

1 Peter 3:7 | “Who’s This Person in My House?!”
Preached on May 16, 2021 by Pastor Matt Brown

Please turn in your Bibles to 1 Peter chapter 3, verse 7.

We are continuing in our study of the book of 1 Peter, and Peter has been giving commands to different people in their different relationships.

He talked about citizens with their governments, slaves with their masters, wives with their husbands, and now we get to husbands with their wives. *[pause]*

So women, I know that the last 2 weeks were more geared towards you, but guess what? Now it’s the guys turn.

But don’t close your ears or shut off your mind, as you need to understand your husband’s role in order to know what the God-given marriages roles are. *[pause]*

I’ve found that a lot of issues in marriage are not only because people misunderstand their own role, but also because they misunderstand the other person’s role.

So listen up, too, as we all can learn from what God’s Word teaches. *[pause]*

We are covering just one verse this morning, but it has so much in it.

It is packed with a punch, and the commands in it are extremely hard to do.

So while this verse telling husbands how to treat their wives may look simple and short, it is actually very deep and difficult to do. *[pauseeee]*

Before I get any further, let me be clear up front, I’m definitely not a perfect husband, so I’m preaching this just as much to myself as to you.

And as I studied this verse, I was convicted about what it says, as I fall short of it often.

My wife can certainly testify to that.

So don’t think that this sermon is coming from a husband who has it all together, but rather, from a sinful husband who is simply sharing what God calls us to do. *[pauseeeee]*

I’ve entitled my sermon this morning, “Who’s this person in my house?!”

Have you ever wondered that when you looked at your spouse? *[pause]*

I think this happens most often when couples first get married.

They get married and begin living together and what happens?

They start to find out things about their spouse that they never knew before.

They find out about the odd quirks and habits that their husband or wife does and they start to wonder, ‘Who is this person that I married? I never knew that!’ *[pause]*

You see what happens is that before you get married, you think you know what your future spouse is like.

But then you get married, and you start to *really* understand who they are.

You get to see them on their best days and on their worst days.

You see what they do when they are excited about an event or happy from getting that new job.

Yet you also see how they handle stress, conflict, loss, or fear. *[pauseeee]*

So you see the high’s and low’s, but you also see what they are like on an everyday basis.

You find out that they pile their semi-dirty clothes onto a chair or on the ground, and it drives you crazy.

You find out that your idea of clean is completely different from your spouse’s idea of clean.

Or you find out that they make this weird noise clearing their throat. *[pauseeee]*

Usually you think of the dating period to be the time that you are getting to know your future spouse, as you ask questions to get to know, “Who is this across from me on this date?”

But really, at every moment along the way, you are learning about your spouse, and inherently learning the answer to the question...

“Who is that across from me at the wedding altar?”

“Who is that across from me at the dinner table?”

“Who’s that across from me, taking care of our children?”

“Who’s this brushing their teeth next to me?” *[pauseeee]*

Marriage is a life-long process of getting to know your spouse.

And what we find this morning in 1 Peter 3:7 is that knowledge is key for a godly husband.

Let’s READ THE VERSE. *[pause]*

The first point that comes out of this text is that...

I. In order to be a godly husband, you need to know some things about your wife.

This is so obvious, isn’t it?

Yet how often do we as husbands fail at this very point? *[pause]*

There are some married couples who live essentially as roommates.

Their marriage certificate says they are married, they may eat out of the same fridge, and sleep in the same room, but they live totally different lives. *[pause]*

What can so easily happen is that they got to know each other super well early on in marriage, but now years into marriage, the kids are gone, and they are thinking, “Who are you?” *[pauseeee]*

But what Peter is teaching men is that this should not be the case.

Husbands need to know their wife in order to be a godly husband. *[pauseeee]*

It’s said that men always tend to want to fix things.

They want their wife to just tell them how they can fix the issue that she is talking about...

Well husbands, you’re in the right spot this morning because Peter tells you how to fix things in your marriage - *get to know your wife. [pause]*

But maybe you’re here thinking, that’s very general, can you be more specific?

Certainly I can, for our verse shows us that you need to have...

A. Knowledge about her personally.

Peter says, “Live with your wives in an understanding way.”

“In an understanding way” is literally, “according to knowledge.”

Live with her according to knowledge.

