

# **Sermon: The Model of a Godly Woman**

**Text: Proverbs 31:10-31; I Peter 3:1-7**

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**Introduction:** Mark Twain once said: “Most people are bothered by those passages of Scripture which they can not understand; but as for me, I have always noticed that the passages in Scripture which trouble me most are those which I do understand.”

In a rapidly changing society of shifting values, it is increasingly important that we follow biblical models for all our relationships. The role of a woman, and especially the wife in the family, is of critical importance. “If the time should ever come when women are not Christians and houses are not homes, then we shall have lost the chief cornerstones on which civilization rests”

- Andrew Dickson White

**I Peter 3:1-7 (NIV)** <sup>1</sup>Wives, in the same way be submissive to your husbands so that, if any of them do not believe the word, they may be won over without words by the behavior of their wives, <sup>2</sup>when they see the purity and reverence of your lives. <sup>3</sup>Your beauty should not come from outward adornment, such as braided hair and the wearing of gold jewelry and fine clothes. <sup>4</sup>Instead, it should be that of your inner self, the unfading beauty of a gentle and quiet spirit, which is of great worth in God’s sight. <sup>5</sup>For this is the way the holy women of the past who put their hope in God used to make themselves beautiful. They were submissive to their own husbands, <sup>6</sup>like Sarah, who obeyed Abraham and called him her master. You are her daughters if you do what is right and do not give way to fear. <sup>7</sup>Husbands, in the same way be considerate as you live with your wives, and treat them with respect as the weaker partner and as heirs with you of the gracious gift of life, so that nothing will hinder your prayers.

A godly woman needs to be:

## **I. Submissive**

### **A. Submission is not a bad quality.**

Being submissive to your husband (or to Christ if you are single) is not a bad quality. It is a completely voluntary action done out of love and respect. There are many examples of submission in the NT. In our text Sarah is found obeying Abraham thereby showing she was submissive.

Jesus was a submissive person. He was submissive to his parents. “Then he went down to Nazareth with them and was obedient” (Luke 2:51a). Jesus was also submissive to God.

**I Corinthians 15:27-28 (NIV)** <sup>27</sup>For he “has put everything under his feet.” Now when it says that “everything” has been put under him, it is clear that this does not include God himself, who put everything under Christ. <sup>28</sup>When he has done this, then the Son himself will be made subject to him who put everything under him, so that God may be all in all.

The Church is to be subject or submissive to Christ, its Head, just like a wife to her husband, and children to their parents. Certainly, submission is not a sign of weakness or a character flaw.

A Christian is to be submissive to his government. In Ephesians 5, masters are not asked to be submissive to their slaves, neither are parents to their children. Never are any of these areas of submission reciprocal with the exception of the husband and wife relationship. **Ephesians 5:21 (NIV)** says: <sup>21</sup>Submit to one another out of reverence for Christ.

Sometimes the word *hypotasso* (translated here: *be submissive*) has been understood and some have tried to soften it to mean ‘be thoughtful and considerate; act in love’ (toward one another). This kind of sometimes wishful thinking breaks down logically when we hear that demons were subject to the disciples (Luke 10:17)

It should be remembered that submission to authority does not mean “inequality” or a lack of value or importance. Jesus was subject to his parents and God, but no one would say Jesus was of less value or importance. It means we know how to love.

“In submission we are at last free to value other people. Their dreams and plans become important to us. We have entered into a new, wonderful, glorious freedom - the freedom to give up our rights for the good of others. For the first time we can love people unconditionally.” - (Richard Foster, *Celebration of Discipline*, p. 112)

“Silence frees us from the need to control others. One reason we can hardly bear to remain silent is that it makes us feel so helpless. We are accustomed to relying upon words to manage and control others. A frantic stream of words flows from us in an attempt to straighten others out. We want so desperately for them to agree with us, to see things our way. We evaluate people, judge people, condemn people. We devour people with our words. Silence is one of the deepest Disciplines of the Spirit simply because it puts the stopper on that” (Richard Foster, *Freedom of Simplicity*, pp.57 -58)

The book of Proverbs (see [Proverbs 31:10-31](#)) has a number of things to say about the qualities a godly woman should have and not have.

