

7.5.23 am

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Date: 07 May 2023

Preacher: Reverend David MacLeod

[0 : 0 0] Good morning. It's good to see you all this morning and there's a few visitors with us and it's great to have you. If you're able to stay behind, there's tea and there's coffee at the end of the service and it would be good to get the chance to meet with you if you're able to stay behind. The intimations, the notices have been on the screen before the service. I'll just take a second to run through them. The evening service, six o'clock tonight, 6-7 as we carry on through the life of Abraham. Kirk session meets tomorrow night at 6pm, so if the elders could take note of that please. Ladies' fellowship as usual tomorrow at 8, Little Fishers. Tuesday morning as usual 10-12, Road to Recovery at 7 o'clock in the church. This is a new one, family music sessions for parents and toddlers. It's normally something that's held in the community centre, but that's booked out with filming for the next six weeks.

So Wednesday, half past 10 to half past 11, that's on. And the next one, please. Prayer meeting is on Wednesday on half past 7 in person and on Zoom and the Gaelic Playgroup on Thursday, 10 to half past 11. Services next Sunday. I hope to be away from maybe Friday night or Saturday morning through till Monday morning. So the services next weekend will be taken by Anthony in the morning and Scott, Nommie, MacLeod in the evening. Cleaning rota you can see there.

There was two other notices. That's one. Praise and pudding night at the church, Saturday 20th and May. So that's a couple of weeks away. At 7pm, there's a sheet, I think, at the front.

If you're able to donate any food or anything for that, that would be gratefully received. And is that the last one, Andrew? Yeah. The last thing I was going to say is we had a barbecue on Friday afternoon for the Jam and Connect. There was a good squad who came of children and parents and just a word of thanks to those who helped, whether it was providing food or cooking or providing donations or coming along and helping out and tidying up afterwards and all these kind of things. It's a team effort and it was good to have the chance to come together. So we pray on.

Jam and Connect are now finished for this term. Rooted, I think, continues until the end of the month. So the rooted folks, they can take note of that.

[2 : 4 0] So these, I think, are all the notices. We will begin this time of worship now and we'll sing from Psalm 84. Psalm 84 from verses 1 to verse 9 of the Psalm. Psalm 84 verses 1 to 9.

How lovely is thy dwelling place, O Lord of hosts to me, the tabernacles of thy grace, how pleasant Lord they be. My thirsty soul longs vehemently, yea, fainth thy courts to see my very heart and flesh cry out, O living God, for thee.

We sing down to the end of verse 9 and we sing to God's praise. We stand to sing to God's praise. How lovely is thy dwelling place, O Lord of hosts to me, the tabernacles of thy grace, how pleasant Lord they be.

My thirsty soul longs vehemently, yea, fainth thy courts to see.

My very heart and flesh cry out, O living God, for thee.

[4 : 1 1] Behold, the spiral findeth out an house wherein to rest.

- The swallow also for herself hath purchased, hath purchased, hath ane.
- In thine own altars where she stayed, her young once forth may bring.
- O thou almighty Lord of hosts, who art my God and King.
- Blessed are they in thy house that dwell, they ever give thee praise.
- [5 : 10] Blessed is the man who strengthens the heart, in whose heart are thy ways.
- Who passing thought of faith does fail, let him to dig up wells.
- O so the rain that falleth down, the pools with water filch.
- So they from strength and weary go, still forward unto strength.
- Until in sight on day appear, before the Lord at length.
- [6 : 07] Lord God of hosts, my prayer here, O Jacob's God give ear.
- Ye God of hosts, my prayer here, O Jacob's God give ear.
- Let's draw near to God now in prayer. Let's pray together. Let's pray together.
- Let's pray together.
- Let's pray together.
- [8 : 18] Let's pray together. Let's pray together. We thank you that as we seek to draw near to you, that you will draw near to us.
- We thank you that as we seek to return to you, if we are those who have wandered, because we confess that we are prone to wander, we thank you that you will receive us back, that you will return to us.
- So we pray, Lord, for your blessing. We pray for that sense of your presence as we come together as your people. We ask that we would know something of what the psalmist wrote of the loveliness, the sense of the love of God upon us and within us and shared amongst us.
- We pray, Lord, that we would know the refreshing of your gracious touch upon our lives. And we thank you for that grace.
- We thank you that it's by grace that we're saved. It's not by works. It's not what we do. It's not what we refrain from doing. But the work of salvation is done.
- [9 : 33] We thank you that Jesus cried out on the cross, it is finished. And the veil of the temple, which kept people at a distance from the holy place of God.
- We thank you that that was rent from top to bottom. And the way into your presence, Lord, that now is clear, opened in and through the precious blood of Jesus that was shed on the cross.
- We thank you that that grace is what saves us. It's what takes our sin away. And we thank you that it's grace that sustains us as well, as we, as your people, seek to follow you.
- We cannot do that in our own strength. We cannot do that depending on our own gifts. But it's all dependent on the grace that we receive day by day as we come to you.
- So grant to us that grace, we pray. Cleanse us from the sin that may weigh heavy upon us as we confess it in the silence of our own hearts.
- [10 : 36] We pray that you would forgive us and give us that assurance of your pardon. That we may know that sense of being at peace in your presence. And grant to us also, we pray, that sense of awe and reverence that we are in the presence not just of each other, but we are in the presence of the living God, the God of heaven and earth.
- We pray, Lord, that we would have that that fear of the Lord, that reverence, that awe within our own hearts. And we pray for that fear of God to be with us as a nation.

