

# FIRST PETER CHAPTER THREE

## Instructions to Wives (vv.1-6)

### Submission to a Negative Spouse (v.1)

**VERSE 1** **In the same way** (Ὁμοίως [*adv., likewise*]), **you wives** ([αἱ] γυναῖκες [*voc.f.p., gune, woman, wife*]), **be submissive to your own husbands** (ὑποτασσόμεναι [*pres.pass.pt. {imper.} ὑποτάσσω, hupotasso, obey, submit to*] τοῖς ἰδίοις [*adj.dat.m.p., idios, one's own*] ἀνδράσιν [*dat.m.p., aner, husband*]) **so that even if any of them are disobedient to the word** (ἵνα [*conj./result*] καὶ εἴ [*conj./ascensive + part./conditional*] τινες [*pro./indef., "any"*] ἀπειθοῦσιν [*pres.act.ind.3.p., ἀπειθέω, apeitheo, disobey; with the particle is a first class clause*] τῷ λόγῳ [*def.art.w/dat.m.s., logos*]), **they may be won** (κερδηθήσονται [*fut.pass.ind.3.p., κερδαίνω, kerdaino, win over, gain, make a profit*]) **without a word** (ἄνευ λόγου [*prep.w/gen.m.s., logos; prep., occurs 3X: Mt.10:29; 1Pet.4:9; it means "apart from"*]) **by the behavior of their wives** (διὰ τῆς ἀναστροφῆς [*prep.w/def.art.w/gen.f.s., anastrophe, behavior; cp. 1:15,18; 2:12; 3:2,16; 2Pet.2:7; 3:11*] τῶν γυναικῶν [*def.art.w/gen.f.p., gune*]),

### ANALYSIS: VERSE 1

1. This section (vv.1-7) concludes the establishment code that began in 2:13.
2. It focuses on wives and husbands (cf. Col.3:18,19; Eph.5:22,23; 1Tim.2:9-15; Ti.2:3-5).
3. It is the only section of the code that includes the mutual obligations of both parties.
4. The unevenness of the six verses devoted to wives, and only one verse to husbands, indicates Peter's interest in the potentially oppressed partner in the relationship.
5. The discussion accents believing wives married to unbelieving husbands (v.1b).
6. The instructions to wives, like the preceding advice to domestic slaves, can be divided into three parts:
  - a. An exhortation to "defer", or "be subject" to, the one in authority (vv.1,2; cp. 2:18).
  - b. A statement of what is pleasing to God (vv.3,4; cp. 2:19,20).
  - c. A specific precedent for the kind of attitude that rises to the divine standard (vv.5,6; cp. 2:21-25).
7. Peter's presentation fits the Asian situation in which a significant percentage of the Christian women had unbelieving husbands.
8. As with slaves, the author's attitude is conservative, and he gives no hint that he regards the relative status of husbands and wives as radically altered by Christianity.
9. The opening words are not intended to draw a carbon copy of the submissiveness due from wives with that expected from slaves.

10. Rather, as in v.7, the Greek adverb “In the same way”, or “Likewise”, looks back to 2:13, suggesting that the principle of the subordination of the wife to her husband is not a matter of human convention but the order which the Creator has established (cf. 1Cor.11:3; cp. Gen.3:16).
11. This order explains why women are not authorized to teach men within the local church (1Tim.2:12,13).
12. The use of the participle “be submissive” as an imperative follows the precedent of 2:18 (and the participles in vv.6b,7,9).
13. The adjective “your own” is used because the nouns “wives” and “husbands” can mean either “women” and “men” or “wives” and “husbands”.
14. So the adjective (cp. v.5b; Eph.5:22; Ti.2:5) signifies that the “wives” and “husbands” are in view here.
15. A particular motive for submissiveness that Peter draws wives’ attention to is that it will help to commend the faith to pagan husbands.
16. In these congregations there were evidently frequent cases of men who were “disobedient to the word.”
17. “The word” (*to logos*) refers to the gospel (cf. 2:8).
18. This section applies equally to husbands who are believers but who are negative to BD.
19. The first class conditional clause represented by the words “even if any are disobedient” indicates the fact that there were frequent situations where the wife was a convert and the husband remained in unbelief.
20. The situation in which positive believing wives are married to negative husbands is quite common.
21. So Peter proceeds to give guidance in how the positive woman is to conduct herself in the presence of a negative, if not antagonistic, husband.
22. The social background of Peter’s day expected a wife to accept the customs and religious practices of her husband.
23. So in society’s eyes these women were already highly insubordinate by virtue of their Christian commitment, and Peter is concerned that they not aggravate the problem by abrasive behavior towards their husbands.
24. Peter’s instruction to wives that they “be in subjection to” their husbands is designed to blunt the slander that the Christian faith encouraged insubordination.
25. Clearly, the Christian faith teaches that commitment to God takes precedence over spouse, family, job, and country.
26. The words “they may be won” refers to their potential conversion.
27. This verb, translated as a subjunctive, is actually a fut.pass.ind. of κερδαίνω (*kerdaino*).
28. It is used of making a profit/gain (cf. Mt.16:26; 25:16; Jam.4:13).
29. It is used elsewhere as a missionary term equivalent to “save” (1Cor.9:19-22).
30. Here, as in 2:12, the prospect is that via the witness of the life under duress, some may “be won”.
31. The specific tack that wives are to take with respect to their husbands is seen in the phrase “without a word” (*ἀνευ λόγου*).
32. “Without a word” represents an intended play on words with “disobedient to the word” in the previous clause.
33. This does not mean that a wife cannot present doctrine to her husband when he inquires about her beliefs.

