

A Study of 1 Peter 3

I. Outline.

1. Instructions to wives with unbelieving husbands (1 Peter 3:1-6).
2. Instructions to Christian husbands (7).
3. Sundry instructions for Christian living (8-12).
4. How to act in the face of opposition (13-17).
5. What Christ did (18-22).

II. Summary.

This chapter begins with a very encouraging word for wives of unbelieving husbands. A method is outlined for working toward the conversion of that mate (same principle would work for men with unbelieving wives). Then a word to husbands is given. A series of simple instructions is stated regarding basic Christian living. We are advised as to how to live in the face of persecution. We are urged to sanctify Christ in our hearts as Lord and be ready to give an answer. We are told about what Jesus did for us.

III. Chronology.

BIBLE PERIOD: The Period of the Church.

If you are not familiar with the 15 Bible Periods, please click here:

<https://maplehillchurchofchrist.files.wordpress.com/2018/05/15bibleperiods.pdf>

IV. Words/Phrases to Study

- **1 Peter 3:1-4... THEY ALSO MAY WITHOUT THE WORD BE WON BY THE CONVERSATION OF THE WIVES**—“The Greek article does not appear before the noun ‘word’ in the phrase, ‘may without the word be gained.’ Here, ‘word’ does not refer, as it does in the former phrase, to the word of truth—the gospel. Instead, it refers to the exhortations, the persuasions of the wives. These husbands had heard the gospel, and were familiar with its demands. They had thus far been stubborn, rebellious, disobedient. Peter admonished the wives of such men to desist from further importunity, lest such should descend to nagging; and instead, by godly conduct and discreet behavior to encourage them to do that which they already understood to be their duty. Properly translated, the passage reads: ‘If any obey not the word, they may without a word (from the wife) be gained by her godly behavior.’ This is an instance when the silent eloquence is more effective than vigorous and vehement debate” [Guy N. Woods, “Questions and Answers,” in *Gospel Advocate*, 2/6/1986, p. 83]. Another interesting view of this text—“It seems that not a few are eager to avoid responsibility to evangelism and are hereby emboldened to rely wholly upon example. By their good example only, they tell us, we are to win souls to Christ. I wonder if it has crossed such a mind that Peter was not here discussing the best method of evangelism, but expounding upon the serious subject of SUBJECTION. Wives are to recall their subjection—even when seeking to convert their husbands. ‘Without a word,’ obviously does not mean she cannot even ask her husband to consider the claims of Jesus of Nazareth, for none can be converted independently of the truth (Js 1:18; Rom 10:17), but that her primary means of persuasion was by her godly life. She is not to bludgeon him with proof of Christianity, but even here she is to recall her role” [Bill Lockwood, “The Grace of Life that Produces a Happy Christian Home,” in *The Abundant Life*, Edited by Perry Hall, p. 252].
- **1 Peter 3:6... AS SARAH OBEYED ABRAHAM**—“It should not be thought that Sarah's obedience to Abraham was in any sense Servility. On one occasion she ordered Abraham to ‘Cast out the bondwoman and her son,’ a ‘request’ that sorely grieved and distressed Abraham; but he obeyed her, God himself commanding Abraham to do it (Gen. 21:10-12). Nevertheless, there was the

utmost respect and honor accorded her husband by the noble Sarah” [James Burton Coffman’s Commentaries].

