



Blessing the Daughters of Sarah! Mother's Day, May 12, 2024

Holy Text: 1 Peter 3:1-7

Three weeks ago we preached on church leadership. In that message we found out that qualified men should lead the church, but we were careful to point out that no dominion can be taken without our sisters.

Last week we preached on the head covering Text, which applies to both men and women. The response has been overwhelmingly positive this time around for which we are very grateful! But in that Text, it is clear that there is a wonderful role for women in the local assembly, and that God has given them the privilege to cover their heads when they pray and prophesy to demonstrate they believe in His Word and trust in His commands.

Taken together these two messages form a wonderful composite of a biblical vision for women: care and protection as well as beauty and modesty. Today, we'd like to flush out this biblical vision a bit more...

The Beauty of Godly Womanhood

I'm convinced that God's creation, as designed, was beautiful. Imagine the lush, unstained forests, the colors of the meadows and fields, the unspoiled mountains and seas, and the paradise that was the Garden of Eden.

Into this paradise, God, in love, placed the crowning jewels of His creation, Adam and Eve. And God walked among them in the cool of the day, obviously desiring a loving relationship with His children (Gen 3:8).

Woman is the last creature God created, and in my view, He saved the best for last! With all my heart, **I believe that *Woman* was created with beauty in mind, to be delightful inside and out, and has a beautiful purpose given by God!**

If you took the time to read the suggested Scriptures, you'll find that God put Adam in the garden to work it and keep it. Part of man's purpose is to labor. This is how man takes dominion. But man was not complete. God wasn't quite finished. Man could not then and cannot now accomplish his dominion purpose without woman. God said, "*It is not good that the man should be alone. I will make him a helper fit for him.*" (Gen 2:18, ESV) Here we find the great purpose for Woman, and that great purpose is a part of her beauty:

Woman was formed for man, to be a helper fit for him.

Now, note that after Eve's creation, God was finished! Woman is the last thing God made. *She is the best and brightest stone on the crown of creation, the finishing touch in the mind of God, and designed by God to be a beatifying "corner pillar" fit for a palace* (Ps 144:12).

Indeed, so precious is this pinnacle of beauty, Scripture unfolds a lifetime of care for her. From birth to gray hair, God commands her protection and provision. Not only that, but she is given the privilege to be a mother, the one who literally conceives within her womb and brings human life into the world! What is more beautiful than that? (Gen 3:20)

Dear reader, we know that Satan works to mar and disfigure everything that God created. His desire is to make the beautiful ugly and the ugly seem beautiful. Nowhere is this more

apparent in the current culture (and sadly, the contemporary church) than among women. I submit to you that woman, especially the Christian woman, is:

1. **Beautiful** in her role as a daughter of Christ, reflecting our Lord's tenderness and care, His patience and tenacity, His submission to and love for His Father.
2. **Beautiful** in her role as an unmarried servant of the Kingdom, making the mission of her family and the church her priority until she weds.
3. **Beautiful** in her role as wife and mother, taking up her role in the picture of Christ and His church (Eph 5), exalted in her role as the submitted bride.
4. **Beautiful** in her role as a mentor and discipler of her children, pouring consistently and exhaustingly into her progeny day after day, crying aloud for them in the secret place as only a mother can.
5. **Beautiful** when she models modesty, rejecting the examples of the world and witnessing to all of creation the Christian virtues of propriety, meekness, and humility.¹

As it relates to mothers, here is a quote I've been reading for years:

"Only women can be mothers. Have we forgotten this fundamental? Only a woman can carry in her body an eternal being which bears the very image of God. Only she is the recipient of the miracle of life. Only a woman can conceive and nurture this life using her own flesh and blood, and then deliver a living soul into the world. God has bestowed upon her alone a genuine miracle — the creation of life, and the fusing of an eternal soul with mortal flesh. This fact alone establishes the glory of motherhood.

This is one reason why the office of wife and mother is (such a high calling). This is the reason why nations that fear the Lord esteem and protect mothers. They glory in the distinctions between men and women, and attempt to build cultures in which motherhood is honored and protected."

