

1 Peter 3:1-7

It's a tempting passage to skip, for it deals with the roles and relationships of the sexes, which is complicated both by ancient customs and our own very tender hearts on gender issues. But have you noticed – the Lord often has something important to say through tough passages!

For further reflection on your own or in a small group, consider these questions:

- What has been your life trajectory in understanding the sexes? Women, have you trekked through these or other views – total woman, submissive wife, feminist, radical libber? What moved you? And men, what has been your trek – male chauvinist pig, macho man, egalitarian, feminist? What moved you?
- If Paul wrote that in Christ there is “no longer Jew or Greek, slave or free, male or female” (Galatians 3:28), what is Peter up to here in chapter 3 giving distinct directions for men and women? Can you think of other passages showing how the new life ideals in Christ had to be tethered to the limited options of earthly roles and identities? What daily life limits do you pair with the new life ideals in Christ?
- Peter directs women not to focus so much on physical beauty, as on the inner beauty, which the Lord forms. Why? How does a woman join the Lord in enhancing her inner beauty? Is physical beauty, then, of no value?
- In v. 1 Peter begins with the goal in mind – winning unbelieving husbands to Christ. What does he believe wins them?
- Peter also had directions for the men in the church – much briefer directions: “being considerate and showing honor to their wives.” That sounds pretty minimal to us, but for them that was revolutionary. How so? How would that impact their prayers?