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January 2025 memory verse (NKJV)

Luke 24:45 And He opened their understanding, that they might comprehend the Scriptures.

Commentary on 1 Peter Chapter 3 by Chuck Smith 1.19.25

Shall we turn now to First Peter chapter three as Peter addresses himself to the wives? This particular section goes back to verse thirteen of chapter two,

Submit yourself to every ordinance of man for the Lord's sake: whether to king as supreme; governors, unto them sent toward the punishment of evildoers, so is the will of God, that in well doing you may put to silence the ignorance of foolish men (1Pe 2:13-15):

So the idea of submitting to one another in love. And so he talked about, first of all, the servants submitting themselves unto their own masters, Christ leaving us an example. And now, to wives.

Likewise, ye wives, be in subjection to your own husbands; that, if any obey not the word, they may also without the word be won by the conversation or behavior of the wives (1Pe 3:1);

Or the lifestyle of the wife. This particular Greek word is a difficult word to translate. The old English word was conversation, which doesn't mean verbal but it means your lifestyle. And so it's a word that has lost its meaning through the years when this translation was made. So you can translate that "behavior" or "lifestyle" or "manner of living." So as Paul wrote to the Corinthian church, I don't need that anyone should write letters of commendation for me because you are my living epistles known and read of all men.

Our lifestyle testifies to what we believe. And more people are brought to Christ by the observing of the Christian life as you live it, than are converted through just someone laying the four spiritual laws on them.

So Paul is declaring that our lifestyle is all-important. You wives who have unbelieving husbands, you're more apt to convert them by your lifestyle than you are by putting tracts in their peanut butter sandwiches. So that when they bite into the sandwich, they get the word and they pull it out of their mouth and they read, God loves you, you know. So it is the lifestyle, the way we live becomes the witness of what we declare.

One of the weaknesses of the church is the lack of the positive lifestyle of the believer, professing one thing and living another. That, of course, we call hypocrisy and that has been the bane and the curse of the church. So how we live is extremely important, just as important as what we say.

While they behold your chaste lifestyle with reverence. Whose adorning [or beauty] let it not be the outward the fancy hairstyles, the wearing of gold, or the putting on of fancy clothes (1Pe 3:2-3);

But let it be the hidden man of the heart, in that which is not corruptible, a meek and a quiet spirit, which in the sight of God is very valuable (1Pe 3:4).

But the true beauty, beauty that doesn't fade, the beauty that grows with years is that inner beauty. Some of the most beautiful people in the world, that beautiful inner beauty; you love to be around them because there's just such a beauty that comes forth from their lives. And Peter is saying recognize that, that is the true beauty. The true beauty isn't that which you put on outwardly but the true beauty is that which is inward, which shines out.

For after this manner in the old time the holy women also, who trusted in God, adorned themselves, being in subjection to their own husbands: Even as Sarah obeyed Abraham, calling him lord (1Pe 3:5-6):

Now I don't expect that you women are going to go this far as to call your husbands "lord", unless it's tongue-in-cheek. And interestingly enough, Sarah had and asserted her place, too. I mean, it was a two-way street. When she was upset over Ishmael mocking her little boy, she said to Abraham, "You get rid of that woman and her child." And Abraham, though it hurt him, got rid of Hagar and Ishmael. So you, husbands don't try to pounce on this scripture and use it as a club to beat your wives in submission. Marriage is a give-and-take proposition and it is an understanding.

Now of course with Peter, interestingly enough, has quite a bit to say to the wife. And if you read it in Amplified, I think these guys were male chauvinists because they really jump onto this and amplify it almost to an extreme. Peter has quite a bit to say to the wives but he has very little to say to the husbands. Interestingly enough, Paul shares pretty much equally; has quite a bit to say to the wives but then he has also quite a bit to say to the husbands, as far as the marriage relationships, interpersonal relationships within marriage. But,

you are the daughters of Sarah, as long as you do well, and are not afraid with any amazement (1Pe 3:6).

Now that's a peculiar phrase, "Not afraid with any terror," and I don't understand what Peter is saying by that. Maybe some of you have some ideas you can share with me.

Having devoted six verses to the wives, he now devotes one to the husband.

Likewise, ye husbands, dwell with them according to knowledge, giving honour unto the wife, as unto a weaker vessel, and as being heirs together of the grace of life; that your prayers be not hindered (1Pe 3:7).