We are conscious that at times in the past we were known as a nation that feared the Lord, that opened and valued the Bible.

And now we are far from you. We ask that you would draw us back. We think of all that we saw on the television yesterday. We pray for those in authority over us.

We pray for King Charles. We thank you for the witness that was left to him from his mother. And we ask, Lord, that all that was read in your word yesterday, all that was spoken in terms of the things of God would have an impression upon him and in turn upon us.

[12 : 06] We know, Lord, that it's possible, your word warns us that it's possible to have a form of godliness with no power. And we pray that that would not be a description of our nation.

Grant to us repentance, we pray. And we ask, Lord, that you would enable those who are in authority to look once more to you. And we pray that we, each one of us, in our own hearts, would look in faith to Jesus and know that salvation that is freely offered in him.

We pray for countries where there is no freedom to worship in the way that we do here in this land. We think of places where there is trouble.

We pray for Ukraine. We thank you, Lord, for all that we heard last Sunday evening, that even in the midst of warfare and turmoil, you are working in a powerful way. And we ask, Lord, for your blessing to be upon that nation.

And we pray that the message of Jesus, the Prince of Peace, would continue to spread quickly through that land. And we pray that peace may be enjoyed in terms of the end of war in the weeks or months ahead.

[13 : 24] And we pray, Lord, for those who are brothers and sisters in Christ who are persecuted. We think of the land of Somalia as we prayed with the young ones on Wednesday evening for it.

One of many places where your people are persecuted. And we ask, Lord, that you would protect them, that you would encourage them, that, Lord Jesus, you would build your church even in these places where the ground is hard.

And we pray, Lord, for our community. We ask, Lord, that you would be with those who are struggling just now. We've sang in the psalm about how you are with us in Baker's Vale, in places where it's difficult.

And we pray for those who are struggling just now, for those who are ill, who battle with pain, whether in hospital or in their own home or in Harris House or in Leverborough, home of rest.

We ask that you would draw near to them. We pray for those who continue to grieve, asking, Lord, for your comfort. We pray for those who battle with addictions, as we do week by week, praying that you would break the power of addiction that is over at so many, that they may find freedom in Christ.

[14 : 42] And we pray, Lord, for those who are anxious at this time. We think especially of our young folks, the school pupils, the students here and on the mainland who are studying for exams.

We ask that in this few weeks that is high pressure, that you would enable them to rest in you, to fret not, but to trust you.

So hear our prayers. Meet us at the point of our need and guide us and lead us as we seek to worship you. And we ask all this in Jesus' name and for his sake. Amen. Boys and girls, would you like to come forward, please?

Yes. You can come as well if you like.

But you can stay there if you want to. Do you want me to take you over? Let's go and see if he wants to come over.