34. The witness of the life, rather than the witness of the lips, is the method of evangelization that wives are to implement.
35. The notion of testimony by conduct is common enough in the N.T. (especially prominent in First Peter).
36. Here is the only instance where words are specifically excluded.
37. Again, Peter's point is not to forbid verbal testimony by wives but to suggest that such testimony is not obligatory, and sometimes not helpful.
38. The tendency with women is to manipulate men by nagging.
39. The Biblical method for positive wives is to win over their husbands by silent "behavior" instead of taking opportunity to use every chance to point out the superiority of the faith to his bankrupt religious beliefs and practices.
40. She will have many occasions in which she will have to bite her tongue.
41. Her responsibility is to conduct herself in such a manner that her husband cannot but notice the changes BD has made in her life.
42. This strategy, far more than words, will commend the Christian religion to uncommitted husbands, considering the special nature of the divine institution (male pride resents female correction).
43. This counsel helps take a lot of pressure off the woman.
44. Silence, except when solicited, is the watchword for married women.
45. The relative absence of verbal persuasion is in harmony with the "gentle and quiet spirit" of v.4 (cp. 1Tim.2:11,12).

### Silent Witness (v.2)

**VERSE 2 as they observe** (ἐποπτεύσαντες [*aor.act.n.m.p.pt.*, ἐποπτεύω, *epopteuo*, *observe*; cp.2:12]) **your chaste and respectful behavior** (ὑμῶν [*pro.gen.p.*; "your"] ἀγνήν [*adj.acc.f.s.*, *agnen*, *pure*, *innocent*; 8X: 2Cor.7:11; 11:2; Phil.4:8; 1Tim.5:22; Ti.2:5; Jam.3:17; 1Pet.3:2; 1Jn.3:3] ἐν φόβῳ [*prep.w/loc.m.s.*, *phobos*, *fear*, *reverence*, *respect*] τὴν ἀναστροφήν [*def.art.w/acc.f.s.*, *anastrophe*, *behavior*; cp. v.1]).

### ANALYSIS: VERSE 2

1. In this verse Peter explains what he means by "the behavior of wives".
2. What kind of conduct can influence the positive volition of their husbands?
3. Peter's explanation is in the same vein as what we saw in 2:12.
4. The aorist participle of "observe" parallels the present participle of 2:12 (ἐποπτεύω, *epopteuo*, observe, scrutinize).
5. The object of the verb in 2:12 is "good deeds".
6. Here the action of the verb is viewed as having occurred with the result of husbands becoming converts.
7. The wife, over an indefinite period of time, conducts herself in such a manner as to favorably influence her husband to embrace the truth.
8. A proposed translation is: "once they have noticed".

9. Here and in 2:12 those who were once hostile to the Christian faith are influenced by the conduct of Christians who were the objects of slander.
10. The thing that will turn husbands to doctrine is the “chaste and reverent behavior” of their wives.
11. Of course, only those individuals who are positive will be led to the truth.
12. Christ lived a perfect life before men, yet many Jews remained in unbelief.
13. The object of the verb “observe” is the accusative of the adjective ἀγνός (*agnos*, pure, innocent) with the definite article modifying “behavior” (ἀναστροφή, *anastrophe*, manner of life; cp. 1:15,18; 2:12; 3:1,2,16; 2Pet.2:7; 3:11).
14. The adjective is translated “chaste”, which limits behavior to marital fidelity.
15. It is used in a broader sense of moral purity in the N.T. (cf. 2Cor.7:11; 11:2; Phil.4:8; 1Tim.5:22; Ti.2:5 of wives; Jam.3:17; 1Jn.3:3).
16. Certainly, sexual purity would be included in this word, but other things apply as well.
17. The word “respectful” (*phobos*, fear) occurs in the Greek in a prepositional phrase sandwiched between the definite article and its object, “chaste”.
18. This prepositional phrase (“in fear” or “with fear”) qualifies “chaste” or “pure behavior”.
19. What is meant is that wives are to exhibit “Godly fear” (cf. 1:17) as the hallmark of their lives before their husbands.
20. As their husbands observe their irreproachable conduct, they will come to acknowledge the source (Christianity) which inspires it.
21. This in turn will result in some of these men becoming converts.
22. Wives who conform to the Sarah’s daughter code help their husbands to overcome their hostility and suspicion with regards to her faith.
23. Both “reverence” and “purity” are qualities clearly visible even to “disobedient” husbands.
24. A pagan married to a Christian woman can see that his wife’s conduct is acceptable even by the best Roman standards even though she cannot join him in the worship of his gods.
25. These virtues, while directed toward God, are nevertheless for her husband’s benefit.