- **1 Peter 3:7... LIKEWISE, YE HUSBANDS**—“...while the apostle particularly addressed himself to the wives of unbelieving husbands, the implication here is that the wives of these believers were also Christians. This was a logical conclusion from the nature of the society then existing. Wives might occasionally obey the gospel without their husbands, but not likely would husbands become Christians without their wives” [Guy N. Woods, Commentary on 1 Peter, p. 92]. |||| **ACCORDING TO KNOWLEDGE**—“I take to refer to the knowledge of the fact that the wife is constitutionally weaker. She is physically his inferior, and so Peter adds, ‘as unto the weaker vessel’. ... The woman, far from being relegated to an inferior status in Christ, is to be considered as an equal sharer in spiritual blessings (Gal 3:28)” [Bill Lockwood, “The Grace of Life that Produces a Happy Christian Home,” in *The Abundant Life*, Edited by Perry Hall, p. 254].
- **1 Peter 3:12... FOR THE EYES OF THE LORD ARE OVER THE RIGHTEOUS**—“This is a reference to the providence which God exercises over his people. Jesus said, “I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. Amen” (Matt. 28:20); and that has the same meaning as the clause here” [James Burton Coffman’s Commentaries].
- **1 Peter 3:18-20...** “To understand 1 Peter 3:18-21 fully, one must have an understanding of 1 Peter 1:10-12. ... Here is plainly stated the **what** (teaching), **when** (before the Christ’s earthly ministry), and **how** (Christ’s Spirit in them, the prophets) testified of the sufferings and glory of Christ. In other words, the prophets preached with the Spirit of Christ in them. 1 Peter 3:18 relates that Christ suffered and died for the sins of all men (Jn 3:16; Rom 5:8-9; Titus 2:14; 1 Pet 2:21-25; Isa 53:1-12). He, the Just, for the unjust (2 Cor 5:21; Heb 4:15; Rom 3:23), to bring us to God (2 Cor 5:18-19), having been put to death in the flesh (Heb 5:8-9; Eph 2:12-16), but quickened (made alive) by the Spirit (Rom 1:4; Acts 1:3; Rev 1:18). 1 Peter 3:19 relates that the same Spirit the prophets preached by, Noah preached by. Christ preached through Noah to those people in Noah’s day who were imprisoned, dead in sin (1 Pet 4:6). Christ himself did not preach, but his message was delivered by righteous Noah (Gen 6:9; Heb 11:7; Gal 3:8). When Paul, Peter, John, or the gospel preacher of today preached or preaches God’s word, it is Christ’s message being set forth by his messenger (Eph 5:19; Col 3:16; Rom 8:9; 1 Pet 1:11). This passage does not teach, as the denominational world contends, that Christ himself went into hell, preaching to those who were imprisoned there, and thus promoting the false doctrine of a second chance salvation. By way of example, Abraham stated that there was a ‘great gulf’ fixed wherein no one could cross (Lk 16:19-31), and the Hebrews writer stated that man’s appointment with death is inevitable, and after that the judgment (Heb 9:27). Christ did not go into hell, but into the Hadean realm, the place called Paradise (Lk 23:43; Acts 2:27 ASV). There is no second chance salvation! When one leaves this life unprepared to face the Christ in judgment (2 Cor 5:10), in rejection and disobedience to God’s will (Jn 12:48; Mt 7:21-27; Lk 6:46; 2 Th 1:7-9), he is lost and damned forever. God was patient (2 Pet 3:9) while Noah preached and prepared the ark. Eight souls, Noah and his wife, their three sons, and daughters-in-law were saved by water (Gen 6:9; 1 Pet 3:20). They were in the ark, the place of safety prescribed and designed by God, transported by water, saved from the destruction of an ungodly, evil world (2 Pet 2:5; 3:5-7)” [Ken Butterworth, “Baptism Doth Also Now Save Us,” *The Bible Way*, 9/1984, p. 2].
- **1 Peter 3:21... BAPTISM DOTHS ALSO NOW SAVE US**—“Peter has referred to the eight souls who were saved through water when Noah built the ark. Just as the water was a point of transition to bring them from an old world of filth into a new world, in a manner that corresponds to it, God uses baptism. It is not just a physical bath to remove dirt from the body. It has a spiritual consequence in that we make our appeal to God for a clear conscience by obeying this form of the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus (cf., Rom 6:3-6, 16-18; Acts 2:38; 22:16)” [Jack Wilhelm, *RSVP*, Nov/1985]. |||| “When all the efforts to evade, subvert, deny, refute, and otherwise oppose the verse as of no relevance, power, or importance, the statement remains untouched: Baptism

saves! When all discussion otherwise comes to an end, baptism saves! Until the end of time in this world, and even into eternity, the force and truth of this statement rings and will ring: Baptism saves! The real question is will I believe and obey this truth God has stated through the inspiration of the words of Peter?" [William Woodson, "1 Peter 3:21," in *The Spiritual Sword*, Volume 35, #3, April 2004, p. 40].

