

Weekly Cell Guide

Leader's Copy

Series - 1 Peter
Topic - It Takes Two (1 Peter 3:1-7)

Date - 11-Oct-2020
Speaker - Ps Ernie Song

WELCOME [15 min]

You may want to look up the following websites for *icebreakers* suitable for your cell.

[Ice Breakers 1](#)

[Ice Breakers 2](#)

WORSHIP [15 min]

You may select songs like

1. Jesus Come
 2. Lord, I Offer My Life
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WORD [45 min]

Spiritual Objectives

At the end of the sermon discussion, cell members will:

1. (who are wives) practice godly submission to their husbands and aspire to be the Proverbs 31 woman.
2. (who are husbands) treat their wives well – with honour and dignity.
3. (who are singles) know the God-given roles in marriage and prepare themselves.

Sermon Summary

The following are the key points of the sermon:

1. Wives are called to submit to their husbands as the head, while husbands are called to treat their wives with dignity and respect.
2. Without this cycle of love and servanthood, a marriage will become consumeristic. Marriage is about serving and not getting.

Sermon Recap (Full Summary)

Just as all Christians were to be subject to government authorities (1 Peter 2:13–17), and servants were to be subject to their masters (1 Peter 2:18–25), Peter now exhorts wives to be subject to their husbands (1 Peter 3:1–6).

Note for Singles

Although this message is directed at married couples, it is also equally important for singles; to have a clearer picture of what a Biblical marriage should look like. Discipleship is a community effort. Singles can help sharpen married couples towards Christlikeness by encouraging the couple to function in their God-Given roles when they aren't doing so.

1. Wives are to submit to their husbands (v1-2)

- Submission of wives is counterculture as submission is not popular today - it assumes inequality and is seen as being weak.
 - However, God created man and woman equal in value and significance. The command to have dominion, to be fruitful and multiply, to fill the earth and subdue it was given to both man and woman. (Genesis 1:26-28)
 - The difference comes in their individual function within the family unit. “Wives, submit to your own husbands, as to the Lord. For the husband is the head of the wife even as Christ is the head of the church, his body, and is himself its Saviour.”
– **Ephesians 5:22-23 (ESV).**
 - This is the divine family structure ordered by God. Satan tried to upset God’s structure by going to Eve first and succeeded. God always works within this divine structure. That is why after the sin happened, God called for Adam first.
 - Eve is a helper to Adam (Genesis 2:18). Helper is defined as:
 - עֲזָרָה
 - The term is used 21 times in the OT. Woman = 2x, alliances = 3x, God as Helper = 16x.
 - The ‘expected’ subservience of women was culturally shaped, rather than Biblically shaped. Women are equal to men in importance, dignity, and honour. They just have a different function within the family.
- Submission is needed for the family to thrive.
 - Sarah, the wife of Abraham, tried to take over the role as the head of the family (acting out of her Biblical role). She sent her maid Hagar to fulfil God’s prophecy, but the consequences were jealousy and fighting between their children until this day. However, when Sarah obeyed Abraham and called him Lord (1 Peter 3:6, Genesis 18:12), when she acknowledge the divine structure that God had ordained, a miracle happened.
 - Your prayers for your family may not yet be answered because you are not honouring the divine order of the family. When you submit, perhaps you may open up the door for God’s blessings to enter into your family.
 - How can submission happen?
 - When there is disagreement of opinions for family decisions.
 - Represent your husband well verbally:
 - In how you talk to your husband (in private and in front of others).
 - In how you talk about your husband with your friends.
 - Stop nagging your husband.
 - For non-Christian husbands
 - This underscores the importance of not marrying a non-Christian (different values, different goals and purposes).
 - Posture your heart to submit unless it violates God’s commands (it is not always so straightforward. Seek counsel from your leaders).

2. Wives are to focus on inner beauty (v3-6)

- Wives should take care of themselves and look presentable to their husbands and children because you represent God to others. However, Peter exhorts to give more focus on inner beauty than outward adornment.
- Proverbs 31 provided the example of a Biblical and godly woman, wife, and mother.

- “Her children rise up and call her blessed; her husband also, and he praises her: Many women have done excellently, but you surpass them all.” – **Proverbs 31:28-29 (ESV)**
- Practical applications:
 - Aspire to live out the Proverbs 31 characteristics in your life.
 - Hang around Godly women rather than godless women.

3. Husbands are to love their wives (v7)

- The marriage mandate given by God to man/husband is – “Then the LORD God took the man and put him into the garden of Eden to cultivate it and keep it.” – **Genesis 2:15**. Eve’s role was to help Adam to cultivate and keep the garden. Therefore, the husband’s mandate is to cultivate and grow the family:
 - So that the next generation will walk in God’s ways. “And this second thing you do. You cover the Lord's altar with tears, with weeping and groaning because he no longer regards the offering or accepts it with favour from your hand. But you say, “Why does he not?” Because the Lord was witness between you and the wife of your youth, to whom you have been faithless, though she is your companion and your wife by covenant. Did he not make them one, with a portion of the Spirit in their union? And what was the one God seeking? Godly offspring. So guard yourselves in your spirit, and let none of you be faithless to the wife of your youth. “For the man who does not love his wife but divorces her, says the Lord, the God of Israel, covers his garment with violence, says the Lord of hosts. So guard yourselves in your spirit, and do not be faithless.” – **Malachi 2:13-16 (ESV)**
 - If the husband is not executing God’s mandate, how then does the wife help him?
- The husband’s role is to represent God in the family – protector, provider, encourager, sustainer, etc. – and guiding the wife (and children) towards the ways of God. Therefore, husbands are to treat their wives well and with honour.
 - Loving your wives require submission as well and dying to self. Submission is not a one-way street. Culture asks, “What can I get out of marriage?”, but a Biblical marriage questions, “How can I serve my wife?”, “How can I mirror Christ to my wife?” It is not self-serving, but selfless.
- Practical applications:
 - Women are associated with family functions such as cooking, cleaning up, taking care of the kids. The man is the breadwinner. This is culturally formed rather than Biblically. What is the best arrangement for your family to function and thrive?
 - Moving away from stereotypes:
 - Man should seek opportunities to help with household chores: taking care of the children, cleaning up, cooking, etc.
 - The goal is to serve your wife in order to create a culture of servanthood in the home.