Getting along; you know our prayer life can be hindered by friction within the home. And so it's important that there be a harmony within the house. It is important, that the husband recognize the weaknesses of the wife and honor her as a weaker vessel; watching over her, taking care of her, shielding her.

As I have said, basically in marriage God has two rules: one for the wife, one for the husband. In giving two rules, He keeps it simple so that it's almost impossible to say, Well, I forgot the rule. He's giving you just one so you can't forget. And in giving the rule, God was thinking of the other.

So when He said, "Husbands, love your wives, as Christ loved the church" (Ephesians 5:25), He knew that a woman's greatest need was that of knowing that she is loved supremely by her husband. And the woman is always fishing for the affirmation of this. Honey, do you love me? Honey, do I look nice? Do I look sharp tonight? Is this, you know, do you like this outfit? And she's always fishing for "Honey, you're beautiful. I love you. You're everything to me." She's needing this assurance and she fishes for this assurance because she needs the security of knowing that she's loved.

Now Peter is saying, Honor her knowing that she's weaker. Give her that security; give her that strength. You are the strong one, give her that strength. Let her feel the protection; let her feel secure; your big, strong arm around her. And she feels that security and she needs to feel that security.

And then the Lord said to the wives, "Submit yourself unto your own husbands" (Ephesians 5:22). And God knew that guys have this stupid male macho image of themselves and that they've got to feel that they're strong and powerful and in control; that they're running the show. And a challenge of their authority is a real threat to their manhood. And so in the challenging of the authority, they then feel they have to assert their manhood. And big boys don't cry; that is, big boys aren't emotional.

And so to assert my manhood, I become very strong, cold and aloof. "I'm running the show and I don't need you and I don't need anybody else. I can do it myself," you know. Oh boy, what that does then is just compound the insecurity of the wife that cause her to challenge you in the first place. And you can get a horrible cycle going here as it works against the marriage to destroy it. Because the more cold and aloof you are, the less secure she feels. The less secure she feels, the more she challenges your decision. The more she challenges your decisions, the colder you become and, you know, and so you can just tear a marriage apart.

And so these are important rules. They're basic to a good marriage, because the more the wife submits to her husband, the easier he finds it to show his love. The more he shows his love, the easier she finds it to submit to him.

Now he may be stupid, he may lose everything, but he's here and he loves me and, you know we're together, we'll make it. But if you're cold and aloof; this jerk making a stupid mistake and he's probably going to take off when he has lost everything. He'll be gone and then I won't have anything. What am I going to do? And she feels insecure, so she has to challenge everything that you do, everything that you say.

So these are basic simple rules. And always as far as the wife, it is subjection to the husband. To the husband, it is the honoring and the loving of his wife. And when it is working, it becomes a beautiful combination, and your lives can be enriched and your prayers effective. "Heirs together. We are heirs together of the grace of life."

There is no kind of a hierarchy in the spiritual realm. The men do not have an advantage over the women or vice versa; as far as in Christ, we are all one. So anybody who's looking for the superior sex or anything else, you will never find it in Christianity. For in Christianity, it removes any kind of barriers that exists between people. And we all come the same way to the same Lord to receive the same grace. And we are all one, heirs together of the grace of God. We share together equally in the things of the Lord. "For there is neither male nor female, bond or free: Christ is all and in all" (Colossians 3:11).

Finally [addressing now both], be of one mind, having compassion for one another, love as brethren, be pitiful (1Pe 3:8),

Now that word has changed in the usage, too. It would better be translated "full of pity." You see that's what it's actually saying, pity-full. But we've come to, you know, think of pitiful, as you know a poor cat that's lost an eye or something. So "be full of pity", or another translation of the Greek word is tenderhearted. Be a softie; be tenderhearted. I pray that God will always grant to me a tender heart, a heart of compassion. To be like Jesus I must have it.

How many times you read in the Gospel, "And Jesus looked upon them and had compassion on them." He was tenderhearted. He was a soft touch. Anybody could get to Him. He was always moved by the needs of people. And may God help us to be tenderhearted, not to become callused or indifferent to the needs of people around us but that we might have tender hearts, full of pity.

and be courteous (1Pe 3:8):

Beautiful Christian trait: courtesy. It doesn't hurt, but it pays big dividends. How important to be courteous.