- [15 : 49] Come on. It's good to see you all today and it's good to have some visitors.
- What's your name? Pardon it. What's your name? Poppy. Poppy. That's a lovely name, Poppy.
- Well, I've got a picture to show you today that's on the screen. You can maybe tell me what you see. Or it might be on the screen in just a wee second. Do you recognize the house?
- What house is it? Well, it's your house really but I'm just staying in it. And what looks different about the house today than you would normally see?
- The scaffolding. And what does the scaffolding tell you? It's under the pairs. Yeah, there's work to get done. I'll tell you the story the first night that we realized there was work to be done.
- [16 : 53] It was during lockdown and it was during a prayer meeting. I think I'd asked Farrakhar to pray and I was in the wee study up in the top of the house and Farrakhar was praying in Gaelic and I had the thing on mute so you couldn't hear what was happening.
- And I heard a bang and the next thing Grace burst into the study even though she knew the prayer meeting was on and she said Dad, the roof's just blown off.
- I said, what? So I went running down out of the study Farrakhar was still praying and I went down the stairs out into the garden the roof hadn't blown off but the kind of plastic fascia and the tip of the roof that had broken and that had blown off and it was there's bits of huge bits of plastic all over the lawn the wind was really, really high that night and so I quickly kind of gathered these bits of plastic and put them round secured them in the shed and went back upstairs into the study Farrakhar was just coming to the end of his prayer.
- And and so that was what happened. So Angie Glenn got a phone call to come and see if he could fix the roof and he went up on the ladder to the roof and he said I've got a new fascia but the trouble is he says I can't I can't actually get it to stay in the roof because the wood's rotten.
- So he says the roof will need to get repaired in the bit where the wood's rotten. So that was about two and a half years ago. It's not Angie Glenn's fault. Angie's super busy but it's someone else that's coming to do it and they've started the job.
- [18 : 42] They put the scaffolding up. They did a wee bit of it on Wednesday I think and then they said we've got to go back to Stornoway and pick some more up. We'll be back in the afternoon. We haven't seen them since.
- Angus Alex said enjoy having the scaffolding there for the next ten years. But anyway what you can see when you look at the house is that there's work to be done and this is our work in progress.
- So it's not a job that's finished it's a job that's that's it's still got things to be done. And you know that the Bible tells us that we're all a bit like that.
- Now we're all a work in progress. When we become Christians what happens? Tell me. What happens when we become Christians?
- Tell the big people maybe because sometimes we forget how do we become how do you become a Christian? Fraser. By going to church. Well we go to church and we hear the message of the Bible and what does God say to us about how we can become Christians?
- [19 : 55] How can you become a Christian this morning if you'd never become a Christian yet? Shawnee. You have to believe in Jesus. Yes that's exactly right. And what else if you were going to make a prayer if you were going to pray and ask God to make you a Christian what would you pray?

You would say in your prayer I believe in Jesus that he's God's son that he's the saviour. Christy. We trust in Jesus we believe in Jesus. So what else do we pray?

Henry. We ask Jesus to be our saviour and take away our sin and we ask him to be our Lord don't we? And King. We ask him to be to be the boss of our lives.

So when we become Christians Jesus he comes into our lives he takes our sin away and then he begins work. And what work does he do in our lives?

he makes us more like who? What? He makes us more like him.

[21 : 03] When Jesus comes into our lives he begins a work where he makes us more like him. It says in Romans 8 that we are conformed to the image of Jesus which is just fancy words we are saying we are made more like Jesus.

And that is a that is a work that goes on in every Christian. So actually every Christian looks a bit like the front of our house. God is just scaffolding up on the life of every Christian and he is working on us.

he is making us more like Jesus. Now when we have got the scaffolding up however long it is up we have got to be patient don't we? And whoever whenever you have got work going on in the house you have got to be patient.

You might not be able to use the front door some days because they are doing stuff. There can be noise there can be mess but that is okay because you know that there is work that is going on and it is good work and it is necessary work but when the work is happening we need to have patience and we need to be patient with each other because no Christian is perfect.

God is at work in us and that work when will that work finish? We don't know when that job will finish. When will the work finish on us to make us more like Jesus?

[22 : 38] Do you think it will take a year? Before it is finished and we are perfect? Do you think it will take five years? Ten years? Forty?

How long will it take? Take our whole lives. We are told that when we die when we believe in Jesus when God takes us to heaven we will be like him.

that is when the work is finished. But all through this life we are a bit like the house with the scaffolding on. So we thank God for his work in us and we are patient with each other as God works on us.

So let us pray and ask God to work in us. Heavenly Father we thank you for your work in our hearts. We thank you Father that you sent your son Jesus into this world.

we thank you that as we believe in him and as we ask him to take our sin away he does that. He saves us. And we thank you that through the power of the Holy Spirit you are working on us all through our lives if we are Christians to make us more like Jesus.

[23 : 49] To take away some of the rotten bits. A bit like our roof with the rotten bits have to be stripped away. We know that there are sins in us that we keep going back to. We can be selfish.

We can be impatient. And we know that all that's got to be taken away and we ask Lord that you would work in us to take all that away that we would be made more like Jesus.

We pray for anybody here today who might not have asked Jesus to come into their lives yet. We thank you that to become a Christian is just a prayer away. And even now if we say in our hearts Lord Jesus I believe in you.

Please take my sin away and please be my Lord. We thank you that that's a prayer that will save us forever. So we ask Lord that you would work in us that you would save us that you would shape us to be more like Jesus.

And we pray this in Jesus name and for his sake. Amen. We'll sing now from Mission Praise 587 Search Me O God We're asking God to search us and know us and work on us to make us more like Jesus.

[24 : 59] in the name of Jesus dicen yes Thank God Amen.

Amen. Amen.

Amen. Amen.

Amen. Girls, if you head to Sunday school.

And remember to pray for them as they go. We'll turn in our Bibles to 1 Peter chapter 3.

[28 : 10] Amen. For those who are visiting, we've been going through 1 Peter for the last wee while.