V. Lessons & Applications.

1. **The silent teaching of a lovely life can win a companion to Christ** (1 Pet 3:1-2). There are many wives who have married unbelieving men and *vice versa*. This circumstance makes for discomfort in the home and can even lead to disaster. The best solution for this problem is never to allow it to happen in the first place. However, for those who are in the situation, the Holy-Spirit-inspired advice of the Apostle Peter is the next best alternative. His advice is to live a dedicated and faithful Christian life before your husband/wife. Let them know just how much faithfulness to the Lord means to YOU! Such manner of life is bound to make a favorable impression upon your companion. Please read the comments of brother Winford Claiborne listed under these verses.
2. **The TRUE ADORNMENT (that of the heart), of a godly woman is of GREAT VALUE in God's sight** (1 Pet 3:3-6). As we read through our Bibles and we find something described as being in the sight of God of great price, this item ought to jump out at us and cause us to pay very special attention! The ornament of a meek and quiet spirit is something that each Christian lady should desire to have. In opposition to the latest fashion in clothing or shoes, this "ornament" will pay dividends in eternity!
3. **The obligation of Husbands** (1 Pet 3:7). He must be understanding. The cruelty which is hardest to bear is often not deliberate, but the product of sheer THOUGHTLESSNESS! He must be chivalrous (i.e., courageous, honorable, having a readiness to protect his wife). He must remember the woman has EQUAL SPIRITUAL RIGHTS (a fellow-heir of the grace of life). Not fulfilling these obligations hinders his prayers. The sighs of the injured wife comes between the husband's prayers and God's hearing.
4. **Be courteous** (1 Pet 3:8). "What is courtesy? Something more than veneer, ease of manners, familiarity with social requirements, and bearing in public assemblies. Courtesy is a fruit of the Spirit, the outgrowth of the gospel-filled heart, manifestations of brotherly love. It stands against sham. Christian courtesy is founded upon: (1) Thoughtfulness of others; (2) Forgetfulness of self; (3) Genuine Christian love and devotion" [*The Minister's Monthly*, December 1965, p. 192].
5. **LET HIM REFRAIN HIS TONGUE FROM EVIL** (1 Pet 3:10). "Gossip is the most deadly microbe. It has neither legs nor wings. It is composed entirely of tales, and most of them have stings" [Quoted from Morris Mandel, by Arlin Atmore in *Leadership*, Vol 6, #1].
6. **ESCHEW EVIL AND DO GOOD; LET HIM SEEK PEACE, AND ENSUE IT** (1 Pet 3:11). "The three verbs are all commands (first aorist imperatives) and demand immediate action. They could be rendered: Immediately turn away from evil and seek peace at once and follow it now. If you read these verbs in that light, you can understand the urgency of doing what God commands in promoting peace among human beings"[Winford Claiborne, *Divine Relationships*, p. 192].
7. **FOR THE EYES OF THE LORD ARE OVER THE RIGHTEOUS** (1 Pet 3:12). "The Lord's eyes, according to Peter, are over the righteous and His ears are open to our prayers. He wants us to pray to Him. In fact, He commands us to do so—not because He does not know what is on our hearts—but that we may express our needs, our love, and our adoration through prayer. 'Pray without ceasing,' Paul commanded the Thessalonians (1 Th 5:17). But let us not overlook Peter's statement in 1 Peter 3:12, 'The face of the Lord is against them that do evil'" [Winford Claiborne, *Divine Relationships*, p. 194].
8. **A Description of the Christian's Answer for Christ** (1 Pet 3:15-16).