Not rendering evil for evil (1Pe 3:9),

Now that's what the natural man would like to do, isn't it? I'll get even with you. "Evil for evil."

or railing for railing (1Pe 3:9):

So don't render "railing for railing". That only creates, you know, that only builds and let's you read, you know --there's so many nuts on the highway today. You know you get out and rail at someone, this guy's going to pull a gun at you. Have you heard some of these things that are happening on the road? I mean, it's getting dangerous living.

contrariwise blessing (1Pe 3:9);

knowing that you are thereunto called, that you should inherit a blessing (1Pe 3:9).

We ought to be seeking to bring blessings to people. So "bless those that curse you," Jesus said. "Do good to those who despitefully use you" (Matthew 5:44). This is what we've been called to do.

For he that will love life, and see good days (1Pe 3:10),

Now here Peter goes back and just quotes a portion out of the psalms. And again, it is interesting to me because it shows us Peter's good working knowledge of the Scriptures. And as he is writing in his own little exhortations here, he goes back and he quotes a portion of Psalms 34, about three or four verses out of Psalms 34. "He that would love life, and see good days," let him refrain his tongue from evil, and his lips that they speak no guile: Let him turn away from evil, and do good; let him seek peace, and pursue it. For the eyes of the Lord are over the righteous, and his ears are open unto their prayers: but the face of the Lord is against them that do evil (1Pe 3:10-12).

You want to have a good life, you want to see good days, these are the rules: Just "keep your tongue, refrain it from evil, speaking evil, and your lips from speaking deceitfully. Turn away from evil, do good. Seek peace, pursue it." You'll have a good life.

And who is he that will harm you, if you are followers of that which is good? But and if you suffer for righteousness' sake, happy are ye: and be not afraid of their terror, neither be troubled (1Pe 3:13-14);

He's moving into a new section in which he is going to be talking about suffering, and for the most part suffering wrongfully, suffering for righteousness' sake. You remember when Peter was arrested for the preaching of the Gospel and they beat him and told him not to preach anymore in the name of Jesus Christ? And Peter and his friends went away rejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer that kind of persecution for Jesus.

Now Peter's telling us the very same thing. In other words, Peter is not preaching something he didn't practice, but he did this very same thing himself. When he was suffered for righteousness' sake, he rejoiced, "Happy are you." Jesus said, "Blessed are ye," and the word "blessed" is happy; "when men persecute you, and say all manner of

evil against you falsely, for my sake. Rejoice, and be exceeding glad: for great is your reward in heaven" (Matthew 5:11-12). There's where you have to get the right perspective. You have to look onto the heavenly future.

So "if you suffer for righteousness' sake, happy are ye: be not afraid of their terror, neither be troubled; But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts (1Pe 3:14-15):

Give a special place for God in your life.

and be ready always to give an answer to every man that asks you for the reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and reverence (1Pe 3:15):

So live the kind of a life that is an example that will provoke people to question you. What makes you different? Why is it that you are not upset over this? "Be ready to give to every man an answer for that hope that you have."

Having a good conscience; that, whereas they may speak evil of you, as of evildoers, they may be ashamed that falsely accuse your good behavior in Christ (1Pe 3:16).

Or lifestyle in Christ. For it is better, if the will of God be so, that you suffer for well doing, than for evil doing (1Pe 3:17).

That's always a better thing. If you suffer for evil doing, you've got it coming. But if you suffer for well doing, then that is a better thing.

For Christ also hath once suffered for sins (1Pe 3:18), He's referring, of course, to the cross. Jesus went to the cross and died there for your sins.

the just [died] for the unjust (1Pe 3:18),

"God made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin" (2 Corinthians 5:21). "The just for the unjust,"

that he might bring us to God (1Pe 3:18),

The purpose of the cross is to put away our sin, which had separated us from God. The effect of sin is always alienation from God. You see, God created you in the beginning for fellowship. He wanted you to be one with Him, but a holy, pure, righteous God cannot be a part of sin, inconsistent with the nature of God. So man fell into sin; as the result, lost fellowship with God. The purposes of God was thwarted by sinful man.