### The Wrong Emphasis (v.3)

**VERSE 3 Your adornment** (ὧν [*pro./rel.gen.f.p.*, *hos*, *who* or “*whose*”, translated “*Your*”, *is the first word in the Greek sentence*, + κόσμος, *n.m.s.*, *kosmos*, *world*; *adornment*; *the last word in the Greek sentence*]) **must not be merely external** (ἔστω οὐχ [*pres.act.imper.3.s.*, *eimi*; “*must*”, + *neg.*, *ouk*] ἔξωθεν [*adv.*, *outside*; *outward*, *overt*; “*external*”]) -- **braiding the hair** (ἐμπλοκῆς τριχῶν [*gen.f.s.*, ἐμπλοκή, *emplotke*, *elaborate braiding*, + *gen.f.p.*, τριχῶν, *trichon*, *hair*]), **and wearing gold jewelry, or putting on dresses** (καὶ περιθέσεως [*conj.* + *gen.f.s.*, περίθεσις, *perithesis*, *wearing {of jewelry}*]; *hapax*, + χρυσίων, *gen.nt.p.*, *chrusion*, *gold*; *gold coin*; *jewelry*] ἢ ἐνδύσεως ἱματίων [*conj.*, *or*, + *gen.f.s.*, ἐνδυσις, *endusis*, *wearing*, *putting on*, + *gen.nt.p.*, ἱμάτιον, *himation*, *apparel*, *clothing*; *used of outer garments*]);

## Inner Beauty (v.4)

**VERSE 4** **but let it be the hidden person of the heart** (ἀλλ' [conj./advers., *Alla, but*, + ὁ κρυπτός, ἄνθρωπος, *def.art.w/adj.n.m.s., kruptos, hidden*, + *n.m.s., anthropos, person*] τῆς καρδίας [*def.art.w/gen.f.s., kardia, heart*]), **with the imperishable quality** (ἐν τῷ ἀφθάρτῳ [*prep.w/def.art.w/dat.m.s., ἄφθαρτος, apthartos, imperishable; cp. 1:4,23*]) **of a gentle and quiet spirit** (τοῦ πραέως καὶ ἡσυχίου πνεύματος [*def.art.w/adj.gen.nt.s., πραύς, praus, gentle*, + *conj. + adj.gen.nt.s., ἡσύχιος, hsuchios, quiet; 2X: 1Tim.2:2*]) **which is precious in the sight of God** (ὃ ἐστίν [*pro./rel.n.nt.s., hos, which*, + *pres.act.ind.3.m.s., eimi, "is"*]) πολυτελής [*adj.n.nt.s., πολυτελής, poluteles, expensive, costly, great value*] ἐνώπιον τοῦ θεοῦ [*prep., enopion, in the presence of; in the judgment/viewpoint of, w/def.art.w/gen.m.s., theos, God*]).

**ANALYSIS: VERSES 3,4**

1. In these two verses Peter insists that believing women should be more concerned about their inner beauty rather than their outward appearance.
2. Moralists in every age have spoken out against the preoccupation of superficial women with dress, make-up, coiffure, jewelry, etc. (cf. Isa.3:18-24).
3. The Neopythagorean Phintys argued that a good woman will “avoid excessive ornament, luxury, and superfluous clothes” and “not decorate herself with gold and emeralds”.
4. Rather, she will “adorn her person through modesty” (*Concerning the Temperance of a Woman*, 153.19-22).
5. Perictione, another Neopythagorean, gave instructions about “clothes, bathing, anointing, dressing the hair, and...decoration from gold and jewels. For whatever of a sumptuous nature is employed by women in eating and drinking, in garments and trinkets, renders them disposed to be guilty of every crime, and to be unjust both to their husband’s bed and to every other person” (*On the Harmony of a Woman*, 143.10-14), and concluded as well that “the beauty which is produced by prudence and not by particulars, pleases women that are well born” (143.26-28).
6. In reference to a statement that “adornment is that which adorns”, Plutarch comments: “that adorns or decorates a woman which makes her more decorous. It is not gold or precious stones or scarlet that makes her such, but whatever invests her with that something which betokens dignity, good behavior and modesty” (*Mor.* 141E; LCL 2.317-19).
7. Among the Romans, Juvenal associated extravagant dress and makeup with unfaithfulness, denouncing the woman who “encircles her neck with green emeralds and fastens huge pearls to her elongated ears; there is nothing more intolerable than a wealthy woman. Meanwhile, she ridiculously puffs out and disfigures her face with lumps of dough; she reeks of rich Poppaeian unguents which stick to the lips of her unfortunate husband. Her lover she will meet with a clean-washed skin; but when does she ever care to look so nice at home?” (*Satire* 6:457-65; LCL, 121-23).