Conclusion

All that God has instructed man and woman to do in their respective roles in marriage/family is so “that you may proclaim the excellencies of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvellous light.” (**1 Peter 2:9, ESV**). We are God’s representatives on this earth and therefore, we should represent what a Biblical marriage looks like – one that is thriving and not perishing.

Discussion Questions

- 1. What is the definition of husband and wife in today's culture? How is it different from what Scripture teaches us? [10 min]**

Leader's Notes:

In today's culture, the role of husbands and wives aren't clearly defined. It is usually self-defined by the couple and they muddle through marriage confused about their purpose and role. Submission is also seen as taboo and politically incorrect in marriage (or generally in life).

However, as Christians, we live countercultural lives. Scripture calls the man/husband to be the head of the family and the woman/wife to submit to her husband. 1 Peter 3:1-2 states the act submission bears witness to Christlikeness and will win over non-believers. Just as marriage represents the divine union between Jesus and the Church, the wife submitting to her husband is an act that displays God's glory and work in her life.

The husband must be considerate to his wife and treat her with honour and respect. Scripture calls him to love her as himself, just as Christ loves the Church (Ephesians 5:28-30). In that sense, husbands are called to imitate Christ's love when loving their wives. Husbands represent God in the family – protector, provider, encourager, leaders, etc.

Transition (Wrapping Up & Moving to The Next Question)

It is important to follow the Biblically defined role for man and woman for a marriage to thrive. Although it may be difficult at times to follow what Scripture teaches, one must lean into the Holy Spirit, and allow Him to transform you. You will see the fruits of your perseverance in time to come.

- 2. As an unmarried person (either single or attached), how can you prepare yourself for the Biblical role (as husband or wife) in marriage? Married couples, how can you help an unmarried person prepare for marriage? [15 min]**

Leader's Notes:

This question is for members who are yet to be married to know what is their expected Biblical role is in marriage and to prepare for it. In this aspect, married couples can counsel them or give them godly advice through what they have learnt from years of marriage. It is especially important to highlight areas of submission, servitude, and Christlikeness in marriage.

Transition (Wrapping Up & Moving to The Next Question)

It is important for an unmarried person to know and embrace their individual God-given role in marriage and to start preparing for it now so that you avoid 'suffering' later when married. In marriage as in everything, the most important is to have God in the centre of it all.

- 3. What are some ways husbands can treat their wives well? What are some ways wives can honour their husbands? [15 min]**

Leader's Notes:

This question spurs members to think of practical ways and actions to take for husbands and wives to treat each other well and honourably.

Ps Ernie gave some practical applications (for wives) on submission in marriage:

- *When there is disagreement of opinions in family decisions, the husbands ultimately make the final decision and wives are to submit and respect the decision made.*
- *Wives should represent their husbands well verbally: in how you talk to your husband in front of others (this should be done in private as well so that respectful communication comes naturally); in how you talk about your husband with your friends; not nagging your husbands but to treat them as 'leaders' of the family.*
- *For non-Christian husbands: wives should submit to their husbands unless it violates God's commands. It is not always straightforward, so seek counsel from your leaders if you have any doubts.*

For husbands:

- *Loving your wives requires dying to self. You are to serve your wife and mirror Christ to her.*
- *Decide what is the best arrangement for the family to function properly. Move away from culturally defined stereotypes of what a husband is (e.g. breadwinner), help with household chores, parenting, cleaning up, and sometimes, provide a listening ear.*
- *The goal is to serve your wife in order to create a culture of servanthood in the home.*

Transition (Wrapping Up, Vision Casting to Cell & Closing the Discussion)

As Christians, our marriages are meant to show to the world God's intention for marriage. Therefore, married couples should learn to live within the ordained divine structure in order for their marriage to thrive.

WORKS [10 min]

Let's pray:

1. Pray that married couples will:
 - Renew their minds to move beyond culture's defined roles for husbands and wives and to live Biblically – according to God's ordained structure.
 - Strive to serve and love each other (as Christ loves) to honour God and their marriages.
2. Pray for Phase 3 of the Circuit Breaker:
 - that God will protect each and every one of us from COVID-19 as public places are opening up for larger numbers,
 - that the community cases and dormitory cases will continue decreasing till there is none,
 - that Singaporeans will remain vigilant and abide by the safe-distancing guidelines.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

1. Joining The Family

Sat, 7 Nov | 10.30am-12pm | Online via Zoom

Sign up online at rlc.sg/jointhefam by Sun, 1 Nov. For more information, please contact Karen Koh at karenkoh@riverlife.org.sg

Note: This course is a pre-requisite for Associate Membership. Getting water baptised in RiverLife does not confer church membership though water baptism is a requirement for membership

Church Vision

“A radiant disciple-making church catalysing Kingdom transformation in our communities and the nations.”

Mission

We exist to make disciples who behold Christ and reveal Him.