

MBC MEN'S STUDY

LEADERSHIP 7: MAN AND HIS HOME

CLASS 3: MAN AS A LEARNER

Before getting into the book, here is the lay out the framework for our five-month men's study class.

- **Jan. 15th:** *The Exemplary Husband* chapters 7-8
- **Feb. 12th:** *The Exemplary Husband* chapters 9-10
- **Mar. 12th:** *The Exemplary Husband* chapter 14
- **Apr 16th:** *The Exemplary Husband* chapters 16-17
- **May 21st:** *The Shepherd Leader at Home* Instructing your family

PURPOSE OF THIS 5 MONTH CLASS

- Why do we want to talk about the man and his home?
- We have talked about many theological and technical subjects over the past couple years, this is where all that knowledge and information has the chance to be lived out.
- While not everyone is called to the elder role in a church, all men are called to live for the glory of God, all husbands and fathers are called to lead, guide, feed and protect their families.
- If you are desiring the office of elder, Paul says in **1 Timothy 3:4-5** "He must be one who manages his own household well, keeping his children under control with all dignity (but if a man does not know how to manage his own household, how will he take care of the church of God?)."
- While this applies to those who are elders, there are many other exhortations throughout the Bible which speak of having an organized, peaceful, spiritual and well-ordered home (Deut 6; Pro 24:3-4; Col 3:19; 1 Tim 5:8; Eph 5:25-31).
- Over the course of this class, our hope is that you are going to grow in several key areas of bring a man of God. As you grow in these areas, you are also going to grow in being a husband, a father and a leader of the family. The overall purpose is for your life to bring honor and glory to Christ and to be an example to others.
- This class is going to examine our heart. We want to have a clear definition of what our heart is, the relationship that our heart has with our works and what influences our worship and love.

THE HUSBAND IS TO LEARN HIS WIFE

- Our first week we discussed the **love** that a husband is to have for his wife. We also talked about the idols in his heart which prevent him from having the love for Christ that he should.
- When a husband does not love Christ, he cannot love his wife as he has been commanded to do.
- This leads over into a man's **leadership** of his home. If he does not love Christ and does not love his wife, he cannot lead his home as Christ has commanded.
- **As you learn to love Christ and how to lead your home, you must be a proficient learner of your wife.**
- **Chapter 14** looks exclusively at **1 Peter 3:7** “You husbands in the same way, live with your wives in an understanding way, as with someone weaker, since she is a woman; and show her honor as a fellow heir of the grace of life, so that your prayers will not be hindered.”
- “Although we have stressed proper treatment of our wives all along the way, grasping the full meaning of ‘with understanding’ is essential in relating to our wives as we should.”¹
- **If we are to lead as Christ calls us, we must understand our wives.**

What does this verse mean?

- First of all, this verse is directed to all husbands, not just a select few. In order to lead your wife and live a life which honors and glorifies God, you must follow this exhortation from Peter.
- Secondly, as Scott does, we must consider the context in which this verse was written.
- The historical context is one that is unfamiliar to us today. In both the Greek and Jewish culture in Biblical days, women were looked at as less than human.
- The quote on page 196 exemplifies this point “We have courtesans for the sake of pleasure; we have concubines for the sake of daily cohabitation; we have wives for the purpose of having children legitimately and of having a faithful guardian for all our household affairs.”
- We must remember that this is the mindset of men who were being saved and brought into the church.
- **This exhortation from Peter is twofold...it serves to show how radically different the Christian man is to view and treat his wife and it shows the wife how radically different she is in the eyes of Christ.**
- What this means is that because of who you are and who your wife is in the sight of God, you now should be treating her as the new creation that she is known by.
- This would have been a radical change in thought to these 1st century hearers. The woman was to view herself in a new way and the husband was to do the same.
- As Scott points out, “Jewish women were treated much like slaves and were given no legal position, and divorce was rampant in the Jewish culture as well.”

¹ Stuart Scott, *The Exemplary Husband*, 195.

- Men, you cannot relate to your wife by the world’s standards, but by those standards which are laid out in the Scriptures.

Part 1: You husbands in the same way...