8. Kindred sentiments (not always so colorfully expressed!) were common both in Judaism and in the Greco-Roman world.
9. The excess in hairstyles, make-up, dress, and jewelry in the first and second centuries is eloquently attested to in the literature and art of the period.
10. In v.3 we have a specialized use of the noun *kosmos*, translated “adornment”.
11. The noun is based on the verb κοσμεω, which means to “put in order/decorate/adorn”.
12. The noun’s usage here should not be confused with its common meaning of “world”.
13. Peter is not capitalizing on the use of “world”, as suggested by some, that jewelry or braided hair is “worldly”, or evil, simply by his choice of vocabulary!
14. Later Christian writers (Clement, Tertullian, Cyprian) take this passage as a wholesale ban on feminine finery, but the true object of the apostolic writers was a constructive one – to inculcate a proper sense of values.
15. There are hints in the gospels (Mt.6:17ff; Mk.14:6; Lk.15:22) that our Lord’s attitude was not legalistic or rigorist.
16. The appeal to women in the matter of adornment is symmetrically arranged.
17. The “not” (ouk) of v.3 anticipates the “but” (alla) which begins v.4.
18. The “adornment” in externals anticipates a contrast with a different kosmos of the heart (see v.5).
19. The negative side of Peter’s appeal (i.e., the present tense) is built around three similarly constructed pairs:
  - a. “Braiding (of) the hair”.
  - b. “Wearing (of) gold jewelry”.
  - c. “Putting on (of) dresses”.
20. Each pair consists of a genitive singular linked to a genitive plural, and describes certain aspects of a woman’s adornment.
21. Pairs “a” and “b” are connected by kai (and), while “b” and “c” are connected by e (or).
22. Braiding of hair and donning of jewelry can be viewed as an extravagance in a way in which simple “wearing of clothes” obviously cannot.
23. The incorporation of all three into his appeal suggests that Peter’s interest is not so much in denouncing certain modes of dress, as in making the more general point that outward adornment–of any kind–is not what counts in the sight of God.
24. Peter’s polemic against these things is vague and almost perfunctory compared to both pagan philosophers and later Christian fathers (see, e.g., Tertullian, *On the Apparel of Women*, ANF, 4:14-25).
25. His negative appeal in v.3 is important primarily as a way of accenting the positive appeal that follows in v.4.
26. There is no evidence that Peter is mounting a polemic against flamboyant dress that characterized women who participated in the Eastern cults of Artemis and Isis.
27. Scripture does not denounce attractive attire for women as long as it is modest and not excessively flamboyant.
28. In v.4 Peter directs their attention to the beauty program that matters.
29. The whole construction is manifestly clumsy, but he is plainly struggling to contrast inner character with overt appearance.
30. Where pagan writers referred to “modesty” or “prudence” or “dignity” or “good behavior”, Peter (like 1Tim.2:9,10) goes into more detail.

31. “But” (alla) introduces a contrast between the overt (o` e; xwqen) and the internal (o` krupto.j a; nqrwpoj, “the hidden person”), and between “hair,” “gold,” and “clothes” and the “heart” of a woman.
32. The contrast is between the values of human society and what God values.
33. By “hidden person of the heart”, he means the unseen you, or the “real you”.
34. Paul’s “inner man” is a synonym (2Cor.4:16).
35. While the cosmic woman concentrates on the overt and perishable, the positive Christian woman’s secret to lasting beauty is that with which she clothes “the hidden person of the heart” (the clothing of the soul is the implication of the preposition (evn), translated “with”).
36. Clothing is a frequent metaphor in Scripture for acceptable decorum in the sight of God (Ps.132:16; Isa.61:10; Rom.13:12; Gal.3:27; Eph.4:24; 6:11,13; Col.3:10,12; 1Thess.5:8; 1Pet.5:5; Rev.3:18; et.al.).
37. God is said to be clothed (Pss.93:1; 104:1).
38. Negative volition will be clothed with shame (Ps.35:26; et.al.).
39. Peter describes her clothing as “imperishable” (a; fqartoj, imperishable, immortal), a term already featured in this letter (cf. 1:4,18,23), to contrast our spiritual heritage with the things of temporal existence.
40. The overt perishes, but inner beauty lasts forever.
41. The neuter “the imperishable” is more precisely defined by the words that follow.
42. It is defined for aspiring “Sarah’s daughters” (cf. v.6) as “a gentle and quiet spirit”.
43. The “spirit” (gen.nt.sing.w/def.art.) refers to the human spirit given at salvation and the receptacle of resident BD.
44. When a believer is in fellowship, the human spirit clothes the soul, and the individual reflects what is inculcated under GAP.
45. Where there is knowledge and a willingness to apply, the human spirit projects its agenda upon the “heart (‘real you’)”.
46. The heart can draw upon two sources: the human spirit or the ISTA.
47. Peter instructs Christian wives to clothe themselves with the attire of “a gentle and quiet spirit”.
48. The construction has no verb, but an imperative is implied by the italics “let it be”.
49. The aspiring “Sarah’s daughter” is to exhibit before her husband, as well as others, these qualities that are prominent features of her inner beauty.
50. “Gentleness”, or “meekness” (prau<j), is a Christ-like quality (Mt.11:29; 21:5) and occupies a prominent place among N.T. virtues (Mt.5:5; Gal.5:23; Eph.4:2; Col.3:12; Ti.3:2, etc.).
51. The basic idea behind this adjective is “mild mannered”.
52. It was not a virtue prized among the Greeks or Romans.
53. Its opposite is someone who is abrasive or overbearing or pushy.
54. A horsey woman is not a gentle woman.
55. “Quietness” (h`su,cioj) is in contrast to the loud, contentious, boisterous female.
56. This adjective occurs here (cp. 1Tim.2:11,12) and in 1Tim.2:2 (here, of our civic demeanor; cp. 1Thess.4:11; 2Thess.3:12).
57. Proverbs depicts the out-of-control woman as someone who is loud-mouthed and disagreeable (7:11; 21:9; 27:15).
58. “Quietness” and “gentleness” are foundational to a woman’s spiritual wardrobe.
59. Apart from which she is unattractive in the sight of God.