We've come to that passage that we've seen on the horizon for the last few weeks. And we turn to God's Word today as he speaks to us through Peter about our marriages.

So 1 Peter chapter 3 and verse 1.

Amen.

he must turn from evil and do good he must seek peace and pursue it for the eyes of the Lord are on the righteous and his ears are attentive to their prayer but the face of the Lord is against those who do evil amen and may God bless that reading of his word to us we're going to sing again now from Psalm 84 and we'll sing the the last three stanzas that we didn't sing earlier Psalm 84 and we sing from verses 10 to 12 for in thy courts one day excels a thousand rather in my God's house will I keep a door than dwell in tents of sin for God the sons for God the Lord's a sun and shield he'll grace and glory give and will withhold no good from them that upright thee to live or thou that art the Lord of hosts that man is truly blessed who by assured confidence on thee alone doth rest these verses we sing to God's praise in Gaelic and we remain seated to sing in Gaelic sing in Gaelic and we remain sing in Gaelic and we remain sing in Gaelic and we remain sing in Gaelic and we remain sing in Gaelic and we remain sing in Gaelic and we remain

[34 : 38] sing in Gaelic and we remain sing in Gaelic and we remain sing in Gaelic and we remain sing in Gaelic and we remain praying for him he's still sharp he's still sharp he's still sharp he's failing with the the ears but he's looking forward to receiving his telegram and if it's not there tomorrow morning emotions will be we remain born and we remain as we go to you is the Seun of glown and what you're ■ minus the world we pray for your help . television voiceeri ■ fat assange We say thank God's fall with alright this is ericeth the help of the Holy Spirit as we seek to study this passage. We need wisdom. We need you, Lord, to illuminate our minds, to stir our hearts, to open our ears, to strip away even prejudices and things that can distort our understanding. So we ask, Lord, that you would help us to be open to the work of your Spirit in our lives. Work on us, we pray, in our own hearts, in our marriages, in our congregation, Lord, and make us, we pray, more like Jesus. We thank you that you are with us.

We thank you, Lord, as we have prayed for those who are going through hard times, you help them. We thank you also that you are with those who have celebrations, and we thank you for Donald.

We pray, Lord, that you would bless him as he approaches his 100th birthday tomorrow. We ask, Lord, that he would know your presence with them. We pray that you would be near to Mary as well, as she is alongside him there in Harris House. Thank you for them, Lord, for their lives, for their witness, for so much that we see that is admirable in them. And we pray for your blessing upon them as a couple, and upon Donald in particular, as some of us go to Harris House tomorrow to open your word and to pray as his wish. So bless him, we pray. We pray also for those who look forward to marriage us this week. We thank Rebecca as she prepares to be married this coming weekend. And we ask, Lord, that you would bless her and that you would be with all those who will attend, be with the family here. And all those who will attend that service. We pray for that marriage in advance, that Jesus would be lifted up within it. So hear our prayers. Help us, we ask in Jesus' name. Amen.

Amen. Most of us at some point have been invited to go to some big event. We saw a huge event on the television yesterday in the coronation. None of us were at the coronation, but we've been, I imagine, at some point in our lives at a big event, whether it's a sporting event or a concert. And we know when we attend these kind of things, you buy the ticket. There's different levels of tickets you can buy.

And you're allocated a seat or a place that you can stand. And that's where you have to stay. But then you see some people at these kind of events and they have passes, whether it's around their neck or across their waist. And their access, all area passes, they can go wherever they want.

[40 : 04] Or even if you think about a hotel, you book a hotel, you go to a hotel, you're given one of these key cards nowadays. And you can use your card to access your room. You could use your card.

To maybe access a gym or the dining area. But you can't take this card and go wandering into somebody else's room or into the staff kitchen or anything like that. You're only able to go into certain areas. Only the owner has access to all areas of the hotel. Now, we're reading a letter here that God has inspired Peter to write to Christians in various places. The area that we now know as Turkey.

And as God speaks through Peter, Peter is crossing boundaries. And he's venturing into all areas of our lives. And that's part of the deal. If we're Christians. If we ask Jesus to come into our lives, yes, we ask him to come into our lives to be our saviour and to take our sin away.

But the deal is also that he comes as Lord. So there's both. We can't ask for a saviour and resist the Lord. He comes as saviour and he comes as Lord.

He comes to be the one who has the reign, the rule. He is king over all areas of our lives.

[41 : 55] And so God, as he speaks through Peter, he speaks to us about how we should be good citizens. And if you glance back to 1 Peter 2, we can see in verses 13 to 17, Peter addresses us and he says that we should be good citizens, those who submit to the authority that's over us, recognising that God is the ultimate authority.