- We want to pick apart this verse and find out exactly what Peter wants us, as husbands, to know. Since this is *the* verse to husbands from Peter and the only one which is structured this way, we should glean from it all that we can.
- “The path of Christian living is no different for the husband than for the wife. Both are called to follow Christ in humble and compassionate love, accepting rebuffs with forgiving grace (3:8–9). Since the husband’s role is different, the form of his service is different. The wife is called to be submissive to her husband; the husband is called to honour his wife. That honour includes considerate understanding.”²
- As Scott says “The theme of 1 Peter is that of *righteous submissive living in the face of persecution or difficult circumstances*.”³
- Starting back on 2:12 “Keep your behavior excellent among the Gentiles, so that in the thing in which they slander you as evildoers, they may because of your good deeds, as they observe them, glorify God in the day of visitation.”
- It is from this verse that Peter launches into a fairly comprehensive list of how the believer is to act in a hostile society against Christianity.
- As Scott says “The motivation for all of Peter’s exhortations is clearly to bring glory to God before a watching world. Husbands are to honor God in the face of difficulty because it ‘finds favor with God’ (vv. 9-20).” (p. 197).
- There are differing thoughts as to what “in the same way” means.
- It can refer to the duty of submission, referring back chiefly to 2:13 where Peter calls all people to submit for the Lord’s sake to every human institution. He then talks about slaves being submissive to their own masters (2:18).
- Then in 3:1 he talks about wives being submissive to their own husbands, even the unsaved and harsh ones.
- He then uses the same language in 3:7, seemingly referring back to the theme of submission.
- As MacArthur states “In the same way refers again to the duty of submission. This time it is the believing husband who submits to serve his wife. Husbands obey that duty by adhering to three basic responsibilities in caring for their wives needs: consideration, chivalry, and companionship.”⁴

² Edmund P. Clowney, *The Message of 1 Peter: The Way of the Cross*, The Bible Speaks Today (Leicester, England; Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1988), 133.

³ Scott, 197.

⁴ John MacArthur, *1 Peter*, MacArthur Commentary Series, 181.

- But is Peter talking about a husband submitting to his wife, as MacArthur states? It would seem that Scott agrees with MacArthur as he says “Husbands *must* honor God in how they treat their wives, regardless of any difficult circumstances inside or outside of marriage.” (p. 197).
- “The words “in the same way” (homoiōs) do not suggest that husbands are to submit to wives, as people submit to rulers (2:13), slaves to masters (2:18), and wives to husbands (3:1). The connective is loose, indicating that a new group is addressed. The New Testament nowhere counsel’s husbands to submit to wives, and such an idea is not implied here. Instead, husbands are to (literally) “live together with them according to knowledge.”⁵
- One more explanation to consider from Rob Green “Apparently, ‘in the same way’ has its meaning even earlier in the book. At the end of chapter 2, we see that Christ is our example – in ‘entrusting himself to God.’ **You see, men, fulfilling the commitment to be a learner isn’t easy. It is hard work. The answer is to follow in the footsteps of Jesus Christ and entrust yourself to God. ...the command to live with our wives in an understanding way is often at odds with what we want.** Let’s be husbands that entrust ourselves to the plan and will of God by choosing to give our wives our time, attention, and focus.”⁶
- **All of these, I believe, have one main theme;** the husband is to submit his will to the Lord’s. As the husband submits to the Lord, he is also going to be submitting to his wife.
- His submission of his will is not based upon his wife but on the Lord. So, when Peter says *you husbands in the same way*, I believe he is saying that husbands also have an authority. They also have someone that they are to submit to as well.
- **Husbands are not the final authority**, they are not the *all sovereign ruler*, they are not where everything begins and ends. **They too have someone over them, that they must seek to please.**
- **How do husbands please the Lord?** That is what the rest of the verse details.

Part 2: ...live with your wives...

- As Scott points out, this is a present, active, participle (verbal adjective). He also says that since it is present, it is something that husbands are to be continually doing throughout their marriage.
- **I personally would take this a step further than Scott. I believe that this is a rare use of the imperative participle.⁷ This means that Peter is not connecting this participle with any main verb, but it is independent in its usage.**
- The reason I think this is important not to miss is because of the exact, inspired word that is used.
- συνουκούντες is the participle used and it means *to live with someone* and also historically it was only used for a relationship between a man and a woman.

