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## HAPPY WIFE, HAPPY LIFE ?

Is the secret to good marriage and happy homes yet to be found?

Or perhaps it's long-overlooked – by people looking for happiness in all the wrong places?

Most 1<sup>st</sup> century women were slaves married to slaves. People worshiped many household gods or idols. Human nature goes for materialism (getting all the toys you want) and hedonism (feeding fleshly passions, sex, drugs, etc).

But becoming a Christian changes all that. Believers receive new life, a living spiritual relationship with God through Christ, and power of the Holy Spirit to make new choices.

So whether people are oppressed by the state, exploited at work, or harassed at home – they respond to life's problems in ways that draw others toward Christ, not away.

1 Peter 3:1-7 explains how that works in marriage. God performed the first wedding, Adam & Eve, and Jesus declared that "from the beginning" marriage is one man and one woman in one life together.

God created the world with an accountability authority structure. The man is head of the home, and the buck stops with him. It does not empower him to be an abusive tyrant. It means

both man and woman give 100% to all their marriage, and he is RESPONSIBLE for final decisions. Eve ate forbidden fruit, but Adam is blamed for bringing sin and death into the world.

Peter's admonition to wives to be subject to husbands follows the same principle as his instructions about masters and servants – it has a specific purpose.

The expected outcome is that even unbelieving husbands will be moved by reverent behavior of their wives. Instead of nagging husbands into trusting Christ, they "respect" them into the kingdom.

Nothing drives a man up the wall and out of the house like a nagging woman (isn't that why Red Green started Possum Lodge in the first place!)

Words are necessary to point someone to Christ, but must be accompanied by actions. A volume of words won't overcome disrespect.

Neither will attempts to camouflage a lack of inward beauty with immodesty or bangles and baubles, says Peter. External stuff will never work like true inner beauty always does. No matter what you try to put on the outside will never overshadow the power of inner beauty. A life transformed by Christ is what will capture the heart of an unbelieving husband.

Author Colin Smith says in Old Testament times the temple was overlaid with gold to make a beautiful place for the presence of God. But since the New Testament, God lives within the lives of believers.

So your inner beauty will attract attention not to you but to Jesus, because it will be a reflection of Jesus.

Likewise, husbands are instructed to "live with your wives in an understanding way." So it must be possible!

Check out the book or dvd "Laugh Your Way to a Better Marriage" for a humorously powerful presentation of how husbands and wives can better communicate – by understanding how and why we think differently, as we complement one another according to God's divine design.

A wiseguy advised his son on his wedding day, "Do you want to be right, or do you want to be happy?"

Women need to be loved, and men need to be respected, and Scripture commands both – so that God's design and purpose will be fulfilled. And it was Christianity that elevated women to equal status.

So Peter tells the husband to "show honor" to his wife, so that his life and his prayers would glorify God.

Again, the reason is so God's purpose will be fulfilled – and more people are attracted to Christ.

That's a challenge to Christians in today's culture – to go against the flow and obey God's Word by the power of His Holy Spirit!

How would that change your marriage? How would that affect other people for Christ? The good news is it works – even if only one partner will try!