This means that you must know your wife personally in order to perform your marriage role well. *[pause]*

Do you know your wife? *[pause]*

Occasionally, you will hear someone say, “No one can understand women.”

Well guess what husbands, you are required to at least know one woman, your wife! *[pause]*

Do you know her needs? Her likes? Her hobbies and habits?

Do you know her personality?

Do you understand what annoys her and what brings her joy? *[pause]*

Take some initiative and get to know your wife more.

Sit down and spend unhurried time with her.

Ask her questions, and get into the way that she thinks and feels. *[pause]*

What are her strengths and weaknesses?

What are her desires, hobbies, dreams, goals, and her perspectives?

What is she currently struggling with? What are her current joys? What makes her happy?
[pause]

Notice things and remember them.

If you have to, write them down! *[pause]*

Something you could do regularly is ask her at the beginning of the day, “How could I help you today?”

And at the end of the day, ask, “What were your biggest joys and struggles today?”

Over time, this will help you see her needs, priorities, and feelings. *[pause]*

Your wife has spiritual, emotional, and physical needs, do you know them? *[pause]*

Every wife is different, but some things that you could know are...

Do you know things like, she just wants you to listen and care, and not try to fix things or make her feel bad for feeling the way she does?

Do you know that she just wants to be held when she’s sad and to know that you are there and love her? *[pause]*

Some husbands might be thinking, “But you don’t know my wife, she is so confusing.”

Well think of it this way, what do you do when something is broken at your house and it seems confusing?

You take time, do some research, even look up YouTube videos to figure out how to fix it.
[pause]

What do you do when you want to get better at your job?

You take time and learn more.

You know a lot about hunting, fishing, fixing things, or your job, but do you take time to get to know your wife? *[pause]*

I’ve even known guys who could tell me their favorite sports player’s favorite color but they couldn’t tell me much about their wife. *[pauseeee]*

Guys, you need to know about your wife personally, but you also need to have some...

B. Knowledge about her as a woman.

Peter says that husbands should, “show honor to the woman as the weaker vessel.”

So obviously, knowledge of your wife as a woman is important in order to show honor and live with her in an understanding way.

You must know and remember that she is a woman, and you must know and remember that she is a weaker vessel than you in order to be a godly husband. *[pause]*

Now I know this phrase, “weaker vessel,” causes a lot of thoughts in everyone, so I’ll need to tackle it. *[pause]*

The word ‘vessel’ points to your body. *[pause]*

Since women are called a ‘weaker vessel’ what does that show us about men?

You are a vessel, also, and you are weak, as well.

We are both weak, but the woman is the *weaker* vessel.

So it’s not saying, “You are strong, and she is weak, haha.”

No, it’s saying, “You’re weak, and she’s weaker.” *[pause]*

So you must understand that you are weak, but you must also understand that your wife is weaker. *[pause]*

I believe this ‘weaker vessel’ is saying that her body is *physically* weaker.

Now I understand that there are exceptions out there, as I’m sure there are some women who could easily beat some men in strength.

But this is a general truth: men are stronger physically than women.

It’s an undeniable fact generally. *[pause]*

Although the world tries to push that women can do exactly what men can do physically, it’s simply untrue overall.

There’s a reason why 89% of construction workers are men.¹

¹ “Employed Persons by Detailed Industry, Sex, Race, and Hispanic or Latino Ethnicity.” *U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics*, 22 Jan. 2021, www.bls.gov/cps/cpsaat18.htm.

And there's a reason why men make up 91% of the Marine Corps.² [pause]

This is not supposed to be derogatory, but simply a statement of truth.

This is also not supposed to prop men up and put women down, for that goes against Peter's whole point! [pause]

Peter's point is that he is talking directly to men, and he's not saying, "Those women are weaker, and we are just so strong."

No, he's encouraging men to treat their wives with honor remembering that she is weaker. [pause]

So he's using it to make men more compassionate, not feel more superior.

He wants men to be more understanding and caring after hearing this.

So when you hear this word, "weaker," it means women ought to be shown more consideration and honor, not less! [pause]

Men, this should lead you to compassion and consideration, not gloating and feeling superior.

Your wife is not the same as you physically, so always remember this as you care for her. [pause]

And women, don't see this as something 'less than', but it should remind you of how special and precious you were made by God. [pause]

I'll give this illustration.

