

Freedom to Submit and Sacrifice

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- [0 : 00] The word of the Lord. Thanks be to God. So the last several decades in particular have seen a great surge in what we call feminism.
- And a professor at Dartmouth College of Philosophy and Women's Gender Studies, Amy Allen, summarizes how it's developed. And she talks about how there were several waves.
- And in the second wave of feminism, she says there was a tension, two camps in tension. And first camp sought to emphasize the supposedly masculine traits in women, to emphasize reason versus emotion and initiative versus passivity, to make it so that women can function just like men in society.
- And the second camp, during that second wave of feminism, in contrast, tried to emphasize the feminine values, they would say, or the feminine priorities, and tried to get the wider society to actually embrace those values in societies as opposed to relegating to secondary roles.
- And it seems that where we are now in the third wave of feminism, that the first camp kind of won out. And even though feminism has accomplished a lot, and the laudable efforts to secure gender equality and inclusion have unfortunately had the collateral damage of minimizing gender distinction.
- [1 : 25] And yet, notwithstanding this drift of our culture, scripture consistently makes gender distinction the main point of marital relationships.
- And it's easy for us, with maybe modern feminist sensibilities, to balk at the biblical teaching. Because it's not familiar to us, it seems foreign to us.
- But we have to remember that if God affirms gender distinction, it's because there's rich blessings in it, and He wants us to live in it. And it's something that He intends for us to grasp of Himself in it.
- And that's exactly what's happening, I think, in Genesis 1, 27, when it says that God created man in His own image. In the image of God, He created him. Male and female, He created them.
- So both male and female are created in the image of God. And for that reason, we see a fuller vision of the image of God when in the intergenderedness, rather than monogenderedness.
- [2 : 25] Which is exactly why marriage is intended to be intergendered, not monogendered. And so I think this passage teaches us that the wives are to submit to their own husbands, and husbands are to honor their own wives for the Lord's sake.
- So we've been going through the various relationships in society. We've talked about how we're supposed to be subject to human institutions, and then as all people, all believers, and then also how workers or slaves were supposed to be subject to their employers or masters.

And now here we're in a place where we're talking about how wives are to be subject to their husbands, and the husbands are to honor their wives. So let's talk about what does it mean for the wife to submit. So Peter had previously instructed slaves to submit to their masters with all respect, or in all fear of the Lord.

That's chapter 2, verse 18. And then now he begins his instructions to Christian wives with the same qualification. And we know that because he starts with likewise. Likewise, wives, be subject to your own husbands.

And the word likewise grounds this command in the rationale that he gave earlier, namely that Christians ought to be subject to these authorities or human institutions, not by virtue of their own merit, or because they deserve it or are worthy of that, but because we are submitting out of our respect for the Lord, out of our fear of the Lord.

[3 : 49] And the command to be subject, you know, it invokes images of really kind of servile people, you know, who might not want to, who have no backbones, who don't stand for anything, and just kind of get pushed over all over the place.

But that's not the kind of being subject that the Bible is talking about. In fact, submission is a cardinal Christian virtue, as traditionally theologians, Christian theologians have talked about it. And Jesus' submission to the Father was hailed as a model for every Christian to follow, as you guys know.

And so then when the Christian wife is called to be subject to her husband, then this is not a call to be subject because the husband is intrinsically more worthy, but for God's sake, according to his will.

So it's not a sign of weakness or an inferiority, rather it's a sign of strength and of faith and of dignity in God's eyes. And because the reason for a Christian's wife's submission to her husband is the Lord, that's the ultimate grounding of this command, not the husband himself, that means that the Christian wife can never follow her husband into sin.

And when the husband tries to lead her astray and lead her into sin, then the Christian wife must react as the apostles did when they were charged not to preach in the name of Jesus.

[5 : 10] They said, we must obey God rather than men. In Acts 5, 17, 42. But her general disposition and inclination still should be to yield to the husband's leadership.

