**All Things New**

New-Life Lessons from the Apostle Peter’s First Letter

**New Behavior: Husbands, Wives, Everyone**

Loving Fearlessly

1 Peter 3:1-12

Peter continues his theme of submission and respect, applying first to the marriage and then all relationships. The idea of submitting to anyone is taboo today, but Peter keeps pointing us to Jesus’ own example of submission, and the truth that love and respect for one another are not horrid duties, but reflections of the Trinity within and among us.

***Following Jesus frees a wife to love her husband fearlessly. vv. 1-6***

A wife’s proper submission to her husband begins with her security in Christ. God’s love for us frees us to love others, and we are to look first to God for approval, and not our loved one. Peter focuses the wife on God’s promises (“word”), spirit, God’s estimation of her, and biblical examples (Sarah). But the most telling quality of biblical submission is its fearlessness. For a woman to submit to a husband out of fear (physical or emotional) is to miss God’s intent and Jesus’ own example. Just as Jesus was able to obey God and serve others because He knew who He was, so also a wife can fulfill her calling because she knows who she is in Him. John 13:1-5; 1 Corinthians 3:21-23; 11:3

***Following Jesus frees a husband to love his wife fearlessly.*** v. 7

A husband’s proper love for his wife is neither sentimental condescension nor stifling domination. The “likewise” links this verse to 3:1 and therefore 1:13-25, and the loving service there prescribed and exemplified in Jesus. Often overlooked is the link between a husband’s own relationship with God and with his wife. One will not prosper apart from the other, as Jesus reminds us of how relationships impact our worship in Matthew 5:23, 24.

***Following Jesus means living as His called ones. vv. 8-12***



What relationships will not prosper in an environment of unity, compassion, love, tenderness, and humility?! But that means not repaying evil for evil, and instead blessing others that we might be blessed by God. Peter’s reference to God’s calling means that we must “be who we are” in Christ rather than what the world and our worst selves would make of us. Joy is internal, not external, and Psalm 34, from which Peter quotes, is a guide.

***Applying Truth to Life: Do we dare love with courage?***

 When we forget that we have all things in Christ and that our eternal future is secure, we begin to seek comfort and security from others. We become self-centered and needy, lacking the healthy confidence to reach out to others. In fact, we feel like we are drowning in a sea of our own troubles and fears.

 If we would love like Jesus, we must draw from His source of Life, namely, His Father, and trust Him to keep His promises to us. Our hearts are “desire factories,” and unless our desires are for God first and foremost, we are destined to perpetual unrest and fulfilment, fretting over how others are treating us. He enables us to love others well, even those whom we must confront.