60. External beauty, a charming personality, and an intellect do not cut it with God in the absence of these virtues.
61. “Which” (pro.n.nt.s., hos) refers to the “imperishable quality” characterized by “gentleness” and “quietness”.
62. The adjective “precious” (polutelh,j poluteles) denotes that which is expensive and of great value.
63. It is a superlative of precious, hence very precious (cp. Mk.14:3; 1Tim.2:9, “costly garments”).
64. A wife/woman who consistently exhibits this inner, hidden adornment is someone who impresses God as beautiful and worthy of divine distinction both now and forever.
65. This reminds us of 1Sam.16:6,7.
66. These verses should not be taken as a brief to neglect the beautification of the outer person.
67. There is no ban on women talking, laughing, or expressing themselves, but rather a woman should strive to avoid the excesses that are so often seen in the female of the species.

### The O.T. Precedent (v.5)

**VERSE 5 For in this way** (οὕτως γάρ [*adv., in the same manner, + conj./subord., for*]) **in former times the holy women also** (ποτε καὶ αἱ ἅγλαι γυναῖκες [*adv., pote, formerly, at one time, + conj./adjunct., also + def.art.w/adj.n.f.p., hagios + n.f.p., gune*]), **who hoped in God** (αἱ ἐλπίζουσαι εἰς θεὸν [*def.art.w/pres.act.pt.n.f.p., ἐλπίζω, elpizo, hope, trust, + prep.w/acc.m.s., theos*]), **used to adorn themselves** (ἐκόσμουσαν ἑαυτάς [*imperf.act.ind.3.p, κοσμέω, kosmeo, adorn, decorate, + pro./reflex.acc.f.p., heautou, themselves*]), **being submissive to their own husbands** (ὑποτασσόμεναι τοῖς ἰδίοις ἀνδράσιν [*pres.pass.pt.n.f.p., hupotasso, be subject, + def.art.w/adj.dat.m.p., idios, one’s own, + dat.m.p., aner, man, husband*]);

### Sarah’s Example (v.6)

**VERSE 6 just as Sarah obeyed Abraham** (ὡς Σάρρα ὑπήκουσεν τῷ Ἀβραάμ [*conj./compar. + n.m.s., Sarah, + aor.act.ind.3.s., ὑπακούω, hupakouo, obey, + def.art.w/dat.m.s., Abraham*]), **calling him lord** (καλοῦσα αὐτὸν κύριον [*pres.act.pt.n.f.s., kaleo, call, + pro.acc.m.s., autos, him, + acc.m.s., kurios, lord, master*]), **and you have become her children** (ἧς ἐγενήθητε τέκνα [*pro./rel.gen.f.s., who or whose, + aor.pass.ind.2.p., ginomai, “become”, + n.nt.p., teknon, child*]) **if you do what is right** (ἀγαθοποιοῦσαι [*pres.act.pt.n.p., ἀγαθοποιέω, agathopieo, do what is right; cp., 2:15,20; 3:17*]) **without being frightened by any fear** (καὶ μὴ φοβούμεναι μηδεμίαν πτόησιν [*conj., and; not translated, + neg., me, +*



*pres.midd. or pass.pt.n.f.p., phobeo, fear, + adj.acc.f.s., μηδέις medeis, no; “any”, + acc.f.s., πτόησις, ptoesis, terror, intimidation; hapax]).*