Because I think that's what it means to be subject here. Because it takes into account the fact that, you know, even the most godly and submissive wife is bound to run into situations where she just doesn't agree with the husband or just can't, you know, reconcile with what the husband is seeking to do.

And that's why it's important to recognize that submission doesn't mean blind obedience. It doesn't mean that you check your brain at the door when you got married. Right? It means that you have a disposition, you cultivate an inclination to follow his leadership and to submit.

But with the understanding that the root, the grounding for the submission is your fear of the Lord, not the fear of your husband. And this submission that Peter talks about has a very definite objective.

It has a purpose. And he talks about this in verses 1 to 2. He says, Now, the caveat without a word is added here because in this culture it was shameful for the wife to try to instruct her husband.

[6 : 41] And so he's kind of accommodating that. But the point is that this is evangelistic. It's a form of suffering, right, to submit in this manner, just like being subject to even unjust authorities is a form of suffering.

It just says a slave being subject to their masters is a form of suffering. In the same way a wife submitting to her husband is a form of suffering. It's because he says not just to good husbands, not just to only Christian husbands, but he says even to those who do not obey the word.

And so that's why it could be a form of suffering and just being submissive in this way. And the whole point is evangelistic. The whole thrust of it comes from chapter 2, verse 12, where he said, Keep your conduct among Gentiles honorable so that when they speak against you as evildoers, they may see your good deeds and glorify God on the day of visitation.

The command then is to keep your conduct respectful, honorable, and pure so that the Christian wife then can win over her husband into the faith.

And this was a particular concern for Peter, especially in this age, because he knew that for the Christian wife to become Christian and to hold on to her Christian faith would have caused tension within the marriage and within the family, especially if the husband was not a believer.

[8 : 04] In fact, a Greek historian and essayist, Plutarch, writes about this in his book, Advice. He says, A wife ought not to make friends of her own, but to enjoy her husband's friends in common with him.

The gods are the first and most important friends. Wherefore, it is becoming for a wife to worship and to know only the gods that her husband believes in, and to shut the front door tight upon all queer rituals and outlandish superstitions.

So the wife in Greco-Roman culture was expected to subscribe to the religion of her husband. And she was not allowed even to have friends of her own. And this is important because the Romans believed that serving the gods, appeasing the gods, was the basis for societal well-being.

And so to have this kind of disturbance within the family or this kind of disturbance would mean a societal disorder as well. So they were very concerned about the domestic household code and they wanted to ensure that every wife worshipped the god of their husbands.

And this is helpful for us to see this context because it shows us how different Peter's perspective is from this because there's several really important ways in which he deviates from the culture that he's in and the way they teach about the way the men are supposed to relate to women.

[9 : 26] And the first is like we talked about last week, the slaves were never addressed directly. And in the same way Aristotle taught that women, the wives are never to be addressed directly, rather only through their husband.

That's what Aristotle taught. But here Peter directly addresses the wives and speaks to them, recognizing that they have their moral agents who are able to act on their own.

And secondly, the teaching assumes here that a wife can be instructed by someone other than her own husband because here the apostle of Jesus Christ is instructing or the word of God here instructs the Christian wives.

So that's again adds another authority and another wrinkle to the relationship. And even though then Peter is teaching the Christian wife to submit to her husband as society expects her to, it is obvious that the Christian wife does so no longer in accordance with the principles of Greek moral philosophy but now in accordance with the commands of God according to the pattern and authority of the crucified Jesus Christ.

And this teaching then, in this case, would have been tremendously liberating for women in this age. It was not considered oppressive. In fact, you see this even in the example of Sarah if you look at verses 5 to 6.

[10 : 42] It says, 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.

It's interesting here. It says, Sarah obeyed Abraham. And you actually, if you look at the Genesis accounts, there's actually only one place where it's the word obedience is used in relation between Sarah and Abraham.

And what's interesting is here, it's not Sarah that's obeying, it's Abraham that's obeying. Because you see Genesis 16 verses 1 to 2. Behold now, the Lord has prevented me from bearing children.