Think of two different plates, you know the plates that you eat on.

One is a plastic plate.

It's pretty durable, as you can throw it, drop it, and step on it, and it's still going to be fine.

That's like a man's physical body, it's stronger.

But a woman is like a fine piece of china.

She may be more fragile, as you can't throw or drop china and it be fine, but that means you must take extra care and give extra honor to her.

You protect her and cherish your wife remembering that she is somewhat weaker than you.

This shouldn't lead you to boast, but to guard, protect, cherish, and love her even more so. [pause]

² "Demographics of the U.S. Military." *Council on Foreign Relations*, www.cfr.org/backgrounder/demographics-us-military.

So you need to know some things about her as a woman - how she is different from you physically as you care for her - but you also need...

C. Knowledge about her as an heir of God.

Peter says, “showing honor...since they are heirs with you of the grace of life.”

Oh, this is important!

Peter is saying, “Husbands, your wife is equal with you in God’s sight!”

“You may be different by nature physically, but you are not different by nature spiritually.”

[pause]

Your wife, as a Christian, is a fellow heir of the grace of life.

She is a precious child to God, and just as equally as an heir as you. [pause]

You are not higher up in the ranks of being a child of God just because you are a man, for God sees men and women as equals.

We may have different roles, but we are all made in the image of God, and are all the same in Christ.

Galatians 3:28 also reminds us of this truth when it says, “there is no male and female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus.” *[pauseeee]*

Men, there is absolutely no room for you to see your wife as lesser than you in the eyes of God.

You should always remember that she is a fellow heir with you.

So that means she’s not your servant, but your fellow heir!

She is precious, just like you, so treat her that way! *[pause]*

This is so important for men to remember because their position can lead them to feel that their wife is lesser, but God is reminding us that they are not.

They are a fellow heir, so we need to treat them like they are. *[pauseeee]*

Husbands, do you know your wife?

Do you know her personally? Do you know some things about how she’s different from you as a woman?

And do you know that she’s an heir with you? [pause]

You are to be a life-long student and your major is your wife.

This is going to take some thinking, remembering, and effort, but it's worth it because it will help you become a more godly husband, obey God, and love your wife better. *[pauseeee]*

So we have talked a lot about knowledge, and knowledge is important, but knowledge isn't enough.

You must apply that knowledge to your day-to-day life - that's what truly matters.

Applied knowledge of what we just learned is key to being a godly husband.

And that's why the next point is...

II. In order to be a godly husband, you need to live in light of that knowledge.

Peter brings out knowing certain things about your wife, but he goes further than that.

He shows men that they must live with their wife *according to knowledge* and show honor knowing that their wife is weaker and a fellow heir.

So you must put this knowledge into practice! *[pauseeee]*

The first thing that he brings out is to...

A. Live with her according to that knowledge.

I have already encouraged husbands to know their wives, but now I want to ask, do you live with your wife according to that knowledge?

So the things that you know, do you live in light of those things?

If you know she gets frustrated when you wash the dishes a certain way, do you adjust and clean them differently?

If you know that she desires for you to be more affectionate, are you more affectionate?

If you know what makes her happy, do you do those things? *[pauseeee]*

This verse was very countercultural for Peter's day!

Men would disrespect their wives and treat them like property, but the Bible's marriage roles have no place for a man that acts like that!

Instead, he is called to live in an understanding way and honor his wife.

And yet so many people have this wrong idea of Biblical headship in marriage, where it's simply authoritarian, 'my way or the highway' type of leadership.

But look at what it involves - it involves being a servant! *[pause]*

It takes a *servant mentality* to do some of these things because many times we would like to do something differently.

We would like to not be as gentle, or take time, or be affectionate, but our God calls us to live in an understanding way, and that means sacrificing for our wives.

It means loving her as Christ loved the church.

It means putting her needs, wants, and desires ahead of our own.

And this isn't giving up leadership, but leadership that gives! *[pauseeee]*

Men, do you live with your wife in an understanding way.

Do you act as though she's just another one of the guys, or do you treat her as she is, with all of her personality, habits, loves, desires, and features?

You should know her so well that you get to the point where you begin to know what she's thinking when things happen, and you begin to know exactly what she needs.

