

1 Peter 3:1

by John Gill

Wives are to be in subjection to their husbands, even if they are unbelievers, and through their agreeable conversation, they may win them over to Christianity.

Scripture: Ephesians 5:22, 1 Peter 3

Topics: "Marriage", "Suffering for Righteousness"

Description

John Gill emphasizes the apostle Peter's instructions for wives to be submissive to their husbands, even if they are unbelievers, as their respectful behavior can lead to the husbands being won over to Christianity without words. He highlights the importance of inner beauty and a gentle spirit over outward adornment, using examples from godly women in the past. Gill also discusses the responsibilities of husbands to honor their wives and the call for all Christians to exhibit compassion, love, and patience, especially in the face of suffering for righteousness. The sermon encourages believers to maintain a good conscience and to find strength in Christ's example of suffering, assuring them that their faithfulness will lead to blessings. Ultimately, it underscores the transformative power of a godly life in influencing others towards faith.

Transcript

INTRODUCTION TO I PETER 3

In this chapter the apostle instructs wives how to behave towards their husbands, and husbands how to behave towards their wives; and then exhorts to various things common to all Christians, and particularly to suffer patiently for righteousness sake; to which he encourages them from the sufferings of Christ, and the benefits resulting from them, on which he enlarges to the end of the chapter. He begins with the duty of wives to their husbands, even unbelieving ones, which is subjection to them, urged from the profitable effect of it; since hereby they might be won over to the Christian religion, without the use of the word, as a means, by their conversation, which is explained of chastity and fear, 1Pe 3:1.

And he proceeds to give some advice about their apparel, that they should have a greater regard to internal ornaments; particularly meekness and quietness of spirit, which is highly esteemed of by God, rather than to outward adorning; and which he enforces by the examples of godly women in former times, who were so adorned, and were subject to their husbands, particularly Sarah, the wife of Abraham, 1Pe 3:3. And next the apostle directs husbands how to conduct towards their wives, to dwell with them, and honour them, because vessels, and weaker vessels, and also heirs of the same grace of life; and besides, to use them ill would be an hinderance of their praying together, 1Pe 3:7.

And then follow various exhortations to unity of judgment, compassion, brotherly love, pity, courteousness, and patience under the reproaches and revilings of men, which is the way to inherit a blessing they are called unto, 1Pe 3:8 and that these are incumbent on the saints, and that they shall be blessed, who are helped to regard them, is proved by some passages out of Ps 34:12, which passages are cited, 1Pe 3:10. And in order to encourage to the exercise of the above things, the apostle suggests, that they that so behaved should not be hurt by any; and if they did suffer for righteousness sake from wicked men, yet still they would be happy; nor should this deter them from making a public confession of their faith; to which should be added a good conscience and conversation, to the shame and confusion of them that spoke evil of them, and accused them, 1Pe 3:13.

And though they were distressed and injured by men, they should not be cast down, nor murmur, since it was the will of God it should be so; and since it was better to suffer for doing well than for doing ill; and especially the example of Christ should animate to patience, since he, an innocent person, suffered for the sins of unjust men, to reconcile them to God; and he is now glorified and happy, and so will his people be, 1Pe 3:17. And having made mention of his being quickened by the Spirit, the apostle takes occasion from hence of observing, that by the same Spirit Christ preached in the times of Noah to disobedient persons, whose spirits were now in hell; and he takes notice of the longsuffering of God in that dispensation towards them, and of the goodness of God in saving Noah, and his family, in the ark, which was a figure of baptism; of which some account is given what it is, and is not, and which saves by the resurrection of Christ, 1Pe 3:19 who is described by his ascension to heaven, session at the right hand of God, and dominion over angels, authorities, and powers, 1Pe 3:22.

Ver. 1. Likewise, ye wives, be in subjection to your own husbands,.... As well as subjects to princes, and servants to masters; though not with the same sort of subjection, but what is suitable to the relation they stand in to their husbands; See Gill on "Eph 5:22".

See Gill on "Col 3:18".

that if any obey not the word; any husband who is an unbeliever, has no love for the Gospel, and gives no credit to it, but despises, disbelieves, and rejects it, the word of truth, of faith, of righteousness, reconciliation, and salvation. The apostle, though he includes all wives, and exhorts them in general to subjection to their own husbands, yet has a particular regard to such as had unbelieving husbands, and who, on that account, were scrupulous of living with them, and of being in subjection to them; and therefore, as the Apostle Paul also did, he advises them to abide with them, and behave well to them, using much the same argument as he does in 1Co 7:10.

they also may without the word be won by the conversation of the wives; for though the ordinary way and means of conversion is the word, faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word; yet it may be sometimes done without it; or however by the agreeable conversation of professors, and so of religious wives, the hearts of such as were averse to Christianity, and the Gospel, as unbelieving husbands, may be so softened, and wrought upon, as to entertain a better opinion of it, and in process of time be inclined to hear and attend it; the consequence of which may prove their conversion, which is a gaming, or winning of souls; and which, as it is for their good, is for the glory of Christ; for as every soul that is delivered from the power of darkness, and is translated into the kingdom of Christ, is a loss to Satan, it is a gain to Christ, and to his church. The Syriac version, instead of "without the word", reads, "without labour"; as if the winning of unbelieving husbands was easily obtained by the conversation of their wives.

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