And Peter then, he tells us about how we should be good employees. And that's verses 18 to 25 of chapter 2. He addresses our behaviour within the workplace.

And now, God through Peter, he speaks to us about our homes and about our marriages.

And we see that in verses 1 to 7 of 1 Peter chapter 3. And then, not next week, but in two weeks' time, God willing, we'll go to the next section and God through Peter, he speaks to us about our church family.

So he looks in the door of this place and he addresses the relationships that we have with each other in the church family and what they should look like.

[43 : 16] But today, I want to look at verses 1 to 7 as through Peter, the Lord speaks to us about our marriages. And Peter was a married man.

When we think about one of the first, one of the early miracles, remember it was Peter's mother-in-law who was brought back to health through the touch of Jesus. So if Peter had a mother-in-law, he also had a wife.

And some of the commentators say that his wife travelled with him. I never checked the text to see where that was actually written down in the Bible, so you can check that one out yourself.

But I imagine, knowing Peter, and what we know of his personality through the Gospels, I imagine Peter wasn't always the easiest guy to live with.

Because he's very impulsive, and he's very direct, sometimes blunt. He's very strong-minded. He's very driven.

[44 : 24] And so Peter, as he writes about marriage, he's not writing about something that he has no experience of. He's writing from experience, and he's writing from experience, taking in what Jesus has taught him and what the Holy Spirit is speaking through him.

So really what we're doing this morning, I suppose, is we're taking the marriage course as drafted by Peter. But if you're not married here this morning, don't worry.

It's not as if you can switch off and sleep for the next 30 minutes or 25 minutes. This is a lesson that's helpful, not just for those who are married.

It's also helpful for those who are maybe going to get married soon, or who hope to get married. It's also helpful for those who know people who are married, because we need to be prayed for in our marriages.

So, let's work through the verses. And the first thing that we can say, the first point to note is that this section that Peter writes is intended to offer support for wives.

[45 : 43] So that's the first point. This is a section that is intended to offer support for wives. Sometimes when we watch a film or a documentary, if it touches on a sensitive area, like anxiety or depression or addiction, at the end of the program, there will be a message that flashes across the screen saying, if you're affected by any of these issues, if you're struggling with A, B or C, please phone this number, please visit this website, and you can find support.

And Peter, in writing about marriage, he begins verse 1 by addressing the wives. And it won't have passed you by to notice that Peter spends six out of the seven verses addressing wives.

So why is that? And some might say this seems unfair.

Why is there six verses for wives and only one verse for husbands? Is Peter trying to be prescriptive? Is he trying to be a bit bullish here?

Is he seeking to be hard on the wives and let the husbands off easy? Well, no, he's not. Peter here, as God speaks through him, is offering support.

[47 : 20] Because if you go back and visit the places that Peter was writing to and look into the context there, it seems that it was much harder to be a wife than it was to be a husband back in that day and age and in that place.

And so wives needed support and they needed guidance on how they could be good disciples of Jesus within marriage.

And very often, the marriages that Peter was speaking into were marriages where the wife was a believer and the husband was not a believer.

So there was difficulty. So in application, the first thing to note, just as we get into this section, is that this is intended to give support.

It's not suppressive. This is intended to give support. The teaching of the Bible is not chauvinistic.

[48 : 28] I know the culture tries to tell us that it is. And if you never pick up a Bible, that's what you would believe. But this is not a chauvinistic message.

The teaching of the Bible was revolutionary at the time of writing because women in the Bible were given a place of honor that they didn't have in that culture. And Jesus, in the way that he related to women in ministry, was unlike any other teacher that they'd ever known.

So this teaching that comes from Jesus through Peter to us, it was and it is intended to be supportive, not suppressive.

I think that needs to be said because of the culture that we're living in. So this is support for wives as we begin to read. The second point that we can note here, and we can't shy away from this, is that Peter, he calls for wives to be submissive.

Verse 1. Wives, in the same way, be submissive to your husbands. Now this is a hard pill.

[49 : 50] I can sense it even in the room just now. This is a hard pill for some people to swallow. And as I noted that down in my bit of paper, my mind went back to when I was a wee boy.

And I remember being probably four or five years old, talking of pills. and my mother, I was quite a poor, thin little boy when I was sort of four years old.

You'd struggle to believe that and I'm a waistline, but that's the way it was. And so my mother decided that it would be a good idea for me to start taking cod liver oil tablets.

These horrible little rubberized tablet things. And this was the new rule. Before I got breakfast, I was to take this tablet. And so day one, night came the bottle that was the size of a gas canister full of these pills.

And I took it in my fingers. I didn't like the smell. I didn't like how it felt. I didn't like how it looked. And so my mother, she was trying to put this thing down my throat and I wouldn't swallow it.