This is Sarah talking to her husband. Go into my servant, and maybe that I shall obtain children by her. And right after that, at the end of this verse, it says, And Abraham listened to the voice of Sarah.

And the word listen actually is the same word for obey. So from this, we see clearly, so the fact that the wife is supposed to cultivate this disposition of submission doesn't mean that the wife is going to listen to her husband every time that only the husband gets to decide what to do, and the wife must follow and submit to everything.

[11 : 51] That was clearly not the case with Sarah. Sarah was no pushover by anybody's measure. And that's not what Peter intends for us. Rather, there is a mutual responsibility and honor, yet the general tenor of their relationship, Peter is exhorting Christian wives to have the inclination, the disposition to submit.

And that's why Sarah is praised as an exemplar here, because she did that. And this is really staggering, if you think about it, the remarkable consistency of biblical teaching across the ages.

Because Sarah is from 2000 BC, and now here in the first century, Peter is using her as the exemplar for wifely relations to her husband.

And then church throughout the centuries, in fact, every major stream of Christianity, the Protestants, Catholics, and Orthodox, have all taught this, and until the late, you know, the 20th century, we have not had serious debate about this issue.

Right? And so that's, so if you consider that, that body of history, and the way in which the scripture has consistently taught the relationship between a husband and wife, it really is staggering.

[13 : 01] There is staggering consistency, which is in stark contrast to the academicians, or the philosophers. Look at what Plato said. Look at what Aristotle said. Look at what the philosophers today say.

It's completely different. Look at what the philosophers back in the days of Sarah said. Right? The pagan writers, what they said. Completely different. But in scripture, there is remarkable consistency and unity in their witness.

And, and if this passage still seems regressive, or oppressive toward a woman, then I think we also need to ask ourselves, and entertain the idea, that perhaps we are repulsed by this idea in scripture, because in our particular culture, this text is problematic.

Right? Because even today, in certain Asian cultures, right, and Islamic cultures, the wife is fully expected to submit to her husband. And, and indeed, to people in these cultures, this passage will not seem regressive.

In fact, it will seem too progressive. Right? And so then, we have to ask ourselves, if you think about it, so if, if we're, if we're all about being multicultural, if we're all about getting, you know, valuing everybody else's opinions, and values, and where they come from, where the other cultures come from, then why do we now say, when we come to this issue, that our cultural sensibilities must trump everybody else's?

[14 : 23] Right? In fact, I think if the Bible is God's word, then I think it makes sense, that at some point, it offends our own sensibilities. And if it didn't, then we, we should be wary of the fact, that maybe we're reading it with our own lenses, and interpreting it the wrong way.

If God's word never offends us, and never contradicts or challenges our sensibilities. As the English writer, G.K. Chesterton puts it, fallacies do not cease to be fallacies, because they, because they become fashion.

The times have changed, and that's why the word of God may seem strange or foreign to us, but, but God's word has not changed. And then, it, something interesting happens in verses 3 to 4, it says, 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.

Now, why is this included here in the teaching about wife's relationship with her husband, about wife's meeting to her husband? And the reason it's included here is because the external adornments in Greco-Roman culture, outward adornments and jewelry and all this stuff, were perceived as instruments of seduction.

And for that reason, in light of the setting that we're in, and Peter's exhorting Christian wives to be faithful to their husbands, to submit to their husbands, when Christian wives leave the home to gather with the church to worship, the fact that she does not adorn herself externally, but that she goes in simple clothing, is a clear signal that she is going to attend worship, not a tryst, and not a rendezvous with a secret lover.

[16 : 08] It's another way in which the wife submits her husband and supports her husband, and by adorning herself with simplicity and simple beauty of the inner life. And this is, historians can actually, like he talks about the braiding of hair and such, and historians can actually track what age that people were in, depending on the hairstyle of the woman that was depicted, because it became increasingly more complicated.

There were more and more adornments in the hair as the Roman Empire progressed. And in fact, during this time, around the time in Peter's writing, there were empresses, for example, like Messalina, the empress, the wife of Roman Emperor Claudius, as well as Poppeia, the empress and wife of Emperor Nero.

