

1. What are the most significant things that have shaped your view of marriage? (both for good and not so good!) Why are they so significant?

Some eg's might be your parents' marriage, your own, the Bible, a close friend or relative, examples in the media & TV while you were growing up. Our goal as Christians is to be shaped by God's word.

The context for this 1 Peter 3:1-7 is 2:11-12. The section on marriage is the 3rd set of relationships where 2:11-12 are to be worked out.

2. **Read 1 Peter 2:11-12, then read 3:1-7.** Before you consider the section on marriage, what difference does it make to keep 2:11-12 in mind when reading the verses about marriage?

It suggests that we can expect that within marriage there will be 'sinful desires' we need to abstain from and a godly way of life to pursue, in the midst of an unbelieving world, that will bring glory to God.

3. **Read again 1 Peter 3:1-7.** This passage contains things that many in our society have problems with. What things stand out to you? Why do people have problems with these things?

This is really to give people a chance to voice their opinions, or the opinions of those who have had an impact on them. Hopefully we'll deal with people's concerns as we work through the passage.

4. This is the third time Peter has told a group in the church to "be submissive" – see 2:13 & 18. Why is 'submission' often scorned today? What do the following verses suggest about being submissive? Luke 2:51; Rom 13:1; 1 Cor 15:27-28, 16:16; James 4:7; 1 Pet 2:13, 5:5

Being submissive is not demeaning nor sub-human – Jesus was submissive to Mary & Joseph and submits to God the Father; Submission is a normal aspect of human relationships, and we all are required to do it in some form or other we are to submit to others "for the Lord's sake", which means it is for his honour and because we submit to him, not because the person we are submitting to is superior to us.

"submit" refers to the willing agreement of one person to allow another to lead them. It is a term that refers to equals – it does not imply superiority and inferiority.

5. What reason does Peter give for wives to be submissive (other than "for the Lord's sake" 2:13)?

It is a way to display "purity and reverence" in their way of life. This might "win over" an unbelieving husband, but will also point a believing husband to the Lord.

6. A more literal reading of v3-4a is, "Your adornment must not be external — braiding the hair, and wearing gold jewelry, or putting on dresses; but the hidden person of the heart..." Is Peter against Christian women 'dressing up'? What does this passage teach about beauty?

Dressing up is fine but it is not to be where we understand our beauty to come from. It is merely external adornment – keep it in perspective! True beauty comes from within, a character that is becoming more like Jesus. This beauty keeps improving as we keep growing up in our salvation (2:2).

7. What are some ways that we can encourage and foster this understanding of beauty?

*Praising godliness and not just someone's appearance, spending time thinking about our behaviour and working on how we think and act **more** than we work on our external appearance.*

8. Husbands are never told to make their wives submit, but they are to lead in love. What are some ways that this passage suggests husbands are to lead their wives?

*Surely to encourage her to grow in true beauty by, **together**, growing in their relationship with the Lord, showing special consideration when there is a situation for him to lead eg if the two of them can't agree and it falls to him to make the decision, being prepared to forego his way if it's merely a matter of opinion, taking his wife's input seriously and not presuming 'he knows best', valuing and asking for his wife's wisdom and insights, initiating time to pray together (and making sure he is praying for his wife and her growth in the Lord).*

9. According to this passage, what are some things that make for a good (ie godly) marriage? Spend time praying for your marriage, marriages you know about, marriages at our church, attitudes of all towards marriage, etc.