

☞ **1 Peter** (opening slide)

☞ Phil - Review: God has offered us the deal of the ages! Since we have received such a great deal from God in salvation, we should be motivated to change. We should think differently, behave differently, and live differently. Peter says that because of our faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, we are peculiar people. We are spiritual; we are set-apart; we are strangers in this world. Don't be surprised if people think you're unusual because of your faith. You are! And, because of our faith in the Lord we should have proper respect for those in authority and submit to their leadership. Even when we disagree with an authority figure it should be in a respectful and honorable way. Jesus was God in the flesh, but he willingly submitted himself to the authorities and it even cost him his life.

☞ **Marriage Matters**

--Sam Levenson... *Love at first sight is easy to understand. It's when two people have been looking at each other for years that it becomes a miracle.*

1 Peter 3:1-9

☞ Let's talk about the **husbands** first...

In the same way = **Jesus is our example** and standard. We can't compare ourselves to anyone else. You may be doing better than your dad did. So what? You may be doing better than your friends. So what? Are you measuring up to the example of Christ? That's what really matters!

☞ **Be considerate** = Men, our natural tendency is to think of ourselves; our needs; our desires. But God calls us higher to consider others first. And, if married, our wives are to be at the top of our list of "others." Don't be harsh toward your wife. I'm not just talking about physicality. I'm talking about how you speak to her. There's really **no room for yelling, putting down, or crudeness**. And, don't lie to her. Most would say they don't lie to their wives, but how about being completely open and honest with her? How about choosing your words carefully?

☞ **Video: The Wife Song**

☞ Naomi - A wise husband builds his mate's self-esteem, realizing that the subtle words and actions of a sinful world constantly assault her sense of self-worth. He remains sensitive to her needs and is always ready to offer his support. Encourage your wife

verbally and in action. Words of praise are high octane fuel that boost your wife's emotional fuel tanks.

☞ Phil - **Be sympathetic = Listen!** Listen! Listen! Usually women don't really want a solution; they just want to share their feelings and "vent" a bit.

☞ Naomi – Sometimes I come home and start talking about a problem. Phil will usually ask me if I want any input or not.

☞ Phil - Men, too often, we are thinking of ourselves and not being sympathetic.

☞ **Love** = One of a woman's greatest need is to be secure in her relationship with you. Let her know continually how much you cherish her. In Ephesians 5 it says we are to love our wives as Christ loves the church. He is working in us to make us the best we can be. We are to work to make them the best they can be.

☞ Naomi - Husband, your wife is not your servant. Ruling over her is actually part of the curse! Yes, she is your helper, but part of your assignment is to bring out the best in her. Help her become everything that God wants her to be!

☞ Phil - As a matter of fact, Christ demonstrated his love by dying for us. Men, we love to indulge... food and drink can easily become gluttony. Technology can easily become idolatry. Physical desire can easily become abusive lust. Instead, we're called to **be self-sacrificing**, putting our wives and children's needs above our own. Leading our families is not about bossing them around. It's about **being the first to do the right thing**. It's about doing what is best for them! It's more... it's about bringing out the best in them. Don't tear them down when they mess up. Correct them, but then help them do better!

☞ Naomi - Love is to have a high regard for someone's value or importance. To always want the best for another. 1 Corinthians 13:4-8 says that "Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud. 5 It is not rude, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs. 6 Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth. 7 It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres. 8 Love never fails."

☞ Phil - Not Lust. Lust is a sinful distortion of a natural desire. Desire for food, belongings, and sex are all normal, but outside of God's guidelines, they become sinful.

--Drew Anderson... While my wife and I were shopping at a mall kiosk, a shapely young woman in a short, form-fitting dress strolled by. My eyes followed her. Without looking up from the item she was examining, my wife asked, "Was it worth the trouble you're in?"

Lust is about self-gratification. Love is about esteeming another above yourself. To be loving means to be concerned about her needs; it means to take care of her; it means to make sure she receives everything she needs to be healthy. That is more than just providing money for necessities. It also includes communicating your thoughts and letting her know how much you cherish her.

Don't repay evil... men, we've got the broadest shoulders in our families. Let's use them for good! If she says or does something that is hurtful to you in some way, **don't try to get even**. Be a leader by example. Bring those things up for a constructive conversation. **Don't** you dare pile on **insults** and treat her in any kind of evil manner!

☞Naomi - There was a U.S. News & World Report in 1994 that reported about marriage researchers studying why some couples last and others divorce. They studied couples for decades and discovered the factors that really influence the durability of a marriage have nothing to do with "how in love" they were at the beginning or how much affection they exchanged. What it really boiled down to was how they spoke to each other. Among those who endured, insults and putdowns were minimal. Among those who broke up, the insults were much more often and increased over the years. The researchers concluded that "Hostile putdowns act as cancerous cells that, if unchecked, erode the relationship over time."