[51 : 05] No matter what she did, I just would not swallow it. It was too hard a pill to swallow. And for some, this text is a bit like a cod liver oil tablet on first glance.

It's a hard text to swallow. Because the reality is that submission to a husband is not always a joy. Because husbands are sinners.

sinners. And some husbands are big, ugly sinners that can be really hard to live with and everyone can see that.

And some husbands can be quieter, more sanctimonious sinners who look perfectly respectable outside of the house but inside of the house are incredibly annoying.

And going back to Peter's day, as I noted, many of the wives that Peter wrote to were married to unbelievers.

[52 : 11] And these unbelievers, they made the wives' lives difficult. They perhaps weren't happy with this newfound faith in Christ that their wives had.

Maybe it annoyed them that their wives' language had begun to change. some of the things that their wives used to do, they wouldn't do anymore. Some of the places they used to be happy to go, they weren't happy to go anymore.

And now they had this annoying habit of wanting to go and meet together with God's people in this thing called church, which wasn't always convenient. So there were clashes in the marriage back then because of what they would and wouldn't do.

Just as there will be clashes in marriages between believers and unbelievers even in this room here today for all the same reasons.

Why do you have to go out to church on a Sunday night to our meeting? What a pest! These clashes did happen, they still happen. So there was difficulty within these marriages where there's a believing wife, unbelieving husband, but this is not just for them.

[53 : 29] This is also for wives who are married to believers because believers can be annoying too. We all have scaffolding on.

We're all still sinners even if we're Christians. So submission in marriage can be a difficult thing and we need to recognize that. Peter is making that point clear.

This text can be a hard pill to swallow. Now going back to the cod liver oil tablet, I'll take you just a wee bit down the line.

I'll take you from 8 o'clock in the morning to 11 o'clock in the morning. Three hours had passed, day one. Still hadn't had the tablet. My mother's trying to persuade me.

She's trying to motivate me to swallow this tablet. I can still remember being in the toy section of Woolies in Stornoway. I had a Batman car in one hand and I had the cod liver oil thing in the other hand.

[54 : 41] My mother was saying to me, all you have to do is swallow that and I'll pay for this. All you have to do is take the tablet. I can remember at the back of my throat I can remember piercing the rubber with my teeth and the putrid fishy oil coming out.

To cut a long story short, there was weeping, there was gnashing of teeth in the aisle, but I didn't submit. It was a dark day. Even though my mother was trying to inspire me, persuade me to submit.

It was for my own good. I wouldn't do it. And as Peter counsels these wives to submit, he points them to Jesus.

He directs them to Jesus. He says in the same way, verse 1, that Jesus submitted, as he points them back to the previous sections, be submissive, he says.

We can imagine some wives saying, but that's just not fair. You don't know how annoying he is. I shouldn't have to. I think what we're told through this text is, we'll speak to Jesus about that, says Peter.

[56 : 11] yes, sometimes it can seem unfair, yes, sometimes it can seem unreasonable, but if you want to speak to someone who understands what it's like to be in a position where you're treated unfairly, unreasonably, there's no one better than Jesus.

He understands what that feels like. He can help you. He has been there time and time again. So the inspiration, the motivation to be submissive on the occasions that we don't want to be is Jesus.

Now, let me just say for clarity, this is that there's sometimes when it is not right to be submissive. Sometimes in relationships there can be abuse, there can be behavior which is wholly wrong, and the call is not to be submissive and just stick in these destructive relationships.

There is a time to eject. But in the normal domestic clashes that we encounter when sinner lives with sinner, then the thing that we must keep on doing is looking to Jesus, speaking to Jesus, asking for that submissive spirit of Jesus to be given to us.

So Peter, he talks about support. He's given support for wives. He talks about submissive wives. And the next thing he says is he talks about successful wives.

[58 : 01] So that's the third point, successful wives. And still in verse 1 into verse 2, 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.

They may be won over without words by the behavior of their wives when they see the purity and reverence of your lives. So Peter, he's thinking about what success looks like within marriage.

And success does not look like a high earning job. He's not talking here about some kind of home environment that has a thousand million likes on Instagram.

He's not using this world's markers when he's thinking about success. Peter, when he is talking about success, he uses the term in verse 1, winning over.

But he's not talking money, he's not talking career, he's not talking home making even. He's talking about being persuasive in drawing someone to Jesus.

[59 : 21] Peter is talking about being influential in a husband being led to Jesus. He's talking about a wife that wins over her husband for Jesus.

success. And that's the priority that we often lose sight of. And it's not just one that's limited to marriage.

Yes, the application here is within marriage, but it goes far wider than that. Spurgeon wrote a book called The Soul Winner, and that's the calling of every Christian.

We shouldn't ask Jesus to come into our lives, realise that we have forgiveness of sin, and sit our backsides in a chair with our feet up for the rest of our days. That's not our calling.