They were all, they had these ornate hairs, and they were known throughout the empire for their promiscuity. And actually, they had, throughout the Asian nations, the Roman Empire placed statues of empresses as well, with these ornate hairs and such.

And so, if you consider that background, then it's not unlike Peter telling modern day people, you know, don't look at, you know, the celebrities, the female celebrities in your lives, and then determine from that what beauty is, and how you should look, and how you should dress, and how you should wear your hair.

But rather, no, look to a biblical example. Look to a godly woman. Look to someone like Sarah. That's what Peter is doing here. He's pointing us back to the biblical example. And what would that mean?

[17 : 46] And I think it doesn't go into, it's hard to translate the specifics here, but I think the general principles are helpful for us, as if you're a woman, and thinking about how you're supposed to dress, to strive for simplicity and modesty.

Because the whole point of clothing, right, when God first clothes Adam and Eve after their sin, it was a result of their sin, right?

And after their sin, they recognized that they were naked, and they were ashamed, right? The biblical account tells us in Genesis 3. Really, the point of clothing, if you look at it in a biblical sense, is to remind us of the glory we lost.

Now we must cover ourselves, because we have lost our innocence, which is a shame, right? And to flaunt our nakedness, really is a blatant rebellion against that.

And so then the clothes are not, it's supposed to point to what's hidden. It shows that, it points to what we lost, it points to what is hidden, the glory. So it's, the clothes are not meant to be, bring attention to themselves.

[18 : 49] What we do to ourselves, our body, they're not supposed to bring attention to themselves. Rather, they're supposed to, to point to what is hidden. It's the fact that, no, they're not, these are not for people's, entertainment for the feasting of men's eyes.

Rather, no, the Christian wives are to dress with, with modesty, and with simplicity. And that's what he is, what's intended here in the words, the gentle, and the quietness he talks about.

He says, but let your adorning, in verse 4, 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.

And the gentleness here is, is, is kind of a friendliness, that's contrasted with bad temper, or brusqueness. And being quiet here speaks of being calm, and peaceful, as opposed to restless, or rebellious, and insubordinate.

Right? So then these again, apply to that context, in which, if the Christian wife, had an unbelieving husband, and using her Christian freedom, she started to be insubordinate, or to, to reject her husband's authority, back in the home, this would have caused great, this would have caused great embarrassment, not only for the church, but it would have also hurt their witness, in this culture.

[20 : 06] So this is, that's what Peter is referring to, here. And there's one particular example, that comes to mind, as I think about this. And if you read, Augustine's Confessions, he talks at length, about his mother, Monica.

And, and she was a devout believer, but she often had a rocky relationship, with her son. Not because, they had a bad relationship, but because Augustine, was not a believer, at the time.

And, and, and Augustine says, to God, to God, about his mother. He says, my mother, your faithful servant, wept for me before you, more than mothers weep, when lamenting their dead children.

Right. He says, that Monica wept for him, for his salvation, more than when mothers weep, when their children die, physically. Right. And, and, and, and at one point, Monica is talking to, the bishop, at the time, Bishop Ambrose, about, the plight, about her son, Augustine.

What do we do? What do I do? And she's pleading, and she's crying with him. And Ambrose is exasperated. She's trying to get away. He's trying to get away, and he can't get away from her. And so he tells her this, it cannot be, that the son of these tears, should perish.

[21 : 19] Saying that when, when, when he, she pleaded so earnestly, with the Lord, for the salvation of her son, and for her, her husband as well, Patroclus, who was not, Christian either.

She was praying in tears, for the salvation of people. And he said, it cannot be, that the son of these tears, should perish. And, and later, it turns out that, that eventually, both her wife, and her son, become believers.

And, and, and the son, and goes on to become, perhaps the greatest, Christian theologian, in the history of the world. I mean, apart from the apostles. And, and, and this is what he writes, in summary, in his book, in the Confessions, of how her efforts, won her husband.