### ANALYSIS: VERSES 5

1. Peter appeals to O.T. support for his advice to wives (cp. the *gar* [“For”] in 4:6).
2. οὕτως (adv., *houtos*, “in this way”) refers to vv.1-4 and to the command to “be submissive” (v.1), as seen in the repetition of the verb in v.5.
3. The “gentle and quiet spirit” draws together the twin themes of wifely submission and wifely adornment, and in effect makes them one and the same by defining the latter (adornment) by the former (submission).
4. The appeal to unspecific examples “in former times” reinforces the apostolic teaching.
5. The adverb ποτέ (*pote*, then) introduces a parallel with the past (as in 3:20), not a contrast.
6. A group out of the Biblical past is introduced here by the words “the holy women who hoped in God”.
7. For similar expressions referencing a specific category, compare: “the holy prophets” (2Pet.3:2), “the holy apostles and prophets” (Eph.3:5), or “the holy angels” (Mk.8:38).
8. The “holy women” Peter appeals to are believing adjusted women of O.T. times.
9. They “hoped/trusted in God” as their positive counterparts in the present age do.
10. They lived their lives in such a manner as to insure their Ph3 vindication.
11. They walked by faith and had confidence that God would reward their Ph2 *modus operandi*.
12. They knew what God expected of them as wives from the function of GAP.
13. Those who “hoped in God” were those who placed their confidence in the Judge of all humanity.
14. These women, known to God, “also...used to adorn themselves” with the inner qualities that signify beauty in the sight of God.
15. The verb “adorn” is the imperfect active indicative of κοσμέω (*kosmeo*; compare the noun, *kosmos*, translated “adornment” in v.3).
16. This verb occurs 10X in the N.T.:
  - a. Mt.12:44 (“put in order”).
  - b. Mt.23:29 (“adorn the monuments of the righteous”).
  - c. Mt.25:7 (“trimmed their lamps”).
  - d. Lk.11:25 (“put in order”).
  - e. Lk.21:5 (“it [temple] was adorned with beautiful stones and donations”).
  - f. 1Tim.2:9 (“adorn themselves with proper clothing”).
  - g. Ti.2:10 (“adorn the doctrine of God”).
  - h. 1Pet.3:5; Rev.21:2 (“a bride adorned for her husband”).
  - i. Rev.21:19 (“city wall were adorned with every kind of precious stones”).
17. The imperfect tense in the Greek takes a *motion picture*, portraying the action as it unfolds (the aorist tense takes a *snapshot* of the action).
18. The action of the imperfect is almost always *past* (note that the imperfect only occurs in the indicative mood [1,682 times in the N.T.]).
19. The imperfect tense is linear action in past time.
20. The particular imperfect is the customary imperfect (they “used to adorn themselves”).
21. Here, the action sees all the positive believing women of previous history who adorned themselves in the common garment of submissiveness.

22. This piece of clothing is not optional, it is mandatory for all women who aspire to being beautiful in God's eyes (the cosmos is passing away).
23. This garment is described as "being submissive" (v.5) and as the "gentle and quiet spirit" (v.4).
24. The circumstantial participle "being submissive" (pres.pass.pt.n.f.p., *hupotasso*) is also used as an imperatival participle (also a pres.pass.) in v.1.
25. In vv.4,5 Peter defines the "adornment" of "holy women" that gains approbation in the sight of God – not hair styling, jewelry, clothes, and the like, but quiet deference to their husbands.
26. Fashion is a metaphor for conduct and resultant inner beauty that brings honor, glory, and praise to a "Sarah's daughter" that transcends the perishable.

### Sarah's Example (v.6)

**VERSE 6 just as Sarah obeyed Abraham** (ὡς Σάρρα [*conj./compar. + pr.n.*] ὑπήκουσεν [*aor.act.ind.3.p.s.*, ὑπακούω, *hupakouo*, *obey*] Ἀβραάμ [*pr.n.*]), **calling him lord** (καλοῦσα [*pres.act.pt.n.f.s.*, *kaleo*, *call*] αὐτὸν [*pro.acc.m.s.*, *autos*, *him*] κύριον [*acc.m.s.*, *kurios*, *lord*]), **and you have become her children** (ἧς [*pro./rel.gen.f.s.*, *hos*, "whose"] τέκνα [*n.nt.p.*, *teknon*, *child*; here, "daughters"]) ἐγενήθητε [*aor.pass.ind.dep.2.p.p.*, *ginomai*, *become*; literally, "whose daughters you have become"]) **if you do what is right** (ἀγαθοποιοῦσαι [*pres.act.pt.n.f.p.*, ἀγαθοποιέω, *agathopoieo*, *do good/right*; 9X: Lk.6:9,33,35; 1Pet.2:15,20; 3:6,17; 1Jn.1:11]) **without being frightened by any fear** (καὶ μὴ φοβούμεναι [*conj., kai*, *and*, + *neg., me*, + *pres.mid. or pass.dep.n.p.*, φοβέομαι, *phobeomai*, *fear*, *be afraid*] μηδεμίαν πτόησιν [*adj./card.acc.f.s.*, from μηδείς, *medeis*, *nothing*; "any", + *acc.f.s.*, πτόησις, *ptoesis*, *something that causes terror*; 1X; verb, πτοέω, *ptoeo*, *be terrified, startled, occurs* 2X: Lk.21:9; 24:37]).

#### ANALYSIS: VERSE 6

1. Peter concludes this section on admonition to wives with the example of Sarah.
2. "Thus", or "as", is the comparative adverb introducing an example (i.e., "Sarah, for example...").
3. The reference is to Gen.18, specifically vv.6,12.
4. Genesis 18:6 corresponds to the words "Sarah obeyed Abraham", and v.12 corresponds to the words "calling him lord".
5. Sarah willingly did her part in preparing bread for the three unexpected guests who visited Abraham with wonderful news of the supernatural birth of Isaac (cf. vv.10,14).
6. Sarah's overt compliance with her husband's detailed directive was complimented with the inner adornment signified by her silent recognition of Abraham as "lord".
7. Peter does not mention the fact that Sarah suffered a lapse of faith when she referred to her husband as "lord".
8. Her silent acknowledgement of her husband as her "lord" was after her overt obedience when she was in a state of amused skepticism at the extravagant promise she had just heard.