⁵ Thomas R. Schreiner, *1, 2 Peter, Jude*, vol. 37, NAC (Nashville: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 2003), 159.

⁶ Rob Green, *Tying the Knot*, 62.

⁷ Daniel B. Wallace, *Greek Grammar Beyond the Basics*, 650-651.

- It has this **συν** prefix which means *marker of accompaniment and association with focus on association in activity*. In other words, the phrase *live with your wives* or *dwelt with your wives* **means to living with someone in intimacy, cherishing them and nourishing them.**
- As Phillips points out “Most men respond, ‘All right, I can check that one off. We live in the same house!’ But, of course, that's not Peter's point. **Rather, you are to live with your wife. The word for "live with" is the Greek word that means "commune" and gives us the noun community.** Peter is saying that husbands are to live with their wives in a single shared life.”⁸
- **This means that as a couple you are to spend time together and live with one another as one flesh.**
- The obvious advantage to what Peter is saying here is that a husband who lives with this type of interest and intimacy with his wife, is far better suited to minister to her needs.

Part 3: ...in an understanding way...

- This is literally just two words in the Greek, *κατὰ γνώσιν*, according to or with knowledge.
- **This is where we get the idea of the husband must be a learner of his wife.** How do we gain knowledge of any subject that interest us? We must go and gain knowledge, or in other words, we must learn about it.
- I think it is important to point out that husbands are not to be learners of *women* but of their own wives. Men, we are not called to figure out the female gender, but put our energy and effort into the life long pursuit of learning our own, God given wives.
- The preposition *with* or *according to* (as Scott says) tells us the “how.” How are we to live with our wives? It is in an understanding way.
- So we have the imperative, or command to live in close communion with our wives. We are to make sure that we are intimately involved in their lives.
- **Now we have the how, not just the what.**
- Once again, there are a few differing views on how this is to be taken and I think they are worth noting.
- As Scott says, “This knowledge can be anything from the knowledge of one’s wife to the knowledge of all Christians principles. The idea here is that a husband must live with his wife *in accordance with the things he should know.*” (p. 198).
- Similar to this point, Schreiner says, “I understand the phrase “according to knowledge” (*kata gnōsin*), like “in fear” (literal translation) in **3:2** and “conscious of God” in **2:19**, to refer to the relationship of husbands to God. **Husbands, then, should live together with wives informed by the knowledge of God’s will, of what he demands them to do.**”⁹

⁸ Richard Philipps, *The Masculine Mandate*, chapter 8.

⁹ Schreiner, 159–160.

- “Does Peter mean knowledge of the wife, or knowledge of God and his calling? The close connection with the description of the wife as the weaker partner favours the specific sense: **the husband must dwell with his wife as one who knows her needs, who recognizes the delicacy of her nature and feelings**. On the other hand, Peter has warned against ‘the evil desires you had when you lived in ignorance’ (1:14). **Knowledge of God distinguishes Christian love from pagan lust**. That saving knowledge enables the husband to love his wife as Christ loved the church and gave himself for it.”¹⁰
- As Philipps says, “This passage contains one of my main Bible-translation points of frustration. The original text does not say men are merely to "be understanding" or, as the NIV puts it, to live "with consideration." Peter is not merely telling husbands to put the toilet seat down (although that is not a bad idea). **The Greek text actually says that husbands must live with their wives "according to knowledge." In other words, a husband must know what is going on with his wife.**”
- **I believe that Peter is making the point that if we do not know what God desires for us as husbands, we are not going to know how we are to relate to our own wives.**
- I think Peter has in mind the same thing that Paul did in **Ephesians 5:17** “**So then do not be foolish, but understand what the will of the Lord is.**”
- This comes 4 verses before his discourse on the marriage relationship.
- **So, in both Peter and Paul, the flow of the text is actually quite simple, as you are dwelling intimately with your own wife, you should be getting to know the Lord’s will and her deepest needs.**
- That means you should know the simple things like her daily schedule. What things does she have to do throughout the day to keep the house up and running? Why does that matter? You do not want to overburden her with unrealistic tasks, so you know what she’s doing.
- It goes from the simple to the spiritual. As you are dwelling with her and learning about her, you should know the spiritual state of her heart.
- Where are areas that she needs your prayer and support. Where are areas that she is struggling with emotionally or spiritually.
- How can you be lifting her up in the ministry of prayer and the Word? You cannot know these things if you do not know your own wife.
- **In a sense, this concept of knowing your wife circles back to the previous two classes. If you have idols in your heart, you will seek to serve and love them.**
- **Your idols will demand your time and energy and your wife will most likely just get the leftovers.**
- **As a leader, if you do not know your wife, you are not going to know how to best lead her either.**