[Proverbs 31:10-31 \(NIV\)](#) <sup>10</sup>A wife of noble character who can find? She is worth far more than rubies. <sup>11</sup> Her husband has full confidence in her and lacks nothing of value. <sup>12</sup> She brings him good, not harm, all the days of her life. <sup>13</sup> She selects wool and flax and works with eager hands. <sup>14</sup> She is like the merchant ships, bringing her food from afar. <sup>15</sup> She gets up while it is still dark; she provides food for her family and portions for her servant girls. <sup>16</sup> She considers a field and buys it; out of her earnings she plants a vineyard. <sup>17</sup> She sets about her work vigorously; her arms are strong for her tasks. <sup>18</sup> She sees that her trading is profitable, and her lamp does not go out at night. <sup>19</sup> In her hand she holds the distaff and grasps the spindle with her fingers. <sup>20</sup> She opens her arms to the poor and extends her hands to the needy. <sup>21</sup> When it snows, she has no fear for her household; for all of them are clothed in scarlet. <sup>22</sup> She makes coverings for her bed; she is clothed in fine linen and purple. <sup>23</sup> Her husband is respected at the city gate, where he takes his seat among the elders of the land. <sup>24</sup> She makes linen garments and sells them, and supplies the merchants with sashes. <sup>25</sup> She is clothed with strength and dignity; she can laugh at the days to come. <sup>26</sup> She speaks with wisdom, and faithful instruction is on her tongue. <sup>27</sup> She watches over the affairs of her household and does not eat the bread of idleness. <sup>28</sup> Her children arise and call her blessed; her husband also, and he praises her: <sup>29</sup> “Many women do noble things, but you surpass them all.” <sup>30</sup> Charm is deceptive, and beauty is fleeting; but a woman who fears the LORD is to be praised. <sup>31</sup> Give her the reward she has earned, and let her works bring her praise at the city gate.

And also ...

[Proverbs 21:9, 19 \(NIV\)](#) <sup>9</sup> Better to live on a corner of the roof than share a house with a quarrelsome wife. <sup>19</sup> Better to live in a desert than with a quarrelsome and ill-tempered wife.

[Proverbs 27:15 \(NIV\)](#) <sup>15</sup> A quarrelsome wife is like a constant dripping on a rainy day;

A godly woman who is submissive would not be quarrelsome or argumentative. Do you know how to have the last word in an argument? - Apologize!

How many arguments have you won? Most arguments aren't won, only discontinued!

[1 Peter 3: 1](#) is many times quoted for wives of unbelievers, but it is equally true for those who have believers for husbands.

A godly woman needs to be submissive:

B. For the Lord's sake (as well as the husband's).

The purpose for this submission is **FOR THE LORD**.

**I Peter 2:13 (NIV)** <sup>13</sup>Submit yourselves for the Lord's sake to every authority instituted among men: whether to the king, as the supreme authority,

In our text it states that submission is also for the benefit of the unbelieving husband that he may be won to Christ without a word. This obviously is a hyperbole. Peter does not mean for women never to speak to their husbands. What he does want us to avoid is **OVER TALKING**. Continual Preaching - Some might call it nagging.

Submission to the husband though never supersedes the wife's responsibility to Christ. And submission to a husband cannot be justified so as to go along with behavior that is sinful or wrong. Jesus Christ must always take priority over **EVERY RELATIONSHIP**.

**Matthew 12:48-50 (NIV)** <sup>48</sup>He replied to him, "Who is my mother, and who are my brothers?" <sup>49</sup>Pointing to his disciples, he said, "Here are my mother and my brothers. <sup>50</sup>For whoever does the will of my Father in heaven is my brother and sister and mother."

(also see Matthew 8:21-22)

A godly woman needs to be:

## **II. Setting a Standard (I Peter 3:4)**

### **A. Of purity – verse 2**

Blessed are the pure in heart, Jesus said, for they will see God. Anyone can change. Even prostitutes are put up as models of faith. Rahab, the prostitute is put up alongside men of faith like Abraham. She stands as a model of purity. (Proverbs also discusses purity and faithfulness by the husband and wife in **Proverbs 6:20-29**. **Verse 32** shows us it is destructive.)