9. Sarah was actually out of fellowship when she called him lord, for as Scripture says, “whatever is not from faith is sin” (Rom.14:23).
10. Sarah’s obedience complimented Abraham’s application of hospitality towards Yahweh (Gen.18:1) and the two angels (Gen.19:1) on that hot summer day.
11. She responded to her husband’s authority without hesitation because she was adorned with the garment of a quiet and gentle spirit.
12. As a positive and adjusted woman, she gained the distinction that is hers forever before God.
13. Even though she lacked the faith of her husband at this point in their history, she was “precious in the sight of God”.
14. This incident in which she was exposed for lack of faith and lying was probably the turning point from a wavering faith to a strong faith with respect to the promise of sexual prosperity in old age.
15. While Abraham was not negative or in any way hostile to his wife’s faith (unlike the husbands mentioned in vv.1,2), the principle of submissiveness applies regardless of the spiritual state of the man in the marital union.
16. All wives are to be submissive to their husbands, and all wives are to exhibit the quiet and gentle spirit of submissiveness.
17. The context for wives married to negative husbands affords an equally dramatic context to exhibit the Sarah’s daughters adornment.
18. The wives who were the immediate concern of the apostle Peter are wives who faced persecution from their husbands and who were called upon to apply in the face of extreme circumstances.
19. To be a Sarah’s daughter a positive wife must be submissive to her lord and master even when she is confronted with hostility to her faith.
20. The participle “do what is right” refers to obedience to the authority of the male under all conditions.
21. He may be reasonable or unreasonable, he may be fair or unfair, he may be sensitive or insensitive to the weaker vessel principle; no matter, the wife is to do his bidding as long as it does not put her at odds with her ultimate authority, God.
22. Furthermore, the wives are to “do what is right” apart from the sin of fear brought on by the threats and actions of their husbands.
23. They must cast their cares on the Lord, who is greater than all and who is more than capable of preserving their Ph2 interests.
24. These ladies must be willing to go through fiery testing associated with a hostile spouse and not react with STA-sponsored insubordination or panic.
25. Whatever act of reprisal the hostile spouse brings against a woman should not be a cause for alarm.
26. The noun “fear” occurs only here, and the verb occurs in Lk.21:9 and 24:37.
27. It is a strong word for that which produces extreme anxiety, as in our word “terrify”.
28. Wives in this situation are told to “let nothing frighten them”.
29. They must recognize that God will be there for them and that He will deliver them by the means He chooses.
30. This is true for all Christians under the pressure of persecution.
31. The wife’s security and safety is in God’s hands.
32. All of us who aspire to the prize must be willing to count the cost.

33. In the extreme she could lose her husband and her children, but God will reward her faith in time and Ph3.  
 34. “Doing what is right” does not include abandoning BD for the alien beliefs of her husband.

**VERSE 7 You husbands likewise** (Οἱ ἄνδρες ὁμοίως [*def.art.w/voc.m.p., aner, man, husband, + adv., homoiōs, in the same manner*]), **live with your wives in an understanding way** (συννοικοῦντες κατὰ γνώσιν [*pres.act.pt.{imper.}n.m.p., συνοικέω sunoikeo, live with, + prep.w/acc.f.s., γνώσις, gnosis, knowledge; “understanding way”*]), **as with a weaker vessel** (ὡς ἀσθενεστέρω σκεύει [*adv./compar. + adj./compar.dat.nt.s., ἀσθενής, asthenes, weak, delicate, etc., + n.nt.s, σκεῦος, skeuos, vessel, instrument; one’s body or wife*]), **since she is a woman** (τῷ γυναικείῳ [*def.art.w/adj.dat.nt.s., γυναικείος, gunaikeios, female {1X}*]); **and grant her honor** (ἀπονέμοντες [*pres.act.pt.{imper.}n.m.p., ἀπονέμω, aponemo, show; “grant” {1X}, + τιμήν, acc.f.s., time, honor*]) **as a fellow heir** (ὡς καὶ συγκληρονόμοις [*adv./compar. + conj./adjunct. + adj.dat.n.p., συγκληρονόμος, sugkleronomos, fellow heir {4X: Rom.8:17; Eph.3:6; Heb.11:9; 1Pet.3:7}*]) **of the grace of life** (χάριτος ζωῆς [*gen.f.s., charis, grace, + gen.f.s., zoe, life*]), **so that your prayers may not be hindered** (εἰς τὸ μὴ ἐγκόπτεσθαι τὰς προσευχὰς ὑμῶν [*prep./result + def.art.acc.nt.s. + neg. + pres.pass.infin., ἐγκόπτω, egkopto, hinder, detain {4X: Acts.24:4; Rom.15:22; Gal.5:7; 1Thess.2:18; 1Pet.3:7} + def.art.w/acc.f.p., προσευχή, proseuche, prayer, + pro.gen.p., su, you*]).

### Admonition to Believing Husbands (v. 7)

#### ANALYSIS: VERSE 7

1. “You husbands” is a reference to believers within the churches who, like the believing wives, were “likewise” responsible before God to apply Biblical principles to their marriages.
2. “Likewise” has the meaning here of “in turn” or “for your part”, indicating that the relationship is reciprocal.
3. The two imperatival participles, “live with” and “grant”, bind husbands to the directive will of God.
4. Husbands have a higher duty than just to bring home a paycheck and issue directives.
5. The command “to live with *your wives* in an understanding way” is not simply that they maintain a sexual relationship with their wives.
6. The noun “live with” is much like the English term “cohabit”.
7. However, the central aspect of the imperative is seen in the adverbial phrase κατὰ γνώσιν (*kata gnōsin*) which translated is, literally, “according to knowledge”.
8. Peter is telling husbands in the Royal Family not simply to maintain a sexual relationship with their wives, but to do so with knowledge or understanding.
9. The statement implies that living with a woman is not a mere physical function but something a man must *know how to do*.