¹⁰ Clowney, 134.

- Some wives like to be motivated with goals and things they can attain. Other wives will crumble under the pressure of having goals and need to be nurtured more to keep moving forward.
- I would submit that if your marriage is at a standstill, it is precisely because you have not taken the time to learn your wife.
- As a leader, you are just moving forward without any consideration for those who are following you. That is not so much a leader as it is a dictator. **If you expect your wife to simply follow you because you are her husband, then you have neither knowledge of the Lord's commands or of your wife's own needs.**
- I like how Scott (pp. 198-99) contrasts this Biblical idea of understanding with how the world or our current culture may define it.
- While we need to be compassionate and sensitive to our wives, those are just reactions to what we think she may need. That is not gaining an understanding of our wives.
- It is from our understanding of what God desires us to do and what our wife needs that we can have compassion on her. But we show our compassion and sensitivity towards her by our actions that she needs at the time.

Part 4: ...as with someone weaker, as she is a woman...

- The verse literally reads *as a weaker vessel*.
- The word *as* is a conjunction, Peter is comparing something for our own benefit. He is comparing women in general to a man and using the illustration of a vessel.
 - On a side note, there is nothing inherently feminine about this vessel, it is also used of men throughout the NT. It is just the illustration that Peter used as his readers would have known exactly what he was talking about.
- Since this is a comparative conjunction (using like or as), he is saying that men are stronger and women are weaker. But how does this fit into the context? In other words, why did Peter say this right now?
- I think that Scott's exegesis is a little bit off here. On page 199 he says "Peter is telling us *how* we should honor our wives...like a very delicate and useful vessel."
- He connects *weaker vessel* with the phrase following it *show her honor*. Personally, I think that since we have a comparative clause (like or as) right after *in an understanding way*, it is best to take it as it flows in the passage.
- Men, we are to live with our wives in an understanding way since she is like a weaker vessel.
- "In what sense are women "weaker"? Nothing else in the New Testament suggests that women are intellectually inferior, nor is it clear that women are weaker emotionally, for in many ways the vulnerability of women in sharing their emotions and feelings demonstrates that they are more courageous and stronger than men emotionally. Nor did Peter suggest that women are weaker morally or spiritually than men. Such a

view would suggest that men are actually better Christians than women, which is not taught elsewhere in the Scriptures, nor is it evident in history.”¹¹

- MacArthur would agree, saying that Peter is not telling husband that women are intrinsically weaker in character or intellect than men. Nor does it mean that women are spiritually inferior to men.¹²
- I like what Adams says, “If you owned a piece of Waterford crystal, you wouldn’t chunk it into the sink or plunk it down on a table. How would you treat it? “With care.” Right. So you see, John, as you would respect the valuable piece of crystal, so too should you show respect for your wife. **That means you shouldn’t treat her like your galvanized garbage can, the way some men treat their wives. No, you are to be gentle and care for her as you would respect a fragile vase—Ming Dynasty!**”¹³
- **So how can we view this weaker vessel in the context here? There really is only one literal meaning to the text here. Peter has in his mind that the women generally possess less physical strength than men.**
- He is directing his attention to what is uniquely feminine about women in general. This shows that men must learn their wife, they need this knowledge in order to properly love and lead them.
- So, I would partially disagree with Scott who says that it does not have anything to do with the physical differences between a man and a woman.
 - In fact, I think that he shows his own troubles when he says “furthermore, it is not clear how the *weaker sex* meaning would tie into giving the wife honor. Wives may or may not be weaker than their husbands in some way...” (pp. 200-201)
- To be clear, I do not think that his conclusion is wrong “**...every husband needs to honor his wife by treating her as a delicate and precious possession.**” But I think that his exegesis to get to that point is not how Peter intended it to be.
- We are to dwell with our wives according to understanding as they are weaker. If we take this to mean the physical differences between men and women, the application is much more relevant.
- As a leader, you will not expect your wife to do things that she is not physically capable of doing. This means that as a man, you have designated jobs that you must do, because you are a man.
- A way to love your wife is to make sure that, as you understand her, you are keeping up the things that you are to do so that you show understanding that your wife is a weaker vessel.
- Having this understanding also prevents you from getting frustrated or angry with your wife when she cannot physically do something.