☞Phil - v.7 **Respect her** = she doesn't think the same way that you do. She doesn't respond to situations the same way you do. That's okay. In fact, God designed it that way! Respect those differences!

☞Phil - Weaker partner = this has nothing to do with spirituality or character. It is simply a reference to the physical difference between most men and women. Don't be rough with her. **Be gentle!** You can wrestle and slap around with your brothers or your best friends, but don't do anything like that with your wife. Hold her hand; put your arm around her; open doors; etc.

☞Naomi – Phil didn't marry me for my muscles and I really don't like to rough house. Some women may enjoy playful wrestling, but men, you need to know when to stop. Likewise, many couples tease each other, and if you can keep it friendly, it might be fun. If, however your humor is at someone else's expense, it's too costly- especially if that person is your spouse.

☞Phil - v. 7 **so that nothing will hinder your prayers.**

☞Men, we should be the **leaders in praying** at our homes. Set the example. Let them hear you pray. When troubles arise, you be the one to suggest we stop and pray! This Scripture

is pretty clear, that God is very concerned about our relationships with our wives. If there's trouble at home our prayers may be hindered. This could be simply that we're in the wrong mindset to really pray. But I think it also suggests that God wants you to take care of things at home before he'll answer your prayers for anything else!

☞ It's been said... **Woman was taken out of man; not out of his head to be above him, nor out of his feet to be trampled underfoot; but out of his side to be equal to him, under his arm to be protected, and near his heart to be loved...** This is a good way to look at your relationship with your wife.

☞ Naomi – Now, let's focus on the **wife**...

1 Peter says "in the same way" = just like the husbands, **Jesus is our example and standard**. We can't compare ourselves to anyone else. Are you measuring up to the example of Christ? That's what really matters!

☞ Scripture says in a couple of places, "**be submissive**"... First of all everyone obeys and submits to someone - even Jesus submitted to God and his will. In Ephesians 5 before it says "wives submit to your husbands," it says "submit to one another." I think everyone struggles with submission. It is against our human nature to 'give in' to another person. But it says in scripture to submit to your husband in everything - could God really mean everything? Of course he did! The issue at stake is one of Biblical principles. Just as we are not free to pick which biblical commands to follow or violate, neither are we free to disregard the instructions of one of God's ordained authorities - your husband.

Submitting is more than just verbally agreeing. It's about coming alongside your husband with full support of his leadership. It's more than just scraping by or perhaps begrudgingly following, all the while complaining that you don't really like his idea and waiting for him to fail so you can say, "I told you so."

☞ Phil – This idea of submission can really cause quite a stir. Apparently, Sarah called Abraham her master. I've yet to receive that title from Naomi. Other titles, yes, but not that one... But submission is not about kowtowing to a harsh boss... it's about showing respect for a leader. It's about keeping order within a family.

☞ Naomi – Proverbs 31 talks about a godly wife, and she is anything but a doormat! It says she was engaged in many and varied activities and had many talents, she had her own life and her husband praised her. And, here's another thought...

☞ **Don't argue** with your husband - I could stop there. I am not saying you can't give your opinion, just don't argue. If your husband is adamant about something then let the gentleness and quietness of your spirit totally surround your response. No preaching, no

nagging, no retaliating. When you respond gently and quietly, trust God to work in your husband and the situation.

☞Phil – It’s a great thing for me to know that Naomi will always follow my lead. However, I have no interest in her being timid and constantly unsure of herself. I want her to be confident and self-assured. I value her input. And, men, it is not our job to make our wives submit. She chooses to submit out of reverence for Christ and respect for you. So, earn her respect! Be a good leader! But, don’t try to force her submission.

☞Naomi - Women, notice that if you’re married, your assignment is to **help your husband**. God knows he needs all the help he can get! It’s your job to come alongside your man and help him achieve whatever God has called him to do. This is not to say that you have no life of your own, but that God designed us to be in relationship, and his assignment for you is to help your husband.

☞Phil - God was the one who said, “It is not good for the man to be alone.” I think he knew what kind of trouble we’d get into without the women in our lives reining us in a bit. Men and women were designed to be social creatures. We need each other! But any husband who believes his wife is his servant has misread scripture.

☞Naomi – a lot of women may think that the assignment to be their husband’s helper is a negative thing. But I can see it as a positive thing. First of all, since God designed it that way, it must be a good thing. Second, I actually enjoy helping Phil and seeing him do well. Knowing that I helped him be successful makes me feel good. However, helping him is not all that I do. There are other things I enjoy doing that have nothing to do with being Phil’s helper. In fact, there are times that he will help me. And that’s part of his assignment to cultivate those in his care. Wives we are to help our husbands in whatever way we can. And guess who gets to determine what is helpful? Your husband! We need to encourage, not hinder our husband’s dreams.

