

1 Peter 3 Family

PREFACE

God's Word contains the answers to all of life's problems and needs. As we apply God's Word to our daily lives, the Holy Spirit strengthens us, our faith grows, and our lives are transformed.

But for many the bible is a complex book, too huge to tackle.

By selecting important chapters of the Bible (20 from the Old Testament, 20 from the New Testament) and focusing on them, I hope to encourage you to get into God's Word. To help accomplish this, I have prepared a visual memory aid for each key chapter. The aids are purposely *weird* in order to increase retention. Each aid has three elements:

1. The *book* of the Bible
2. The *chapter*
3. The *theme* of the chapter

By studying the memory aid several times and focusing on it, you will recall the image and consequently the book, chapter and theme.

Remembering these key chapters will enrich your daily life. It will also help you to relate God's Word to others. As you write greeting cards or speak with people, you will be able to apply God's Word directly to their problems or needs.

At times, you will be unable to speak directly to a person. Send them a Key Chapter booklet! They are designed for sharing!

Each Key Chapter booklet is presented in the same format:

1. *Background* for the chapter
2. *Key verses* of the chapter
3. *Thoughts* on the theme of the chapter

Bible classes and small study groups will find the third section helpful for discussions. The *thoughts* will provide a variety of applications upon which to reflect.

God will not let his Word return void (Isaiah 55:11)!

He will bless you abundantly as you meditate on his Word (Psalm 119:48)!

He will enable you to be a blessing to others as you spread his Word (Genesis 12: 2-3)!

Soli Deo Gloria,
Paul R. Schroeder

Explanation of the Memory Aid

1. The BOOK of the Bible:
Peter (Petros) is often called the “rock” (petra) = **1 PETER**
2. The CHAPTER:
The *number* for the tonnage of the rock = **CHAPTER 3**
3. The THEME:
The *family* looking at the “rock” = **FAMILY**

1 PETER 3: BACKGROUND

Peter stresses that every aspect of a Christian’s life should bring glory to God—at all times, in all circumstances. Suffering does not change that goal—it intensifies it.

Numerous examples for daily life are given in this section of the letter (2:11- 4:11). Peter singles out *the family* for special application of these Christian principles.

God has established the family as the basic structural unit of all society.

He built within us the need for love and relationships.

A child born into the world must be cared for—it is not independent. How the family meets those needs will affect the child’s entire life.

Christ designed his church to be a family. (See Ephesians 2 and 4.) It’s not surprising that Paul talks about family relationships in the same letter (Ephesians 5-6). Our need for love, understanding, meaning, togetherness, self-worth, etc., is to be met within a Christ-centered family—and also through the “spiritual family” of the church.

When the home or the church fails, Satan rushes in to provide his counterfeits. It’s not surprising that many cults stress a “family” unity and togetherness. Purpose and meaning for cult members are developed in such simple ways as selling flowers on a street corner. Not much—but it makes them feel that they belong.

No wonder the family is under attack! It is so important! As we strengthen our homes and center them in Christ, our children will grow up to glorify God in their lives. The starting point must be that both husband and wife, by the mercy and grace of God, accept the deity of Christ and his lordship over themselves and their children. This step has to be the first one! It is basic. Then the couple can look for tips and common-sense advice that help make things run smoothly.

Peter addressed his first letter to Christians in churches scattered throughout Asia Minor. They were under attack and were suffering for the sake of Christ. Peter knew things were going to get worse for these Christians, so he wrote to encourage and support them in their faith. He wanted them to understand that suffering is not a punishment but an

opportunity for growth and commitment to God. They were urged to become more Christ-like.

One way to show the world the difference Christ has made in our lives is to demonstrate our faith in our family relationships. A moral, loving, forgiving, nurturing, family is a miracle, a work of God. Such a family brings glory to God.

KEY VERSES OF 1 PETER 3

Verses 1-2

Wives, in the same way (2:21-25) be submissive to your husbands, so that, if any of them do not believe the word, they may be won over without words by the behavior of their wives, when they see the purity and reverence of your lives.

The conduct, attitude, and spirit-filled love of the Christian will demonstrate to the unbeliever that their loved one has a power beyond themselves. This strong witness will prepare them to listen when the believer gives witness about Christ, who has enabled them to live this way (v. 15). Clearly, actions speak louder than words.

Verses 3-5

Your beauty should not come from outward adornment, such as braided hair and the wearing of gold jewelry and fine clothes. Instead, it should be that of your inner self, the unfading beauty of a gentle and quiet spirit, which is of great worth in God's sight. For this is the way the holy women of the past who put their hope in God used to make themselves beautiful. They were submissive to their own husbands.

True beauty is inner beauty, reflecting God's presence.

Verse 7

Husbands, in the same way be considerate as you live with your wives, and treat them with respect as the weaker partner and as heirs with you of the gracious gift of life, so that nothing will hinder your prayers.

