

**THE HUSBAND'S HONOR**  
**Making Marriage Work – Week 4**  
**1 Peter 3:7**

**INTRO**

The title of this sermon is “The Husband’s Honor.” This is the fourth and final message in our sermon series called “Making Marriage Work.”

As a pastor I have the privilege of officiating at weddings.

I’ve officiated the weddings of several of church members. Eddie and Micky Fauchoux; Will and Angie Hedge; Destiny and Jeremy McCart; Stephen and Sarah Lane; and most recently Daniel and Alyssa Brunson.

And when I do a wedding I almost always use the same vows.

And there’s one phrase that I use twice in the vows.

I have them make the same promise when they say “I do,” and when they repeat after me in the ring ceremony.

This is the promise that I have couples make twice in their wedding: **To love, honor, and cherish.**

Today I want to take a close look at one of those words; the word “honor.”

The Navy and Marine Corp have three values, and honor is one of them: Honor, Courage, and Commitment.

The Army has seven values, and honor is one of them: Loyalty, duty, respect, selfless service, honor, integrity, and personal courage.

In fact, the Medal of Honor is the highest military decoration that may be awarded by the United States government.

Many companies have an honor code.

If you make all As and Bs on your report card you make the Honor Roll.

It's obvious that many people think that honor is pretty important.

But what is it? And is it Biblical? And how does it apply to marriage?

First of all, honor is absolutely a biblical concept, and it's not just a marital concept.

**Romans 12:10 (CSB)** says, "Love one another deeply as brothers and sisters. Outdo one another in showing honor."

But what exactly does honor mean, specifically in the context of marriage?

That brings us to our text for today, 1 Peter 3:7.

Remember that the first seven verses of this chapter are all about marriage. The first six verses are addressed to wives; and the last verse, verse 7, is addressed to husbands.

You might want to know why there's more written to wives than to husbands. We'll talk more about this in a minute, but husbands and wives have different roles, and the wife has the tougher role, that of submission, and it was especially tough back then.

Let's take a look at **1 Peter 3:7 (CSB)**.

Husbands, in the same way, live with your wives in an understanding way, as with a weaker partner, showing them honor as coheirs of the grace of life, so that your prayers will not be hindered.

The command we want to zoom in on today is "showing them honor."

Here's the big idea today: For marriage to work as God intended, husbands must show their wives **honor**.

So the first question that we need to ask of this passage is **what is honor?**

The Greek word *timē* (Phonetic Pronunciation: tee-may')

is used 41 times in 13 different books in the New Testament,

and it is translated in many different ways.

In Romans 9:21 it is translated "special";

in 1 Timothy 6:1 it is translated "respect";

in 2 Peter 2:7 it is translated "great value";

and in Revelation 21:26 it is translated "wealth."

So to show someone honor means to treat them as special, to treat them with respect, to treat them as if they are very valuable or important.

So here's a definition of what honor means in marriage. **To honor your wife means to treat her with great respect.**

What does that mean? Treat her like she is very valuable; like she is very important; like she is very special.

Now this was actually a very radical teaching in the first century when Peter wrote this. Biblical commentator **William Barclay** wrote the following in his commentary on 1 Peter.

“In every sphere of ancient civilization, women had no rights at all. Under Jewish law a woman was a thing; she was owned by her husband in exactly the same way as he owned his sheep and his goats; on no account could she leave him, although he could dismiss her at any moment. For a wife to change her religion while her husband did not was unthinkable. In Greek civilization the duty of the woman was ‘to remain indoors and to be obedient to her husband.’ It was a sign of a good woman that she must see as little, hear as little and ask as little as possible. She had no kind of independence and no kind of mind of her own, and her husband could divorce her almost at caprice, so long as he returned her dowry. Under Roman law a woman had no rights. In law she remained forever a child. When she was under her father she was under the *patria potestas*, the father’s power, which gave the father the right even of life and death over her; and when she married she passed equally into the power of her husband. She was entirely subject to her husband and completely at his mercy. Cato the Censor, the typical ancient Roman, wrote: ‘If you were to catch your wife in an act of infidelity, you can kill her with impunity without a trial; but, if she were to catch you, she would not venture to touch you with her finger and, indeed, she has not right’ .... The whole attitude of ancient civilization was that no woman could dare take any decision for herself...”

At the time this was written, women had no rights.

They were simply property, like sheep and goats.

A husband could divorce his wife anytime for any reason by just kicking her out of the house.

A husband could beat or kill his wife if he thought it was warranted.

And then came the apostle Peter commanding husbands show honor to their wives; to treat them with great respect.

This was a big deal.