¹¹ Schreiner, 160.

¹² MacArthur, 182.

¹³ Jay E. Adams, *Hebrews, James, I & II Peter, and Jude*, The Christian Counselor’s Commentary (Cordova, TN: The Institute for Nouthetic Studies, 2020), 267.

- As you are intimately dwelling with her, learning her, you are going to learn the things that she can and cannot do. Then you are going to lead her accordingly.

Part 5: ...and show her honor as a fellow heir of grace...

- As Phillips points out, “The word for “showing honor” might be better rendered as “cherishing” her (the Greek word here, τιμήν, is used for assigning a high price to objects in the market). **A husband is to convey to his wife that he values her greatly, that she is precious to him.**”¹⁴
- This word *honor* means *manifestation of esteem, honor or reverence*.
- **While Peter uses this word as a noun, it is describing how husbands are to manifest their knowledge of their wives. It is to be done with honor. You are to esteem your wife as precious in your sight.**
- Honoring your wife means that you treat her with excellence, from the day you are married until the day the Lord calls one of you home.
- **How do you honor your wife practically,** “...showing honor means that our dirty laundry stays hidden in the closet. Rather than broadcast faults, irritations, or areas of immaturity to others, a godly husband will choose to handle those matters behind closed doors.”¹⁵
- His point is that you have intimate knowledge about your wife. You are getting to know her; you are seeing her strengths and weaknesses. What you do with that information will prove how much you honor her.
- **To truly honor your wife is not just hiding the negatives but it is actively sharing the positives.**
- Practically, when someone you know meets your wife for the first time, are they going to think that she is the worse person on the planet or someone who you hold in the highest esteem?
- Your words are going to be a window into your own heart about your wife.
- **Peter then grounds the husband’s mandate to show the wife honor in the fact that she is a fellow heir of the grace of life.**
- Once again, how this is defined has been up for debate throughout the years.
- As Scott states, “The *gift of life* could be marriage, life in general, or eternal life.” (p. 200).
- While I agree with Scott’s point that husbands and wives are *people* in general and that means that women should be treated with dignity. I just do not think that is what Peter had in mind here.
- Another view is, “The description of their bodies as ‘instruments’ might suggest that the gracious gift of life of which the man and wife are heirs together is not eternal life, but the gift of new life in children.”¹⁶
- In other words, it is the sexual union which produces life. Peter is talking about the truest and more intimate relationship that God created, a marriage. This would mean that Peter is not calling the life a grace but the marriage is God’s grace (MacArthur, p. 182)

¹⁴ Phillips, chapter 8.

¹⁵ Green, 61.

¹⁶ Clowney, 134.