The first six verses talk to wives. Now, *one* verse is directed to husbands. But what a powerful verse! The meaning is clear. Christian husbands should act like Christ to their wives by being considerate and respectful. This attitude will help their prayer life.

Verse 8

Finally, all of you, live in harmony with one another; be sympathetic, love as brothers, be compassionate and humble.

The church itself, made up of all the individual families and homes, is to be an "acceptance center" of love.

Verse 9

Do not repay evil with evil or insult with insult, but with blessings, because to this you were called so that you may inherit a blessing.

God's way: treat with love and forgiveness those who mistreat you.

Verse 10

For, “Whoever would love life and see good days must keep his tongue from evil and his lips from deceitful speech.”

The Old Testament book of Proverbs is filled with wise sayings about the tongue; e.g., Proverbs 17: 27-28. The tongue is difficult to control (See James 1:26; 3: 2-12).

Verse 15

But in your hearts set apart Christ as Lord. Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope you have. But do this with gentleness and respect...

Your witness will carry great weight if people have seen you patiently suffering for Christ.

Verses 17

It is better, if it is God’s will, to suffer for doing good than for doing evil.

Don’t bring suffering upon yourself. But if it comes from God, bear it patiently.

Verse 18

For Christ died for sins once for all, the righteous for the unrighteous, to bring you to God. He was put to death in the body but made alive by the Spirit...

That is beautiful, pure Gospel. Christ is our Savior.

Verses 19-20a

Through whom also he went and preached to the spirits in prison who disobeyed long ago when God waited patiently in the days of Noah while the ark was being built.

After his resurrection, before he appeared to the disciples, Jesus victoriously showed himself to those who were in hell. One of the torments of hell is knowing *for certain* that what was denied is actually true.

Verses 20b-21

In it only a few people, eight in all, were saved through water, and this water symbolizes baptism that now saves you also—not the removal of dirt from the body but the pledge of a good conscience toward God. It saves you by the resurrection of Jesus Christ...

Reference is made to those who were saved in Noah’s ark. In baptism it is not the water that saves but the “washing away” of sins through Spirit-given faith in Christ. Not external, *but internal*.

Verse 22

Who has gone into heaven and is at God’s right hand—with angels, authorities and powers in submission to him.

The King of kings will carry you through any persecution.

THOUGHTS ON FAMILY

Day 1

Scripture speaks of a structural order within the family, for example, children are to obey parents. Yet there is no distinction between husband and wife or children when it comes to union with Christ by faith. In this regard each person is equal before God (Galatians 3: 28).

* * *

Though husband and wife belong to each other, they still have individual freedoms. I have often told my wife she is free to go anywhere, to do anything with anyone at anytime, as long as it glorifies God! That's the freedom we all have in Jesus Christ.

* * *

Paul and Peter agree on the position of the wife in the family. This is striking when you realize that Paul was speaking of a Christian wife responding to a Christian husband (Ephesians 5), and Peter was speaking to a Christian wife responding to an unbelieving husband (1 Peter 3). They do not imply the wife is to be obedient to every whim or abuse of the husband. He is not her dictator.

* * *

The sacrificial love of the husband toward his wife—being ready to lay down his life for her—motivates her to feel safe and secure with him as head of the family.

* * *

Christ is head of his church. He shows love, protection, forgiveness, kindness, and thoughtfulness toward his church. He lays down his life and serves in love. That's the picture! That's how a husband should treat his wife. No wife alive would mind "submitting" to such tenderness, love and honor (See Colossians 3: 19; 1 Corinthians 11:3)

* * *

Our lives must reflect what we believe—and they will. The interrelationship between Christian family members is to be a "snapshot" of the kingdom of God on earth. The world is observing.

* * *

When God, in Christ, calls us his children, we become brothers and sisters one family with God as our Father. In this family there is no room for favoritism or prejudice.

* * *

Painted faces, flashy jewelry, and uncovered heads were to marks of the pagan temple prostitutes. Female converts to the new church were to be careful not to bring disgrace upon the believers by improper dress or adornment. Styles change. That's okay. Women are to look the best they can. But the goal remains to same. Christian women are to dress in a way that their Christian witness is not hindered (see Isaiah 3: 13-24).

* * *

Day 2

In 1 Peter 3:12, peter is quoting the beautiful promise found in Psalm 34: 15-16.

* * *

“to suffer for doing good” does not mean illness. It refers to the ridicule and mockery directed toward you *because of your bold witness to Christ*.

* * *

Let your heart be a sanctuary for God, a sacred place where you glorify Him (! Peter 3:145). See also Habakkuk 2:20.

* * *

Followers of Christ are to be imitators of him. The ability to lead such a life comes as a direct result of his presence *inwardly* first—that's faith. (See Key Chapters booklets *Romans 6: New life and James 2: Works*)

* * *

The ideal virtuous wife is described in detail in Proverbs 31: 10-31.