So in order that man might have fellowship with God, these purposes of God restored, Jesus suffered once for our sins, "the just for the unjust", that He might be able to bring you to God. That He might be able to wash and cleanse you from your sin in order that you might have the purposes of God accomplished in your life as you fellowship with God.

being put to death in the flesh, but he was made alive by the Spirit: By which also he went and preached unto the spirits that were in prison; Which sometimes were disobedient, when once the longsuffering of God waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was being prepared, wherein few, that is, eight souls were saved by the water (1Pe 3:18-20).

Jesus preached to the souls in prison. Now in the prophecy concerning Jesus, in Isaiah 61, says, "The spirit of the Lord is upon me; because the LORD has anointed me to preach the good tidings to the meek; he has sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to those that are bound" (Isaiah 61:1).

What is he talking about? The prison was death by which men were bound. They were held captive. Jesus came to open the prison to those that are bound, or to open up Hades to those people who were bound there, who died before Jesus died for our sins. So when He died, He descended into hell. And He preached to those souls that were in prison. And when He ascended out of hell, He brought with Him those who had been captive.

In Ephesians chapter four, Paul tells us that "He who has ascended is the same one who first of all descended into the lower parts of the earth. And when he ascended, he led the captives from their captivity" (Ephesians 4:8-9).

Luke's gospel, the sixteenth chapter, Jesus describes what hell was like prior to His death: Two compartments, no capacity of crossing from one to the other. One was a place of torment, the other was a place of comfort. Those who died in faith went to the place of comfort and were comforted by father Abraham. They are the ones to which Jesus preached when He descended into hell. But "God did not leave his soul in hell, neither did he allow the Holy One to see corruption," but this same Jesus has God raised from the dead (Acts 2:27).

And Matthew's gospel chapter twenty-seven tells us that the graves of many of the saints were open and they were seen walking in the streets of Jerusalem after His resurrection from the dead. He led the captives from their captivity. So opening the prison.

The like figure (1Pe 3:21) That is, "the eighth --eight souls saved by water," "The like figure"

whereunto even baptism doth also now save us (1Pe 3:21)

So they were saved by the water or by the ark in the water. Even so, "Baptism," Peter says, "saves us." But then lest people make a mistake, he points out; it isn't the physical ritual.

(it isn't the washing away of the filth of the flesh, but it is the answer of a good conscience toward God,) by the resurrection of Jesus Christ (1Pe 3:21):

So the true baptism is a matter of my heart.

Now I do believe that every one who believes in Jesus Christ should be baptized in water. I definitely believe in water baptism and I personally believe in water baptism by full immersion. But I do believe that water baptism by full immersion is only a symbol of the work of the Spirit that has transpired within my heart. The old man being dead now buried in water and the new life that I now have, the life of the Spirit through Jesus Christ. Baptism becomes a beautiful symbol of that. As I go down in the water, it's being buried. The old life just being buried; and as I come up out of the water, it's that new life in the Spirit, in Christ. And it becomes a beautiful symbol.

But if it has not happened in my heart, it cannot happen by the ritual. The ritual itself cannot save me. Now you may be baptized by sprinkling, by dunking, by full immersion, and still not be saved. You know, they could hold you down until you drown and it still won't save you. The rite of baptism doesn't save. It symbolizes that which has already transpired in my heart. If it hasn't transpired in my heart, then baptism is meaningless. In fact, it's worse than that; it is --it's almost condemning to me.

So if you go through the rite or the ritual of water baptism and it hasn't happened in your heart; it's only a witness against you. It doesn't save you. So I do not believe in what is called baptismal regeneration. I do not believe that if a person is not baptized, then they are not saved. I can't believe that; you're saved by believing in Jesus Christ. Now because I believe in Jesus Christ, I want to obey Him and thus I am baptized as a sign of what has transpired already within my heart. But should I never get around to being baptized by some unfortunate accident or circumstances of some kind, I will still be saved. I have every confidence of that. "It isn't the putting away of the filth of the flesh," but it's that work of the Spirit within my heart, "the good conscience toward God, by the resurrection of Jesus Christ:"

Who is gone into heaven, and is at the right hand of God; angels and authorities and powers being made subject unto him (1Pe 3:22).

Jesus, before He ascended into heaven said to the disciples, "All power is given to me in heaven and earth" (Matthew 28:18). Have you ever imagined how much power that must be? Look at the universe. Think of the power that brought it into existence. "All power," He said, "is given to me in heaven and in earth." And so He ascended to the right hand of God; the angels, the authorities, the powers, the ranking of angels are all subject unto him.