So let's talk about how husbands can honor their wives. How can husbands show great respect to their wives?

Before we do that, let me make one important comment.

There are two ways that the Bible talks about honor.

First, you can honor someone because of their position.

And second, you can honor someone because of what they have done with their position.

Typically in our culture we reserve honor and great respect for someone who has earned it by their actions.

That's not the kind of honor that Peter is talking about here.

Peter is not commanding husbands to show their wives great respect if they earn it.

He is saying show your wife great respect because of her position. Because she is a priceless human being, created in the image of God, and because she is your wife, show her honor. Treat her with great respect.

Just as you should show the President of the United States great respect because of his position, regardless of his politics,

just as I show great respect to my manager at FedEx because of his position,

you should show your wife great respect because of her position, regardless of her actions.

In other words, this command is unconditional.

You are to show your wife honor and great respect regardless of how she behaves.

Honoring your wife is not about your relationship with your wife; it is about your relationship with God.

This is about God commanding you to show your wife honor, not your wife earning your honor.

Just as the wife is to be submissive whether or not you are a good husband, you are to show her great respect whether or not she is a good wife.

Now let's take a look at five specific ways to honor your wife.

## **5 WAYS TO HONOR YOUR WIFE**

### **1. Honor your wife with your time.**

If you are going to show your wife great respect, then it starts with your time.

It's been said that the way to spell love is t-i-m-e.

And it's the same with respect. The way to spell respect is t-i-m-e.

You can tell how much you respect someone by how you treat them with your time.

Your time is limited. You only have so many hours in a day. And you only have so many days in a year. And you only have so many years in your life. And that means your time is very important.

Therefore, the more important someone is to you, the more you will honor them with your time. The less important they are, the less you will honor them with your time.

Your wife should be the absolute most important person to you in this world, other than God. She should be more important to you than your kids, your best friend, your parents, your job, etc.

Therefore, you should honor her with your time.

How do you do that?

First of all, if you want a healthy marriage then you need to **spend quality time with your wife.**

Dr. Willard Harley, my favorite Christian marriage counselor, tells husbands that they need to set aside 15 hours a week to give their wives their undivided attention.

That means the kids are put away; the pets are put away; the phone is put away; the TV is turned off; your eyes are on her, and you are present with her mentally, physically, and emotionally.

Another way to honor your wife with your time is to **date her weekly.**

I recommend that you set aside one night a week, every week, as date-night.

And you don't need a baby sitter.

If the kids are old enough, put a movie on in the other room and tell them "do not disturb."

If they are really little, then put them to bed. Then the two of you can have a date.

Here's what Lydia and I have been doing for years. Our date night is on Friday night. I'm responsible for it. I either cook, or I take her out. Most of the time we stay home. We let the kids watch movies and tell them to stay away, and then I set up a table and chairs in our bedroom, and we spend the entire evening our bedroom together. It's our favorite night of the week.

There are other ways to honor your wife with your time.

**Your wife should have immediate, constant access to you.**

Your wife should know where you are and what you are doing at all times.  
And she should be able to reach you quickly on the phone at all times.

When I'm busy, like when I'm in the study working on a sermon, I don't answer the phone, and I lock my door so that my kids can't barge in and interrupt me all day long. But if Lydia calls me, I answer the phone. And if Lydia knocks on my door, I stop what I'm doing open the door.

I have a friend who intentionally keeps some of his vacation schedule a secret from his wife, because he doesn't want her to schedule her vacation at the same time, and he doesn't want her to make any plans for him on his time off. That's not honoring your wife with your time. And by the way, that couple is now in the middle of a divorce.

And finally, you can honor your wife with your time by **being faithful and dependable with your schedule.**

If you tell her that you will be home at a certain time, then do it.

If something unavoidable comes up and you're going to be late, then call her immediately and let her know.



If you tell her that you will do a certain honey-do task or help her with some project on a certain day, then keep your word.

If you tell her that you will pick up the kids, then keep your word. These are just some of the ways that you can honor your wife with your time.

## **2. Honor your wife with your sexual purity.**

If you want to show your wife great respect, then this is crucial.

You need to be a one-woman man.

Not only that, but you need to act in a way that makes your wife one-hundred percent confident that you are a one-woman man.

In other words, it's not enough that you think you are sexually pure. If you want to honor your wife, and if you want your marriage to work, then she needs to think you are sexually pure.

First of all, you need to be sexually pure **with your body**.

All sex should be reserved for your wife.

**Hebrews 13:4** says, "Marriage is to be honored by all and the marriage bed kept undefiled, because God will judge the sexually immoral and adulterers."