And when you get to that point, now you can step up and live with her according to that knowledge. *[pauseeee]*

Do you expect her to think and act like you do?

Then you are not living according to the knowledge of *her*, but according to the knowledge of *yourself*. *[pause]*

Do you understand that she is weaker than you and maybe can't carry that couch like you do?

Don't get mad at her when she is struggling and can't help you get it in the door. *[pause]*

Do you understand that you may be able to handle something, but she may not?

Well guess what, you may not be able to handle something else, while she can.

Be compassionate, considerate, and caring. *[pauseeee]*

Do you live with your wife according to what you know about her?

Some guys know the in's and out's of their favorite hobby and could talk for hours on end about it, but when it comes to their wife....

...They act as though they just met her by the way they live with her.

“Oh, she gets annoyed when I do that?”

“Oh, she just wants me to listen right now and not fix things?”

Uh yeah, you've only been married to her for 30 years. *[pauseeee]*

Live with her according to knowledge, but also...

B. Honor her according to that knowledge.

Peter tells husbands to show honor to their wives as the weaker vessel, since they are fellow heirs.

So Peter is pushing us to treat our wives with honor remembering things about her. *[pause]*

Show her honor remembering that she is a weaker vessel.

Don't put her down or think lowly of her, but rather show her more honor!

Care for her, protect her, guard her, and treat her with respect. *[pause]*

The things that we find are more delicate and precious to us are treated with more honor.

You don't care for your shoes the same way as you treat your car.

So remembering your wife's weaker than you, then treat her with respect. *[pause]*

The Greek word translated "showing" here in the phrase, "showing honor" actually points to the fact that this honor is *due her*.

She deserves this honor, and it is proper to show her honor. *[pause]*

So don't treat your wife badly, don't be harsh with her, but be gentle, tender, and protective.

Value her highly and treat her as valuable.

Treat her as special and precious, and esteem her highly. *[pauseeee]*

Men, how do you treat your wife? With honor? *[pause]*

Sometimes husbands can be harsh and rough with their wives.

If their wife is sad for a good bit of time, they say, "Why are you still crying?"

No, we must be kind and speak gently with our wives.

Don't speak badly about her to others, either. *[pauseeeee]*

I want to once again go back to the idea that marriage roles are completely misunderstood by many people.

They see the man's role as this tyrant who just pushes his wife around, but look at what God is calling husbands to!

He's calling them to show honor to their wives!

This means that if a husband is showing honor to his wife like he should, she *isn't* going to feel like she's being treated as a lesser...

...But she's going to feel honored! *[pauseeeee]*

Husbands need to also show honor to their wives remembering that she is a fellow heir.

So husbands, remember that your wife is spiritually equal, so treat her that way!

Don't put her down, but remember that she's a precious heiress of God.

You are not higher up in spiritual ranking in God's eyes, but you are both on equal standing as children and heirs of God. *[pause]*

This truth leads us to not put down our wives, but to show honor to them. *[pauseeee]*

Husbands, live in light of the knowledge of your wife.

Live with her according to what you know of her personally, and show honor to her according to the fact that she is a precious woman and heir. *[pauseeee]*

All of this is enough to challenge any husband, but Peter doesn't stop there, for he says one more thing to end out the verse...he shows us that...

III. In order to not hurt your prayer life, you need to live in light of that knowledge.

Peter says at the end of the verse, "so that your prayers may not be hindered."

Now it's getting more serious, isn't it?

Peter really ramped up things here. *[pause]*

What he's saying is that if you neglect to live with your wife in an understanding way and treat her with honor, then your prayers will be hindered.

How you treat your wife affects your prayer life and therefore your spiritual life. *[pause]*

These commands by God for your marriage role aren't suggestions or recommendations, they are commands that have consequences when you don't do them.

Your treatment of your wife can have an impact on your spiritual effectiveness! *[pauseeee]*

Some people act as though the Bible treats women horribly, yet just look at this verse!

God calls men to live with their wives in a loving, understanding, and honorable way.

But he also calls women fellow heirs, and even goes so far as to care so much about women that he will hinder a man's prayers if he treats his wife badly. *[pause]*

By doing this, God is showing men that 'you do not treat my daughter like that!' *[pauseeee]*

So this point shows us that God cares about his daughters, but it also shows us that our relationship with others affects our fellowship with God.