- 1) REASONABLE—from *apologian* (*logos*, a reasonable and intelligent statement of his position).
 - 1- Our faith must be a FIRST-HAND DISCOVERY, not a SECOND-HAND STORY.
 - 2- The Christian must go through the mental and spiritual toil of **thinking out his faith**.
 - 2) With Meekness (gentleness)—with winsomeness and love.
 - 3) With Fear (reverence)—in atone which God can hear with joy.
 - 4) With Good Conversation (behavior) in Christ—A saint is someone whose life makes it easier to believe in God.
- 9. The Suffering Christian Must Always REMEMBER that he has a Suffering Lord** (1 Pet 3:17-18). The work of Christ was unique and never to be repeated. The sacrifice was for SIN (1 Corinthians 15:3; Gal 1:4). The sacrifice was VICARIOUS—the Just for the unjust. The work of Christ was to bring us to God. The work of Christ was a complete triumph (v. 22).

VI. Questions.

True or False

01. _____ The Bible says that baptism saves us.
02. _____ Jesus now reigns at the right hand of God.
03. _____ The preaching mentioned in the last part of this chapter was done in the days of Noah.
04. _____ Sarah obeyed Abraham and called him, “lord.”
05. _____ It is possible that our home life can cause our prayers to be hindered.

Multiple Choice (Select the BEST Answer)

06. _____ Wives of unbelieving husbands are urged to couple their chaste conversation (behavior) with: (a) fear; (b) action; (c) honesty.
07. _____ Rather than render evil for evil, the Christian should render this for evil: (a) negotiation; (b) confidence; (c) blessing.
08. _____ While the eyes of the Lord are over the righteous to hear their prayers, the face of the Lord is against them that: (a) do not pray; (b) do not bow; (c) do evil.
09. _____ Our answer should be given with this and fear: (a) meekness; (b) courtesy; (c) urgency.
10. _____ For which of the following is it better to suffer: (a) well doing; (b) evil doing.

Fill in the Blanks

11. When Jesus suffered for our sins, it was the just for the _____.
12. “...even the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of _____.”
13. “...love as _____, be _____, be _____.”
14. Those women who do well and are not afraid are properly referred to as daughters of _____.
15. “Finally, be ye all of one _____, having _____ one of another...”

Each Question is worth 7 Points

My Score is: _____

Answers will be found on next week’s handout

ANSWERS to 1 Peter 2 Questions... **01**—False (18); **02**—True (11); **03**—False (25); **04**—True (2); **05**—True (12); **06**—b (7-8); **07**—c (1); **08**—b (24); **09**—b (17); **10**—c (9); **11**—confounded (6); **12**—thankworthy, endure grief (19); **13**—Lord’s, sake (13); **14**—people (10); **15**—follow, (21).

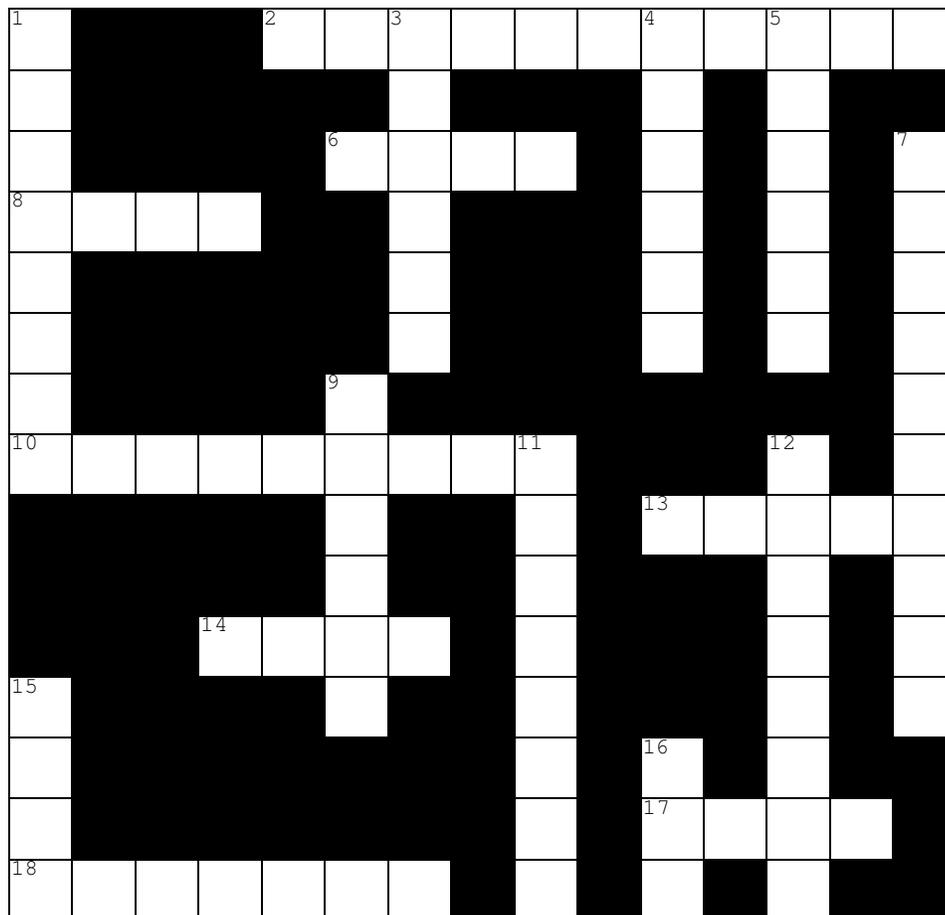
VII. Seek-A-Word Puzzle. The words may be backwards, diagonal, upside down, etc. See if you can find them all. The more you use the words of the Bible, the greater blessed you will be! You might be surprised at how much this little exercise will help you retain important truths. THANK YOU for the good effort you are putting forth in Bible study. –DRL

