

God's Blueprint for Marriage Stands in Stark Contrast to This Common Message

In today's world, there are many conflicting voices vying for our attention when it comes to the subject of marriage. But if you are a follower of Christ, look no further than the Word of God. The God who made you, redeemed you and loves you has already given you a glorious blueprint for marriage.

God's blueprint stands in stark contrast to the world's plan. The world counsels us to fight for our own rights or leave our spouse if our needs are not being met. But God's plan is different and far more beautiful. It involves submitting to one another out of reverence for Christ, confronting the sin in our own hearts before confronting it in each other and forgiving our spouse—as often as it takes. This is God's countercultural plan for marriage, designed to make our marriages flourish.

The Marriage Blueprint

One place where we see God's blueprint for marriage is in 1 Peter 3:1-7. In this passage, Peter dedicates six verses to the wives and only one verse to the husbands. To understand why and to be equipped to correctly apply these principles to our lives today, we must first study the context of this passage.

In Roman culture during this period, a wife was expected to follow her husband's religion without question—so if a wife came to faith in Christ before her husband, it was a huge problem. Not only did pagan men reject the exclusive nature of the Christian faith on principle, but the natural order of the marital relationship within Roman society was being challenged at the same time.

For this reason, Peter spends six verses addressing a Christian wife who has an unbelieving husband—a common scenario in his day. Yet if you examine this Scripture closely, you will find that Peter gives more responsibility in one verse to the husband than in six verses to the wife. Here are four valuable insights he provides that are relevant in all marriages today.

1. Submit in Reverence

Wives are called to submit to their husbands. The word “submission” is an unwelcome word in our culture today. But biblical submission is a beautiful thing and the foundation of marital blessing. In fact, God calls us all to submit to one another out of reverence to Christ (see Eph. 5:21). As we trust Him with our lives, we have the freedom to submit because we are trusting God to work on our behalf. In the same way, a wife is free to submit to her husband.

2. Build Strong Character

A wife’s character is her greatest strength. In an age where the standard of beauty is shallow and ever-changing, God has given women a different standard of beauty. A wife’s desire should be to develop what is most powerful, precious and has the most impact: godly character. Such inner beauty empowers her to be her spouse’s greatest encourager, to shine as Christ’s light in the world and to find her sense of worth in God alone.

3. Fear Nothing but God

Wives have nothing to fear as they follow Jesus. If you fear God, you will fear nothing else. This unshakable confidence and trust in the Lord will sustain a wife through the trials of marriage—whether a crisis in the home, an unbelieving husband or the daily pressures of parenthood.

4. Cultivate Unity

Finally, God calls husbands to be loving, considerate and respectful toward their wives so that the family’s prayer life

is not hindered. If you are a Christian husband, God has called you to cultivate peace and unity in your relationship with your wife. Ask for God's help to know everything there is to know about her so that you can minister to her and serve her in the best way possible. As you learn what brings her joy and brings her pain, you will be cultivating an intimacy with your wife that will strengthen your family in a way that nothing else can. In turn, this unity of heart, soul and mind will allow for deep and effective prayer together.

Looking Within Yourself

What might be hindering spiritual unity in your marriage? Is it selfishness, a lack of faith or failure to trust in the promise of God? The devil knows that there is great power in a husband and wife who are unified in Christ, and he will do everything he can to divide you. He knows there is power in submission. He knows there is power in your prayers, especially together as a couple. But when you follow God's blueprint for marriage, Satan's schemes will have no power. As you align yourself with God's plans and seek to honor Him together, watch as He works mightily through your marriage, for His glory. {eoa}

Michael Youssef, Ph.D., is the founder and president of *Leading the Way with Dr. Michael Youssef*, a worldwide ministry that leads the way for people living in spiritual darkness to discover the light of Christ through the creative use of media and on-the-ground ministry teams. Youssef was born in Egypt.

This article originally appeared at .