* * *

Christians should be more interested in doing what is right in God's eyes than in insisting on their own rights.

* * *

It is not our action of applying water in baptism that saves, but rather God's justifying action through his Word. He chooses to give saving faith through baptism. It is *faith* that saves!

* * *

St. Augustine testified that it was the submissive love of his mother, and her diligent witness by word and life, that God used to bring his father to faith.

Day 3

The first verse of 1 Peter 3 does not suggest it is okay to marry a non-Christian. That is warned against in 2 Corinthians 6:14. Peter is giving advice in a situation where the wife has become a believer before her husband.

* * *

The marks of a strong man of god are understanding, sympathy, and humility.

* * *

God sent his Son in human form as a *child*. He was born of the Virgin Mary as a child and grew up in a *family setting*.

* * *

Children are a blessing and responsibility from God. They are to be taught about their Father in heaven and raised to live a life of commitment to him. (See 2 Timothy 1:5; 3:15).

* * *

God instituted the family. He wishes families to live in joy and peace. In his law, he provides the warnings, direction, and guidance for happy family living. In his Son, Jesus, and the Holy Spirit he provides the enabling power and strength to live our lives as Christian. The blessings of love, joy, forgiveness, and peace flow from God through you toward others in the Christ-centered family.

* * *

Companionship is one blessing of marriage. Family members help encourage and support each other (Ecclesiastes 4: 9-10).

* * *

God intends marriage to last until death (1 Corinthians 7: 10-11; 39; Luke 16:18; Romans 7: 2-3; Matthew 19: 4-9; Hebrews 13:4). But he also permits the possibility of divorce on the grounds of adultery and desertion (1 Corinthians 7: 15). The increasing dissolution of marriages rips and the very fabric of our society. If our homes are not preserved, we could easily see the downfall of our nation. But God who is rich in mercy forgives and preserves.

* * *

In both the Old and New Testaments, adultery is regarded as grounds for divorce. However, divorce is not *required* in such cases. If repentance and forgiveness is genuine, a restoration is often possible.

* * *

Day 4

A parent is requited by God to set a good example and bring the child up in the **training and instruction of the Lord** (Ephesians 6:4). Children are given directives in the first three verses of the same chapter. (See also Colossians 3:20.)

* * *

Discipline is a necessary form of love in raising children. (See Proverbs 3: 11-12; 13:24; 23: 13-14; 29:15). The foundation of discipline must be love, not frustration and anger. When the child repents, the parent's love must be open, warm, complete, and immediate. (See Luke 15: 11-32).

* * *

To guard against sexual sins, we are to commit our bodies to God (Romans 6:13; 12: 1-2; 2 Timothy 2:22; James 4: 1-4; Ephesians 5: 3-4; 1 Corinthians 6: 15-20; 7: 2-5). You have to take a stand, make a decision, and fight the fight. If you are god's person, live like god's person. If your family is God's family, let it show. **Therefore, I urge you, brothers, in view of god's mercy, to offer your bodies as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God—this is your spiritual act of worship. Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind** (Romans 12: 1-2).

* * *

Christ's relationship to his church is the pattern for married relationships (Ephesians 5: 24-25).

* * *

Communication is essential for successful family life. To be effective, it must contain elements of honesty, wisdom, sincerity, and especially, love. We learn by doing. The more effort devoted to expressing our feelings and thoughts in love, the better the relationship.

* * *

Keep fun and adventure in your family. Never take each other for granted. Remember, your happiness is a by-product of pleasing someone you love. God's type of love is not self-serving, it is sacrificial. Seek to satisfy those you love, and you will gain your own fulfillment.

* * *

Sex is at the center of many marital problems. The misuse of sex can be destructive. God intended sex to be good and positive. He created it. God intended it for our enjoyment when used within the confines of his will.

Day 5

Even in a busy world, a child needs to have parents who are available.

* * *

Be reasonable in your expectations. Expectations which are too high lead to frustration.

* * *

Communication in marriage is essential. Basically, communication attempts to reveal to the other person our thoughts and feelings. We know ourselves. But, no one else can know us until we communicate.

* * *

Proverbs 30:33: As churning the milk produces butter, and as twisting the nose produces blood, so stirring up anger produces strife.

Ephesians 4: 26-27: "In your anger do not sin": Do not let the sun go down while you are still angry, and do not give the devil a foothold.

When anger is present, deal with it.

* * *

Genesis 2: 18: The Lord God said, "It is not good for the man to be alone. I will make a helper suitable for him."

One purpose of marriage is to prevent loneliness.

* * *

James 1: 19: Everyone should be quick to listen, slow to speak and slow to become angry.

To help communication, practice listening.

* * *