- I think that is a harder case to make than what seems to be the most literal reading.
- Since Peter used language to show that he was starting a new section and not continuing on with the unsaved spouse theme, we should not look at this as a husband with an unsaved spouse.
- So it would not be a grace of marriage (though that is God's grace) to the unsaved nor a means of the wife being shown God's grace by procreation.
- The language of *fellow heir* means that there must be an inheritance. If there is an inheritance, then there must be something takes place in the future.
- The word συγκαληρονόμοις literally means *inheriting together with* or *co-heirs*.
- The word is used in **Hebrews 11:9** “By faith he lived as an alien in the land of promise, as in a foreign land, dwelling in tents with Isaac and Jacob, **fellow heirs of the same promise...**”
 - It is also used in **Romans 8:17** and **Ephesians 3:6**, all with the same idea of inheriting the eternal life which awaits believers.
- So, I would disagree with Scott and MacArthur about the meaning of the verse but agree that Peter is using it to show that a husband and wife are equal in God's sight.
- One of the ways this section can be read, which may make it easier to understand is, *because your wife is a Christian and will inherit eternal life, you must show her honor.*
- I really like that Peter put this in here. I think we often times forget that our believing spouses are also born again and children of God.
- **This means that we must firstly treat them as fellow believers, those for whom Christ died. Then, as husbands, we have more responsibility to our wives. We must not just treat them fellow believers, but since we are married, we must treat them as our wives.**
- There is a general sense that all believers are to show one another love, compassion, honor and so on. But not every man is to lead every woman. Not every woman is to submit to every man. The kind of love and closeness that Peter is talking about goes beyond the normal Christian relationship.
- This is the duty and responsibility of every husband.
- To learn his wife, to cherish and nourish his wife, to show honor to his wife. The reason that he does this is positively because she is a believer.
- **Negatively, if he does not do this, God cuts off communication with him.**

...so that your prayers may not be hindered.

- How do we know that this submission to the Lord and to our wives pleases the Lord? We have the purpose statement right here. **Husbands are to be this way so that the Lord will hear them.**
- The most important lifeline in your marriage is your communion with God. If that communication is off, then your entire life and marriage will suffer.

- The negative is just as true as the stated positive. If the husband is not treating his wife like this, then the Lord will not hear his prayers. The vertical relationship is going to be non-existent.
- The Lord will cut off communication with any husband who is not following the exhortations which are laid out in this verse.
- **Men, these are serious words, and the weight of this warning should not just pass through our ears.** If you are to know the Lord's commands so that you can properly love, lead and learn your wife, you must be in constant communion with God.
- If you are not living with your wife in an understanding way, then there is no way you have a close walk with the Lord. The reason? You are living in sin.
- God does not bless with his favor those who are in positions of authority and abuse those who are under them by mistreating them.”¹⁷
- I find it interesting that just 5 verses down, Peter says **verse 12 “For the eyes of the Lord are toward the righteous, and His ears attend to their prayer, but the face of the Lord is against those who do evil.”**
- Perhaps we should think that it is not just that God is not hearing the sinful husbands' prayers, but that the Lord is against him as he is doing evil.
- We should not just think of this on the vertical level but also the horizontal. The reason that your prayers are hindered to God is because of your issues with your wife.
- That means that you have two fronts now that the battle is raging. One with your wife and two with your God. If there are any kids in the mix, I am sure that it is not well with them either.
- Why is this such a strong warning? “Marriage is not a sacrament conveying divine grace, but it is the human relationship that God has designed to mirror the love of Christ for the church, and of the church for Christ.”¹⁸
- That means that as a husband, you are representing the love that Christ has for His church by the way that you treat your wife.
- Christ and the Father have perfect communion because Christ treats His church perfectly.
- You and I are not perfect. We can never treat our wives with the same perfection that Christ treats His church, but we are called to strive for that end.
- How is it that we can make sure that we are not cause of hindered prayers and an unloving attitude?
- Dwell with your wife, intimately. Not just sharing the same room or house together, but make sure that you are around her with purpose.

¹⁷Schreiner, 161.

¹⁸ Clowney, 135.

- Gain knowledge about her, the knowledge that really makes her who she is as a woman. Observe her, ask her questions and step into her world and experience it with her. (taken from Scott, pp. 202-3).
- Let her know what you think about her and how you value her and what she does.
- Be quick to die to your own desires and strive to find ways to honor her.
- Be quick to repent and equally swift to forgive. Make sure that there is nothing between you and your wife on a daily basis. Keep the air clear from all distractions.
- Most of all, love the Lord your God with all your heart, soul, mind and strength. Seek first the kingdom of God. Know what the Lord desires and then you will know how best to love your wife.