It says, the virtues, with which you, had adorned her, and for which he respected, loved, and admired her, were like so many voices, constantly speaking to him, of you.

Augustine says, that her dutiful attentions, and her constant patience, and gentleness, finally broke through, the defenses, you know, of, of, of, the husband. And, this is a powerful testimony, and really, it models exactly what 1 Peter, is talking about, in chapter 3.

[22 : 38] And, and that's, and that's the purpose of it, right? So, we, it, it is, it is humbling to be in that position, to be able to, to have to submit, right? But, for the sake of the, for the salvation of that man, of that husband, for the sake of the witness, in this world, for our credible witness, can we give, can we sacrifice, can we humble ourselves, as Christ did himself, for us?

That's, the call, that he gives here. And, and they don't, are not to submit in fear, right? Because, rather in hope in Christ, in hope in God, right? It says, verse 5, for this is how the holy women, who hoped in God, used to adorn themselves, by submitting to their own husbands.

Holy women, submitted to their, submitted to their own husbands, because they hoped in God. Their hope, was not in their husbands, like for a single woman, their hope is not in getting married, right?

Their hope is in God. And because their hope is in God, they are able to submit, even to unbelieving husbands here, like in this passage, and not fear anything, that is frightening.

Because when you are, are completely disposed, and entrusted to, the sovereign God, and know that, that sovereign God, loves you perfectly, and would want nothing, evil, for you.

[23 : 59] And, and it's that God, that calls you into this place of submission. Then you know, that you can bear, you don't have to fear anything, that he would provide strength, to bear it.

And, you might wonder, okay, why, why does Peter address, the why for six verses, and address husband for one verse, and why, why is there such an attention, for what women should do, and isn't this, again, a sign of oppression, and, and, and regressiveness, in scripture.

And, and, and I don't think that's what's going on here, and, and the reason is, because, all throughout first Peter so far, he's only, he's addressed the part, the people that are supposed to be subject, the people that had no power, and no authority, right, he's, so he addressed, the people who are to be subject to human authorities, and institutions, he addressed the slaves, who are supposed to be subject to their employers, and masters, now he's addressing the women.

And, and the reason he does that, is because he's saying, that the pattern of Jesus, as the suffering servant, speaks to these people, who are in weaker positions, right, in compromised situations, right, and he's saying that it's the, the fact that Jesus, who did not have to suffer, suffered, in our place, that's what enables us to suffer in this way, and that's why there's an emphasis on, on the woman here in particular, in relation with the husband.

In fact, what's remarkable, I think, is that the husband is mentioned, and I think that's because, the, Peter is keenly aware, for the need for accountability, especially when the wife is called to submission, even to unbelieving husbands, because then the quickly, we can go to the question of, well, then what if the husband is abusive?

[25 : 33] What if the husband is, is not, then you're leading a, and then how, then what, what does it mean for the wife to submit, right? So, he doesn't leave the man off the hook, right?

So, he says, men are not off the hook, and to behave however they wish, and then to insist that their wives submit to them, because if you look at it, like, it's the wives that are supposed to submit, husbands are not supposed to make them submit, right?

That is a key, that is an important difference there. The husbands are not called to make their wives submit. The wife submits voluntarily, herself, and when the focus in a marriage becomes about submission, then that's already an indicator that there's a problem, right?

And to say, no, if the husband is having conversation with his wife, saying, no, you need to submit to me, you need to do this to me, that there is already a problem there, right? Because the husband is supposed to lead, and to honor, and to care for his wife, and the wife is the one that's supposed to submit, right?

And, and it's just like in any healthy relationship, right? If, if all you can think about is how the other person is supposed to change, there's a problem, right? We have to recognize how we ought to change, how we are weak, how we are broken, how we are sinful, right?

[26 : 41] And, and, note here that it's, it begins the same transition, with the same transition, likewise, husbands, live with your wives in an understanding way. Again, husbands also, also honor, live with their wives in an understanding way, and show honor to, to their wives, with respect to God, with the, all fear of God.