We're called to be soul winners. We're to try and win people over for Jesus.

[60 : 35] So how does that work within marriage? Well, Peter gives advice on that. How, according to Peter, should a Christian wife seek to win her husband over for Jesus?

That's the question. Should she buy a thousand tracts and leave one on a coffee table everywhere in the house, so that wherever the husband goes, he's finding tracts that are pointing him to Jesus?

Well, I don't think that's what's been taught here. Should she be playing a high volume Christian podcast out of every speaker in the house? No, that's not the application here either. Should she be preaching at her husband every day on every given opportunity?

Is it about using the right words relentlessly? Well, no, says Peter. There will be some husbands, says Peter, who do not believe the word.

They determinedly do not believe the word. It's not that they haven't heard the word. It's not that they don't know the word. They just will not believe. But Peter says in verse 1, they may be won over without words by the behavior of their wives.

[62 : 00] And what kind of behavior should be seen? Peter answers in verse 2, well, there should be purity and reverence.

And these qualities shouldn't just be kind of the occasional flash across the life, but these qualities should be evident over the long haul.

There should be purity. and reverence that the fear of God, that sense of God's presence in the house, overseeing everything in life, that awareness of God with us.

These are the things which should be seen in the behavior within the marriage. marriage. And so there's helpful instruction here, and it's for us all, and it relates to all of life, but especially to marriage.

You know, I've heard wives in the past saying, you know, I'm just done speaking to him about Jesus. I've tried. I've heard wives with tears in their eyes saying, I've spoken, and I've spoken, and I've spoken, and I've tried to get him to believe, and the more I speak, the less he seems to hear.

[63 : 33] The more I try and persuade, the more determined he seems to get not to believe, and Peter's saying through these verses, that's very true. You know, sometimes when it comes to sharing faith with those that we're closest to, it's best to spend much more time talking to God about them than it is talking to them about God.

And as we stay close to the Lord, and as we seek to live lives that are pure, lives that are lived full of that sense of reverence and awe of God, Peter is teaching that will more likely bring spiritual success than your many words.

So Peter here, he's giving a lesson to wives and how they can be spiritually successful. He speaks about submission. He's giving support.

And the next thing he speaks about is wives that shine. That's verses three to verse six. Your beauty should not come from outward adornment such as braided hair and the wearing of gold, jewelry, and fine clothes.

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. For this is the way the holy women of the past who put their hope in God used to make themselves beautiful.

[65 : 14] They were submissive to their own husbands, 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.

Now, as we read these verses, are we here reading about a ban that Peter imposes on nice clothes and braided hair and jewelry?

well, no, that's not the point. What Peter is saying is that that kind of beauty which is on the outward, it's beauty, but it fades quickly.

But there's an unfading beauty, verse 4, that comes from your inner self. love. And that's where the shining comes from.

So there's a tip, perhaps, for some of the young men and women. Don't just go when you're considering your partner for life.

[66 : 29] Don't just go for someone that you find physically attractive. Yes, that's necessary for marriage, but there needs to be more than that. Because physical beauty fades.

And if that's all the marriage is built on, it's not built on a very steady, secure foundation. So what makes a wife shine and keep on shining through the years?

Well, the answer is godliness. The inner beauty comes from a close walk with God.

It comes from putting our hope in God. And when I was reading through this, my mind went to a couple of folks who, towards the end of their lives, were very, very frail physically.

but there was a real beauty that came from deep within. I can think of Ina in hospital. In these days when her strength was fading, but there was a beauty that shined from within her.

[67 : 53] I can think of Marlene, who as she battled at the end of life, as her strength faded, there was this shining, there was this beauty that came from within.

And there are many examples that we can think of of that. There's an inner beauty that comes from having, verse 5, our hope in God.

So putting our hope in God is the most beautiful thing. That's where the light comes from, that's where the shining comes from. And then Peter, as he teaches this, he gives us the example of Sarah in verse 6.

And we've been studying Sarah in the evening, those who come out in the evenings. Sarah was Abraham's wife. She wasn't perfect, we've seen that, but she was godly.

And she was married to Abraham, who also was far from perfect, but he was godly. And so as Peter teaches this, I wonder what was going through his mind, who was going through his mind when he was thinking about unfading beauty.

[69 : 13] Who is Peter thinking of when he writes about a gentle and quiet spirit in verse 4? Well, he's thinking about Jesus.

That's where a constant bright, shining beauty comes from. Remember what Jesus said about himself in Matthew chapter 11?

He says, Come to me, all who are weary and burdened, I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls.

love. And so Peter is saying, as he so often did, come to Jesus. Stay close to Jesus.