10. Such “knowledge” is specifically that application of doctrinal principles toward “the weaker vessel”.
11. The generalizing tone of the first half of the verse gives way to a specific command with respect to the kind of knowledge a husband must implement if he hopes to have a happy and stable marriage (one that God is free to bless).
12. The imperatival phrase “giving honor to the wife” is preceded in the Greek with the words “as with a weaker vessel”.
13. The phrase “grant honor to the wife” is literally, according to the Greek word order, “to the female displaying honor”.
14. This second imperative quantifies the first imperative, “live according to knowledge”.
15. Only when a husband understands what his love obligations fully mean can he attain to the equivalent of what a believing wife is called to in the preceding section.
16. A husband who is derelict in the understanding and application of his duty code towards his wife is in jeopardy, as is the wife who is contentious and insubordinate!
17. The fact that women are weaker than men is behind Peter’s designation “weaker vessel”.
18. “Weaker” is a comparative adjective describing the woman’s physical condition as compared to that of the man (“the weaker sex”).
19. The designation is not intellectual, moral, or spiritual, but purely physical.
20. “Vessel” (*skeuos*) is used of a material object, often of a piece of pottery, and metaphorically of the human body (Rom.9:21-23; 1Thess.4:4; 2Cor.4:7; 2Tim.2:20,21; Rev.2:27).
21. The notion that women are “weaker” than men was commonplace in the ancient world (e.g., Plato, *Republic* 5.455D, ἐπι πασι δε ασθενεστερον γυνη ανδρος, “yet for all a woman is weaker than a man”).
22. This reality has not been proven invalid for all the modern propaganda.
23. This fact has influenced many men to depreciate the woman.
24. This is evident by the way women are treated in many cultures.
25. Peter uses the designation not to foster abuse but “respect/honor” (τιμή).
26. The next phrase in the Greek is “to the female grant honor”.
27. The hapax “woman” emphasizes her gender and is virtually equivalent to “the female sex”.
28. The imperatival participle (second in this verse) “grant” (ἀπονέμω) also occurs 1X in the N.T.
29. It is an Attic Greek verb meaning to assign or portion out.
30. This imperative quantifies the preceding participial imperative “live with *your wives* according to knowledge”.
31. To “grant her honor” is to fulfill her needs as a responder.
32. One of the most fundamental needs of a woman is affection.
33. It is important that the man show his wife affection.
34. It is something she cannot live without and feel secure and important.
35. Men need to understand how much women need the overt affirmations of affection.
36. Affection symbolizes security, protection, and approval.
37. From a woman’s point of view, affection is the essential cement of her relationship with her husband.
38. Acts of affection (hugs, holding hands, phone calls, flowers, invitations to dinner, etc.) send the message that, “I’ll care for you and protect you. You are important to me. I’m concerned about your problems. I think you do a great job, and I’m proud of you”.
39. It is essential to this command that the man let his wife know in various ways that what she contributes to the relationship is highly valued to him (this should be done regularly).

40. In addressing wives, Peter's attention is on those married to unbelievers; while in addressing husbands, his attention is centered on those married to believers, as the next phrase shows.
41. Peter now supplies an additional reason for showing honor when the wife is a positive believer.
42. The "and as" (ὡς καὶ) is ascensive, as in "even as".
43. The adjective "fellow heir" is actually a plural.
44. The Christian husband and wife are "fellow heirs of the grace of life".
45. Phase 2 blessing is in view in the phrase "the grace of life".
46. Together they share in God's blessings, as they are a believing, positive unit.
47. They are not two, but one; therefore, they should live in harmony, love, and mutual respect, acclimating to their separate roles within the institution of marriage.
48. Christian marriages (where the union is not spiritually divided) have a distinct advantage over other marriages where God and His Word are honored.
49. Marital discord and dysfunction undermine the blessings of "the grace of life".
50. Hence, the significance of Peter's final observation.
51. When the husband fulfills his part (as specified in v.7) and the wife responds with love and obedience, his prayers will be that much more efficacious to an all-seeing God.
52. "Your prayers" refers to the prayers of the "husbands", to whom this verse is addressed (rather than the prayers of husbands and wives).
53. Obviously God will answer the prayers of an adjusted husband in the absence of an adjusted wife and vice versa.
54. When the essentials of vv.1-7 are missing, their common prayers will be "hindered".
55. The infinitive "may not be hindered" (pres.pass.infin., ἐγκόπτω, *egkopto*) represents a negative result clause (the husband's lack of sensitivity to the needs of his wife results in his prayers not getting past the ceiling).
56. The translation would be: "in order that your prayers not be hindered".
57. If a husband neglects his wife emotionally, using her only to gratify his sexual and physical needs, then his prayer petitions, which may be otherwise valid, will be put on hold.