And, it says, to show honor to the woman as the weaker vessel. And, what does that mean, for her to be a weaker vessel? I mean, this could, this is another thing that could come across as really offensive, to, to, with modern sensibilities.

And, and, I, I think it, it could mean a couple things, but the, I think the most, the first thing that would come to mind, for someone reading this, is, is probably physical weakness. In that, and that men are, especially in the upper body, generally speaking, 30% stronger than women.

Right. And men also have larger hearts and lungs. Right. And so, that means when, and that's because of the higher level of testosterone. Right. And, and, and when, and that, the higher level of testosterone produces more red blood cells, so that it enables, and there quickens their recovery as well.

So, what that means then is when a man and woman is running, when are running together. Right. And I've used this example before. If they're running at the same pace, then the woman is running at 70% of her capacity, while the man's probably running at about 50% of, of his capacity.

[28 : 04] Right. So, if you see a husband and wife running together, that means the wife's in better shape. Right. And, so, so that's, he could be talking about that kind of a physical difference in weakness.

Yes. There's also a difference in, I mean, there's general differences. So, for example, women have a, a, a part of the brain called the splenium, uh, is much larger in women than in men.

Um, and what that means then is that when an average man performs better on spatial tests, mathematical tests, and an average woman performs better in verbal ability and memory. Right. So, there's, uh, these, uh, these differences between, uh, men and women.

And this, and I think the physical weakness is especially in view because he's saying it's, it's, it's, it's a weaker vessel, uh, honor, show honor to the woman. But, so this makes sense.

Uh, and I think maybe partly this is in view, but I think it's a secondary thing that's in view. In fact, I think what's even more primary, uh, uh, is, is, uh, what Paul talks about in first Corinthians 12.

[29 : 01] So, if you have your Bible, if you want to turn with me to first Corinthians 12, I think there, there's a very suggestive parallel that helps us understand what it means. When Paul, Peter tells us to show honor to the, to the wife as a weaker vessel.

Cause it says in first Corinthians 12, 21 to 25, the, I cannot say to the hand, I have no need of you, nor again, the head to the feet. I have no need of you.

On the contrary, the parts of the body that seem to be weaker are indispensable. And on those parts of the body that we think less honorable, we bestow the greater honor. And our unpresentable parts are treated with greater modesty, which are more presentable parts.

Do not require, but God has so composed the body, giving greater honor to the part that lacked it, that there may be no division in the body, but that the members may have the same care for one another.

Now, I think this is an important parallel in the Bible because one, it has the same word weaker, right? And it also has the same theme of showing honor, right?

[30 : 02] And, and, and if you look at this way, it's structured in verse 22. So on the contrary, the parts of the body that seem to be weaker are indispensable. So the weaker here seems to be parallel to being thought of or considered as more dispensable.

And then verse 23, and on those parts of the body that we think less honorable, we bestow the greater honor. So again, the parallel seems to be that weaker refers to being considered perhaps less honorable, right?

And so I, I think what, and what is in view then here is, is that women, the wives have placed themselves in a position of weakness. They're equal to men and, and have not inferior to men in any way, yet they have placed themselves as wise out of fear of the Lord in submission to the husband.

They've placed themselves in a position of weakness and vulnerability. And, and because, and though they're in a position that can be considered less honorable or more dispensable, the, the, the, the fact, the truth of the matter is that, they are not more dispensable.

In fact, they are not less honorable. And that's the whole point of this body imagery is that in fact, the part that we think less of it, we're supposed to be still more honor, right? And, and when I think of weaker vessel, like if a vessel is a container, right?

[31 : 14] It's, and, and I think of, uh, what we use in, uh, in our home as vessels, as cups, for example. And, um, we generally use, if you guys have been over to our house for dinner, um, when we have a lot of people, we use plastic cups like this, uh, but, uh, generally we use, uh, corning wear.

I don't know if you guys know of that. It's, it's those kind of, uh, uh, it, they never break. And it's pretty incredible. Like Hannah, like dropped one earlier this week in the kitchen, the tile floor, and it doesn't break.