☞Phil - Purity = unmixed. Keep your walk with the Lord absolutely pure. **Keep your marriage relationship completely pure.**

☞Naomi – No others should take precedence over your husband. That goes for your girlfriends just as much as any guy-friends.

☞Phil – We’ve made it our practice to let each other be our guide when it comes to friendships, especially with the opposite sex. If Naomi is ever concerned, I don’t get defensive and try to protect that friendship; instead, I try to adjust my friendship so that she feels good about it. And, this goes both ways.

☞Naomi – Scripture also talks about “reverence” = Christian women should be known by their gentle demeanor. Yes, you can be fun-loving, but never open to being called “wild.”

☞ Women, one of the ways you can best help your husband is to **believe in him, encourage him, and cover his weaknesses.** Phil has said before, “There’s nothing that motivates a man like his own cheering section.”

☞Phil - Some jokingly comment about men: “you get extra credit for the slightest act of thoughtfulness.” It goes to man’s greatest need. Men need to feel important. Just as certain as most wives need to hear loving words from their husbands, husbands need to hear encouraging, respectful words from their wives.

☞ Video: The Woman of his Dreams

☞Naomi – Scripture talks about “inner beauty.” Today’s society has outlandish expectations of girls and women when it comes to physical beauty. Working at physical attractiveness is fine, but biblically, **real beauty is on the inside.** God calls Christian women to be gentle. You can be “all that” on the outside, but if you’re not beautiful on the inside, it’s just a waste of time. We’re often very purposeful about what we wear, often buying new outfits for special occasions. But we should at least be as intentional about having the fruit of the Spirit. **Be gentle and kind.**

☞Phil – I think it’s entirely normal to be physically attracted to your spouse. Taking care of yourself is a good thing, too. But physical attraction fades into oblivion when personal qualities are abrasive and rude.

☞Naomi – Scripture encourages a “quiet spirit” = not argumentative; not boisterous; **keep the peace.** These may fly in the face of modern society, but notice that these are “of great worth in God’s sight.” So what matters more?

☞Phil – Naomi is a great peace keeper and she never argues with me. She may occasionally disagree or express concern about something, but never argues. I love it that we can have completely civil and calm conversations without getting out of hand.

☞Naomi – But this quiet spirit doesn’t mean you should not speak your mind. However, we need to realize that **nagging and criticizing will only discourage men.** What they really need is **positive reinforcement.** Even the slightest steps in the right direction should be encouraged. And this is not just about a fragile ego that needs constant bolstering. Though it may be true that men tend to have fragile egos; they really deserve respect as well. Think about a man’s or Dad’s responsibilities and obligations... Biblically, he’s the Head of the home; principle provider; principle protector; he’s charged with Godly

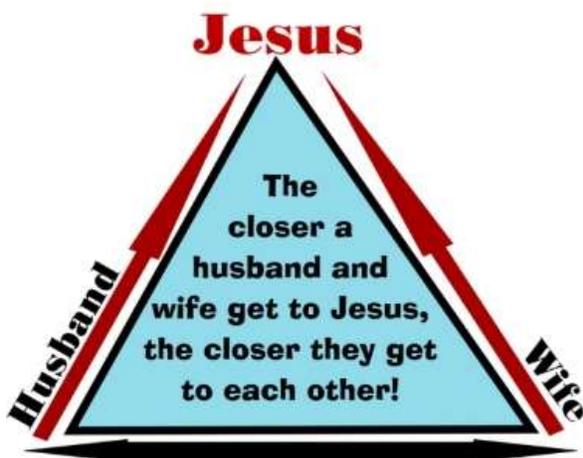
instruction and training; typically, the final disciplinarian; Ultimately, God's representative to his kids.

Earlier Phil mentioned the imagery of the woman being taken out of the man's rib and what that suggests in a marriage... Here's another one from God's perspective for wives... **I chose the rib, which protects his heart and lungs and supports him, as you are meant to do. Around this one bone I shaped you. I modeled you. I created you perfectly and beautifully. Your characteristics are as the rib, strong yet delicate and fragile. You provide protection for the most delicate organ in man, his heart. His heart is the center of his being; his lungs hold the breath of life. The rib cage will allow itself to be broken before it will allow damage to the heart. Support man as the rib cage supports the body.**

☞ Phil – So, we've covered a lot of ground today, and really, much more could be said. But we want to close with these simple thoughts... Yes, there are biblical guidelines that are distinct for men and women in a marriage relationship. However, there are guidelines that apply to all of us. **We are all supposed to be more like Jesus.** And if we follow that one simple rule, it will make all of our marriages stronger...

--A.W. Tozer... Has it ever occurred to you that one hundred pianos all tuned to the same fork are automatically tuned to each other? They are of one accord by being tuned, not to each other, but to another standard to which each one must individually bow.

☞ **The Marriage Triangle**



Each growing closer to the Lord will grow closer to each other.