Biblical writer, Luke was ahead of his time in the value he placed on women.

Not she with trait'rous kiss her Savior stung.  
Not she denied Him with unholy tongue;  
She, while apostles shrank, could dangers brave,  
Last at the cross and earliest at the grave.

- Eaton Stannard Barrett: *Woman*, Pt. I

**Everybody needs a good model. In Scripture Abraham is lifted up as a great model for men, yet Sarah is a great model for women - even today!**

**B. Of beauty (that is imperishable or unfading) - verses 3-4**

**There is a tremendous difference between inner and outer beauty. There is much talk about how women of the first century tried to make themselves beautiful. Extravagance and excess is not a 21st century phenomena. Seneca spoke of women with two or three fortunes in their ears.**

**Outward appearance is not the gauge of inner beauty. Jesus speaks of “whited sepulchres” that were full of dead man’s bones. People can be like that, too.**

**Some religious sects are opposed to makeup and jewelry based on the I Peter 3 passage - but to be faithful to the text they also of necessity would need to be against clothing, and I do not know of anyone willing to press this passage that far. Talking about makeup on women, Dr. Henderson, somewhat insensitively, once said, “If the barn needs painted, paint it!”**

**There is plenty of artificial beauty to go around. Advertising tells us what we should hold as beautiful - but that changes every generation.**

**Keats said, “Beauty is truth, truth beauty, - that is all”**

**A godly woman needs to be setting a standard**

**C. Of hope**

**Sarah waited for God’s promise - a son. Against all hope she believed...**

**A godly wife may need to wait patiently in hope that her example of beauty, purity, and reverence will have an accumulative effect on her unbelieving husband.**

**A godly woman needs to be:**

**III. Timeless**

**Galatians 5:22-23 (NIV) <sup>22</sup>But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, <sup>23</sup>gentleness and self-control. Against such things there is no law.**

**A. Some things never go out of style.**

**wingtips, and Paisley ties.**

**Proverbs 12:4a (NIV)** <sup>4</sup> A wife of noble character is her husband's crown,

**Proverbs 11:16a (NIV)** <sup>16</sup> A kindhearted woman gains respect,

**Proverbs 11:22 (NIV)** <sup>22</sup> Like a gold ring in a pig's snout is a beautiful woman who shows no discretion.

A godly woman will always:

B. Think about tomorrow .

**Hebrews 6:4-6 (NIV)** <sup>4</sup>It is impossible for those who have once been enlightened, who have tasted the heavenly gift, who have shared in the Holy Spirit, <sup>5</sup>who have tasted the goodness of the word of God and the powers of the coming age, <sup>6</sup>if they fall away, to be brought back to repentance, because to their loss they are crucifying the Son of God all over again and subjecting him to public disgrace.

Faithfulness in every aspect of a marriage (relationship) is a continual project. It is awfully difficult for a Christian woman to walk away from her husband - just like a Christian who might walk away from Christ - It becomes terribly difficult to find your way back.

What we do today affects what we will have tomorrow. Don't trade away tomorrow for today. Don't be short-sighted. There is gold and there is iron pyrite. Do not be foolish with your life.

**Conclusion:** Charles Haddon Spurgeon once said, "God save us all from wives who are angels in the street, saints in the church, and devils at home." The reason for the decline of the family, as God meant it to be, is the lack or absence of good models and absolute values. One of the things that will preserve our world is a godly family." The Church must be the answer for people who do not know "How" or "Why".

Women are equal with men in the area of salvation, but some of their functions within the family are different. In a culture that screams for equality in everything,

**WE NEED TO LISTEN TO GOD'S WORD FOR OUR LIVES.**

**I Peter 3:7 (NIV)** <sup>7</sup>Husbands, in the same way be considerate as you live with your wives, and treat them with respect as the weaker partner and as heirs with you of the gracious gift of life, so that nothing will hinder your prayers.