He is the one who makes us shine. He is the one who can make our marriages beautiful. shining wives, successful wives, submissive wives, support for wives, and my time is gone, but I cannot stop without addressing the husbands.

[70 : 27] And husbands are called to be considerate. I just got the one verse of seven, and it's verse seven. 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.

So what does a considerate husband look like? And I won't spend much time on this, I'll give you the headings, and we can talk about it later, and you can go and study it yourselves. What does a husband who is considerate look like?

Well, four things. First of all, four H's, just for your memory. First of all, he's at home with his wife. Be considerate, he says in verse seven, as you live with your wife.

And that's a point that might be easy to miss, but there's an assumption here that we will live together. There's an intimacy, there's a physical intimacy there that is assumed.

Now, I know that sometimes it's necessary, as it was for Peter, to go off on trips for a period, in return, but considerate husbands will not always be absent.

[71 : 58] Considerate husbands are called to be with their wives, and that doesn't just mean that we're to be in the same house all the time. how often do we see in houses, a husband in one chair, a wife in another chair, the husband's connected to some world in this device, the wife is connected to some world in another device, they're not with each other.

There's no connection between them, even though they're in the same house. But the husband is called here to be considerate, to make that determined effort to be with his wife.

The responsibility there lies with husbands. We are those who are to make the effort to keep that connection, that there will be intimacy, that there will be that witness within the marriage.

So live with your wives, says Peter. The husband, he's at home with his wife. It's the first thing that a considerate husband has to take on board.

The second thing is he honours his wife. The NIV translated as treat them with respect. Why does that?

[73 : 21] I don't know, because the word literally is honour. We're to honour our wives. In the same way that we saw the king being honoured yesterday, we're to give that place of honour to our wives within marriage.

And when we do that, when we pursue that as husbands, when we aim for that within a marriage, submission isn't a hard pill to swallow for the wife.

When we honour our wives, submission doesn't taste like a cod liver oil tablet. It's more like a margo bar. Considerate husband, he's at home with his wife, he honours his wife, thirdly, he helps his wife.

Peter says something very controversial here, he talks about the weaker partner. It's very counter-cultural, it's something that we could get parked up on for half an hour, I haven't got time to dig into this.

One note that's helpful in my Bible here is this is not a reference that says to moral stamina or strength of character or mental capacity, but probably a reference just to sheer physical strength.

[74 : 45] strength. I know that's not always the case, but generally speaking, Peter is saying the husband will have greater physical strength.

So the one with a stronger physical frame is to use that strength to help and not to hinder his wife.

And that's what it looks like to be considerate. We're to help, not sit with our feet up, not be lazy, not expect her to do everything, but to actually physically help.

Considerate husband, he's at home with his wife, he honours his wife, he helps his wife, and the final thing here is that he remembers that he is an heir with his wife.

The commentator says it quicker than I can. The wife receives the same grace her husband does. She receives the same salvation her husband does.

[75 : 49] Husband and wife are heirs together of the gracious gift of life. Not one above the other, but equal.

Both heirs of the grace and the life that comes through faith in Jesus. And that's what makes the difference as we finish. It's the grace and the life that flows from Jesus.

That's what makes the difference. If you and I want to be good citizens, if we want to be the best employees and employers in the workplace, if we want to be considerate husbands, if we want to be wives as God has designed, if we want to be members of the congregation who reflect something of the beauty of Christ and community, we need the grace and the life that flows from Jesus.

And today he offers it. But we have to accept it. Without that grace, without that life, we can't be saved.

But with that grace, with that life, we are assured of salvation and we can expect transformation within our lives. But remember, for that, we have to give access all areas to the Lord Jesus.

[77 : 27] Let's pray. heavenly Father, we thank you for your word.

We confess that we are challenged by it, we are convicted by it, and we pray that as you show us ourselves, that you would help us to repent of the areas where we are sinful and to receive the grace and the life that flows from the Lord Jesus.

We pray this in his name. Amen. We'll sing to conclude. Mission Praise 275, I heard the voice of Jesus say, come unto me and rest.

I heard the voice of Jesus say, come unto me and rest.

Lay down thou weary one, lay down thy head upon my breast.

[78 : 46] I came to Jesus as I was weary and warm and sad. I found in him a resting place, and he has made me glad.

I heard the voice of Jesus say, behold, I freely give. The living water, thirsty one, stood down and drink and live.

I came to Jesus and I drank of that life-giving stream.

My thirst was quenched, my soul revived, and now I live in him.

I heard the voice of Jesus say, I am this dark world's light.

[80 : 02] Look unto me, thy Lord shall rise, and all thy day be light.

I looked to Jesus and I found in him I star my son. And in that light of life I walk till
travelling days are done.

And may the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God the Father, and the fellowship
of God the Holy Spirit be with us all now and forevermore. Amen.