive that it shows off how wealthy you are.

So think about what Peter is saying. When God looks at a woman with a sweet, selfless, meek, submissive, gentle, calm spirit, what God sees is a woman decked out in the most extravagant, gorgeous clothes. It is over the top in God's eyes. When you have this kind of inner character, to God it looks like you are wearing a million dollar diamond necklace and the world's most beautiful designer gown. How is that for a reason to strive for beauty? If you cannot bring yourself to strive for beauty for your husband, how about doing it for God's enjoyment?

Benediction: Romans 15:13 May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace as you trust in him, so that you may overflow with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit.

1:25 Questions

1. Which of the following virtues needs the most work in your life: purity that comes from fear of God alone, selfless gentleness, or calm, poised peacefulness?
2. In what way could increasing your hope in God help you make progress in that area?
3. Wives, if you asked your husband, "What could I do to be more strengthening to you?" what do you think he would say. (If you don't know for sure, ask him!)
4. Husbands, if you asked your wife, "What could I do to be a better spiritual leader for you, what do you think she would say?" (If you don't know, ask!)