Second, you need to be sexually pure **with your eyes**.

You should not be visiting strip clubs, or looking at porn, or gawking at other women when you're out in public.

You should only have eyes for your wife.

**Psalms 101:3 (NLT)** says, "I will refuse to look at anything vile and vulgar."

**Psalm 119:37 (CSB)** says, “Turn my eyes from looking at what is worthless; give me life in your ways.”

**Proverbs 4:25 (CSB)** says, “Let your eyes look forward; fix your gaze straight ahead.”

Jesus said in **Matthew 5:27-29 (CSB)**, “27 “You have heard that it was said, Do not commit adultery. 28 But I tell you, everyone who looks at a woman lustfully has already committed adultery with her in his heart. 29 If your right eye causes you to sin, gouge it out and throw it away. For it is better that you lose one of the parts of your body than for your whole body to be thrown into hell.”

Third, you need to be sexually pure **with your words**.

Don't ever talk to your wife or anyone else about how beautiful another woman is.

Don't talk to your wife about other women that you are attracted to.

And don't flirt with other women. Save all of your flirtations for your wife.

**Proverbs 5:18-20 (CSB)** says, “18 Let your fountain be blessed, and take pleasure in the wife of your youth. 19 A loving deer, a graceful doe—let her breasts always satisfy you; be lost in her love forever. 20 Why, my son, would you lose yourself with a forbidden woman or embrace a wayward woman?”

**3. Honor your wife with your decisions.**

A third way to honor your wife is by including her in your decisions.

The Bible says that the husband is the head, or the leader of his wife and family. It also commands wives to submit to their husbands – to let their husbands have the final say.

But if you want to show your wife honor, if you want to treat her with great respect, and if you want a healthy marriage, and if you want to make better decisions, then you will include your wife in every major decision you make.

Let me tell you **two quick ways to ruin your marriage.**

**First, make major decisions without including your wife.**

I have friends who have gone out spent thousands of dollars without telling their wives. And it turned out bad for them.

When you make major decisions about your time, your money, your living arrangements, your job, or anything big without consulting your wife, here's what you are saying to your wife: "I don't respect you."

Here's a **second** way to ruin your marriage. **Choose a course of action even though your wife is strongly against it.**

For example, let's say you want to buy a boat, and your wife is strongly against it, but you do it anyway.

Here's the thing. You're the man of the house. You are the leader.

And there might be one or two times in your marriage when you both strongly disagree on a very important matter, and a decision has to be made, and you are called to lead, and she is called to submit.

But hopefully there will only be a few of those decisions in your lifetime together.

The majority of the time, you don't *have* to choose a course of action that your wife strongly opposes, and you shouldn't.

Yes, your wife is called to submit to you. But you are called to show your wife great respect; and you are called to love your wife as Christ loves the church.

So if you want to screw up your marriage really fast, then just do those two things, and do them consistently.

Don't include your wife in major decisions.

Decide to do things even though you know your wife is strongly against it.

But if you want a healthy, happy marriage, and if you want to show your wife honor, do the opposite.

**First of all, include your wife in every major decision.**

Not only will she feel loved and respected, but you'll make better decisions.

And **second, make it your goal to use the Policy of Joint Agreement.**

This is what Dr. Willard Harley recommends, and this is what Lydia and I practice, and it works.

**“Never do anything without an enthusiastic agreement between you and your spouse.”**

I can just hear the men screaming in their minds. I can steam coming out of some of your ears.

“But I'm the husband; I'm supposed to have the final say; she is supposed to submit.”

I know. But if you want your wife to feel honored, and loved, and if you want your wife to like you, and to respect you, and enjoy being your wife, and to be in love with you, and if you want her to be happy, and if you want her to let you touch her, then use the Policy of Joint Agreement. It works. You can learn more about that in Dr. Harley's book *Love Busters*.

#### **4. Honor your wife with your service.**

A fourth way to honor your wife is to be a servant leader.

You are the leader of your home, but Jesus taught that leadership is about servanthood.

Biblical leadership is about using your power and position to serve and meet the needs of the people you lead so that they can flourish.

In other words, you can honor your wife by making sure she flourishes.

Make sure she is happy and healthy physically, emotionally, relationally, and spiritually.

What are some ways that you can honor your wife with your service?

Let's start with the basics.

##### **First, ladies first.**

Let your wife go first.

Open the door for her.

Prefer her in all things.

In other words, when you are going out to eat, choose a restaurant that she likes. When you watch a movie, choose a movie she likes. When you buy a car together, choose a car that she likes. Prefer her.

## **Second, help her around the house.**

Help her with the kids.

Give her what I call “Me Time.”