Right? And so that's why we use it because we know that it can handle the use. We know that it's not going to break. It's, it's kind of a, uh, it's, it's not as vulnerable, right? It's, it's a pretty strong vessel.

But then we also have these two mugs, uh, that we got as a gift from the Millers, uh, and, uh, that, that Lauren actually made, uh, and it's a, it's a, it's ceramic.

So we know it's brittle, right? But that's precious to us, right? Uh, we don't use that every day. And we use that on special occasions and we care, use, we use it with a special care and, and, and delicacy, right?

[32 : 17] And it's the same thing is that the wives, your wife as Christian, your Christian wife has placed himself in a position of vulnerability for the sake of serving the Lord and for, as, and to support the husband and to be, be, uh, his helper as God has called her to do.

And in doing so she's placed herself in this place of vulnerability. And that, for that reason, the husband is supposed to show even greater honor and even greater care. And to make sure that she is not, uh, uh, she's not for the sake, in the place of vulnerability, she's played abused or mistreated.

So show honor to the woman as a weaker vessel, since they are heirs with you of the grace of life, so that your prayers may not be hindered. And this is the reason that Paul gives, since they are heirs with you of the grace of life, right?

Right? In this, in the Greco-Roman culture, again, only men receive inheritance, right? But in the kingdom of God, as it says here, women, wives, they're heirs with you of the grace of life, there's no distinction in God's eyes, and what he bestows on a husband and a wife, they are equally, the grace of God extends to them all, and we're co-heirs together, of the grace that God's given to us.

And this is how much God cares about this. He says, so that your prayers may not be hindered. In fact, if you are abused that place of a story that God's placed you in, and mistreat your wife, your prayers will not, will be hindered.

[34 : 00] I will not listen to your prayers, says God. That's how important this is to the Lord. And, and I think it's, the whole difference between the genders, the distinction, that the intergenderness, that it's supposed to, uh, show the greater picture, I think the fullness of the image of God, in the sense that we have things, we have, each have strength.

Women have strength, and men have strength. And together, they can show a fuller, uh, sense of what that's supposed to look like. Um, and, and, and women, as they submit, and as they help, and, and as they support their husbands, and the men then, in that, they can't run, ruptured over the women, and over the wives that they've given them, but rather they care, they show honor.

And in doing that, there's such a beautiful picture of mutuality, and, and harmony, and unity, that we see in the Trinity itself. As 1 Corinthians 11, 3, it says, 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.

Right? And I want you to also, I forget, I forgot to mention this earlier, note, uh, the very important qualifications, when, uh, Peter tells wives to be subject.

He says, to be subject to your own husbands. Right? Um, they're not supposed to be subject to any other men. Uh, they're supposed to be subject to their own husbands. Uh, and, and, and, and here, again, it's talking about the husband and wife relationship, in 1 Corinthians 11, 3.

[35 : 30] And he says, that the head of every man is Christ, and the head of the woman is man. It's his, it's, it's her husband. And the head of Christ is God. And we teach, that, you know, God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit, are all equal in power, and dignity, and a deity, and authority.

Yet, in the Trinity, the Son submits to the Father. And that's his humility, as 1 Peter 2 talks about. In, even though he was in very nature, God did not consider equality with God, something to be grasped.

And it's in that same manner, that the wife submits to her husband. Not because she is inferior, but because that's what Christ has done. And Christ has shown in the pattern in which he lived while he was here on earth.

And I think in doing that, and living as husband and wife in this manner, we show the watching world what the Christian community looks like. And what the beauty and the harmony and the unity, and the complementary we see in the divine Godhead is like.

And so with that in mind, I'd love for us to pray. And pray especially for married couples in our church, but also for singles, as they, you know, that men and women alike, that they would have their hope in God, not in a potential spouse, or their current spouse.

[36 : 45] And that it's that hope in God, and fear of God, that would enable us to live in light of this complementarity, that Peter teaches us. So let's pray out loud together.