W O R D M D O T C V L A N
 G S W E L L S C O L O R D
 H D I L G L H A N I V L P
 G I V E G I A L V K E O R
 E V E N V F V L E E E B A
 V C S A V E I E R W D E Y
 I H U S B A N D S I S Y E
 L R B P V R G H A S K N R
 K I J I R I G H T E O U S
 P S E R A F R A I D T H M
 Y T C I L P A D O R N E D
 L R T T S B E I N G N A F
 K A G O O D S U F F E R O
 W E B S R M R M E E K T I

ADORNED	AFRAID	ALSO	BEING	CALLED
CHRIST	CONVERSATION	EVEN	EVIL	FEAR
GIVE	GOOD	HAVING	HEART	HUSBANDS
LIFE	LIKEWISE	LORD	LOVE	MEEK
OBEY	PRAYERS	RIGHTEOUS	SAVE	SPIRIT
SUBJECT	SUFFER	WELL	WIVES	WORD

VIII. Crossword Puzzle.

1 Peter 3 (KJV)			
ACROSS		DOWN	
02	Another word for perishable.	01	Christian husbands and wives are heirs ____ of the grace of life.
06	Baptism doth also now ____ us.	03	Christians should have this for their hope.
08	Better to suffer for well doing than for ____ doing.	04	Needs to be refrained from evil.
10	The eyes of the Lord are over these folks.	05	____ to suffer for well doing.
13	Kind of spirit which is a VALUABLE ornament.	07	Wives are to be in this to their own husbands.
14	Kind of spirit which is a VALUABLE ornament.	09	Jesus is gone into ____.
17	Key word in understanding a difficult text.	11	What the Christian is to do with the Lord Jesus in his heart.
18	A Christian woman's adorning should not be this.	12	It is possible for prayers to be ____.
		15	For Christ ____ hath once suffered.
		16	Wives are to be in subjection to their ____ husbands.



IX. EXTRA CREDIT FOR “SUPER” Bible Students...

Will you please consider answering these three SIMPLE questions based on the Bible text of this chapter? I will try to make use of your answers. Bring them with you next week. Tear out this last sheet from the Study Guide and be prepared to put it in a basket. I think it will be a great help to all of those in the class if you will do so. Thank you in advance for your marvelous cooperation!

W O R D: What word would you like to know more about in this chapter?

W O N D E R: I wonder what this phrase, verse, or series of verses means...

W I S H: I wish myself—or others whom I know or even don’t know—would understand this fact, principle, or concept from this chapter...