Sometimes your wife just needs to get away for a nap, or for a bubble bath, or a leisurely trip to the mall.

Be willing to watch the kids and let her escape.

Help her take care of the house – with home repairs and home improvement projects, and keeping the house clean – don’t be a slob; pick up after yourself.

Help her take care of the cars. Oil changes; repairs; cars need constant maintenance.

Help her take care of the yard. Cutting the grass; trimming the hedges; pulling weeds.

Help her manage the finances.

In a marriage, usually one person manages the finances, and it’s usually the wife.

But I think that if you want to be the best leader of your family, the husband needs to manage the finances. That means paying the bills; balancing the budget; communicating with your wife how much money is left to spend before the end of the month.

For the first few years of our marriage, Lydia managed the finances, even though we'd heard preachers say that it would work best if the husband would do it. But Lydia was better at it, so she did it.

But the Lord convicted me about it, and eventually I took over the finances. I started managing it – the bills, the budget, all that stuff.

Here's what's weird. Lydia is smarter than me; better at math; she's tighter; thriftier; more frugal; more financially disciplined.

But when I took over the finances, our financial situation improved – a lot. And Lydia will be the first to tell you that.

Why?

The family works best when the husband is being a good leader.

But it's hard to be a good financial leader if you are not closely watching your finances.

And most men aren't. They go to work, get paid, hand their wives the paycheck, and forget about.

But I think your finances will improve drastically if the husband will take over, because God created the husband to lead, and the wife to support.

But even if you don't manage the finances, if you want to honor your wife with your service you need to be very aware of what's going on with your finances – you need to be aware of your income, your spending, your savings, your investments, etc.

**Third, take care of her when she is sick. Be her nurse.**

**Fourth, serve her on her special days – birthday, anniversary, Christmas, Valentines Day.**

Not every woman is the same.

Lydia does not care about gifts. Her love languages are quality time and physical touch. Gifts don't impress her.

But some women are very big on those special days, and so if you want to honor your wife, then be sure to make a big deal out of those special days.

**Serving your wife can be boiled down to three short statements:**

**First, don't treat her like she is your servant.**

Many men don't act like a servant leader; they act like the king of their home.

And they don't treat their wife like the queen; they treat her like the king's servant.

And her job is to wait on him hand and foot, and meet his needs, and keep him happy. Bad idea.

Don't treat your wife like she is your servant.

You are called to serve one another; but you are called to be the chief servant. The lead servant.

In other words, make it your goal to outdo your wife in servanthood.

**Second, if there is something your wife really needs or wants, then do everything you can do get it for her.**



Just as Christ feeds and cares for His church, a husband is called to meet the needs of his wife.

If she wants something or needs something, do whatever it takes to get it for her.

If she needs help with something, or if she needs something fixed, or if she needs something bought, get it.

**Third, if there is something that really bothers your wife, then fix it.**

Just as Christ is the Savior of His bride, the church, a husband is called to be his wife's savior.

So if something is really bothering your wife, then fix it.

If it's something that you are doing that is bothering her, then stop it.

And if it's something else that is bothering her, then rescue her. Find a way to help her solve it.

**5. Honor your wife with your words.**

In other words, speak to your wife with great respect.

Let **Ephesians 4:29 (CSB)** be your standard. "No foul language should come from your mouth, but only what is good for building up someone in need, so that it gives grace to those who hear."

What are some ways you can honor your wife with your words?

**Praise her** often for her good deeds and good qualities, both to her personally, and to others.

**Thank her** often for the ways that she blesses you and your family.

**Don't discuss her faults with others.** If you have a problem with her, go to her alone.

**Don't make her the butt of your jokes** when you are in the company of others.

**When you are picking on her and being sarcastic at home, be sure that she is having as much fun as you.**

I am very sarcastic, and I like to pick on Lydia a lot. More than she likes.

So every once in a while she has to say, "Be careful."

That tells me that I've gone too far.

So I've learned that Lydia doesn't appreciate sarcasm and picking as much as me, so I've cut down on that for her.

As well, **don't insult your wife.**

**Don't raise your voice at her.**

**Don't tell her that she has it easy because she gets to stay at home with the kids while you go out and do the real work.**

**When she is talking, don't cut her off.**

**When she wants to have a tough conversation, don't clam up and stonewall, and don't run away.** Be willing to have the tough conversation.  
Honor your wife with your words.

## CONCLUSION

So what have we learned today?

**For marriage to work as God intended, husbands must show their wives honor.**

How do you do that?

Show your wife honor with your **time**, with your **sexual purity**, with your **decisions**, with your **service**, and with your **words**.