Many times people act as though, 'as long as I'm loving God, then it doesn't matter how I treat others.'

They treat others like dirt, and then expect God to be pleased as they go to him in prayer.

No, no, no.

When we sin against others, we sin against God.

Our relationship with others affects our fellowship with God.

He truly cares about how we treat other people. *[pauseeee]*

Men, if you treat your wife badly, your prayers will be blocked and ineffective.

It's like your wrong treatment of your wife is blocking the way of your prayers. *[pause]*

Do you know what this means?

It means that God is showing husbands that as leaders in their marriages, they have *no right* to abuse their authority and mistreat their wife.

And if they do, God isn't going to bless that and he will go so far as to not answer their prayers as a sort of wake-up call. *[pauseeee]*

Could it be that you haven't had an answer to a certain prayer because of the way you have been treating your wife?

God is using that as a way to get you to open your eyes and see that the way you are treating your wife is not pleasing to Him.

He wants you to love, cherish, honor, and understand your wife - for no man is spiritually effective if his prayer life is ineffective. *[pauseeee]*

What I want to leave with you today is this...

You can be a godly husband by knowing your wife and living in light of that knowledge!

How you live in your marriage is important to God.

I like the way that commentator Wayne Grudem puts it when he says...

“To take the time to develop and maintain a good marriage is God’s will; it is serving God; it is a spiritual activity pleasing in his sight.”³ *[pause]*

So husbands, how are you doing?

Have you been sorta in cruise control, not putting in the time and effort needed to be a godly husband?

Have you been actively treating your wife badly?

Don’t try to excuse your actions by thinking, “She drives me to do this,” or, “Pastor Matt, you don’t know how bad my wife is.”

No, let’s get rid of the excuses, let’s throw down our pride, and own up to our sins. *[pause]*

Only focus on your role right now - how have you been treating your wife?

In an understanding way? With honor? Or not so much? *[pause]*

The first place to start is to seek forgiveness.

Turn to God and repent of the way you have failed, and he will forgive!

He is loving, forgiving, merciful, and gracious! *[pause]*

But don’t stop there - ask your wife for forgiveness.

Own up to your sin, and talk to your wife about the specific ways that you have failed.

Seek her forgiveness. *[pause]*

Then after seeking forgiveness, seek to grow in this area.

Determine in God’s strength and wisdom to know your spouse more, but more than that, to treat her right in light of that knowledge. *[pause]*

The Lord will help you as you rely upon Him.

Talk to Him and say, “Lord, I have failed in so many ways as a husband, and I need your help to be what you have called me to be...

...So help me today to live with my wife in an understanding way and to show her honor.”

Make a conscious effort to be different, to grow in this area, and treat your wife with love, understanding, and care.

³ Grudem, W. A. (1988). *1 Peter: an introduction and commentary* (Vol. 17, p. 154). Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press.

Step up and be the leader by not waiting for your wife to change, but by doing your role as God has called you to do.

Be in the Word, be in prayer, rely upon His Spirit, and take time for your wife. *[pauseeee]*

You know, I love how God has shown us a perfect example of knowing us and acting in light of that knowledge...

God knows us because he created us, and he even went so far as to send His Son to take on flesh.

By doing this, Christ got to know first-hand experience of what human life on this fallen earth is like.

And in light of the knowledge of our frame and our sinfulness, he has cared for us, loves us, and died for us.

And then he rose again conquering death. *[pause]*

Listen to Psalm 103:13-14, “As a father shows compassion to his children, so the Lord shows compassion to those who fear him. *For he knows our frame; he remembers that we are dust.*”
[pause]

God always lives in light of His knowledge of us.

He takes us where we are at and treats us with mercy and grace.

In Christ, he treats us as valuable and precious, even though in our sinfulness, we are far from it.

That’s our God, the all-knowing One, yet the all-understanding and all-gracious One. *[pauseeee]*

So men, what do you say?

“Who’s that person in your house?”

She’s *your* wife, who you are called to understand and honor.

She’s a precious woman, and she’s a fellow heir with you of the grace of life.

Do you know her? And do you treat her the way that God has called you to?

Let’s follow what God has called us to be in our marriages.

Let’s be loving, servant-leaders who know, cherish, and honor our wives.