Our beliefs about Biblical Womanhood and Motherhood²

1. At CRC, we view the role of women and the call to motherhood in such high esteem that our entire church has changed because of it! Why?
 - To honor the Scriptures, and therefore be obedient to God's ordained order: *But I would have you know, that the head of every man is Christ; and the head of the woman is the man; and the head of Christ is God. (1Cor 11:3 KJV)* This wonderful Scripture implies...
 - To increase the *love, support, protection, and provision* for the women and children among us! "Women and children first" may sound old fashioned to some of you but not to us.
 - **We are calling men to lead not for the sake of domination, but for deliverance; not to be served, but to serve; not to be catered to but to be trained to give his life for his wife, sisters, and children!**
 - **We believe every woman is to be cherished and nurtured, treated with special gentleness and care, provided for, and protected at all costs.**
2. We are so grateful for the women of this church! To be at CRC:
 - It takes a woman who is absolutely in love with Christ.

¹ C. McLeod, A Return to Headcovering, 2017.

² These are things we've been saying consistently for many years, especially around Mother's Day. The reasons are threefold: 1) We really do love and value our sisters, God's daughters! 2) Men cannot take dominion without you! 3) To reinforce an encouragement that will guard CRC against demonic lies concerning womanhood.

- It takes a woman who is sold out and committed to the Word. It takes a woman who is willing to put aside cultural norms and embrace biblical principles.
- It takes a woman willing to escape feminist shackles that she might be free and embrace strong, anointed, dominion-taking biblical womanhood!
- It takes a woman committed to holy singleness or the covenant of biblical marriage despite what media and culture says.
- It takes a woman who is not ashamed of motherhood and caring for children!
- It takes wives not ashamed to submit to their own husbands!
- It takes a woman who although she is strong, can nevertheless rest in the loving protection of the men in her personal life, her elders within the church, and/or the mature holy men in the Body of Christ!

Sisters, we honor you in the LORD and celebrate you today!

1 Peter 3:1-7: Context

- Our Text was written by the apostle Peter to who he called the “scattered” (diaspora):

1 Peter 1:1-2 (KJV) Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ, to the strangers scattered throughout Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia, 2 Elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ: Grace unto you, and peace, be multiplied.

- Peter’s first epistle was written to Christians undergoing persecution, possibly during the reign of Nero during his persecutions of the church (64-65AD). William MacDonald writes:

Christians in Muslim and Marxist countries are so used to repression, hostility, and even downright persecution that they almost come to expect it. For them 1 Peter is a tremendous practical help in accepting suffering as allowed by the Lord and as beneficial in producing certain desirable qualities, such as perseverance.

Christians in the West, especially English-speaking believers with their great biblical heritage, have not yet adjusted to public opposition to the faith. Until recently the state at least smiled on the family unit as basic to society and even encouraged attendance at “the church of your choice.” No longer. The government, especially local government, seems to use its judges, educational institutions, and especially the media, to misrepresent, ridicule, and even defame Bible-believing Christians. Radio, television, films, newspapers, magazines, and official communiqués promote immorality, liquor, cheating, and even blasphemy. Christianity is now “counter-culture,” and the sooner believers learn the lessons the Apostle Peter teaches in his First Letter, the more prepared they will be for the last years of the twentieth and first years of the twenty-first centuries—if our Lord tarries.

- Indeed, for believers going through difficulties, 1 Peter is at the top of the list for encouraging, strengthening sections of Scripture to read!
- But even in the midst of persecution, God demonstrates His care and desire for biblically healthy households in our Text.
- Even though Peter is referring primarily to wives, the principles give us a framework for the *Daughters of Sarah*.

A Short Profile of Sarah

1. She was the wife of Abram/Abraham (Gen 11:29)
2. She suffered barrenness (Gen 11:30)
3. She was beautiful (Gen 12:11,14)
4. Due to her beauty and the cowardice/fear of her husband, she was abandoned....twice! (Gen 12:13, chapter 20)
5. She surely knew of her husband's covenant with God. (Gen 12/15)
6. She became impatient with God and gave Abram her servant Hagar for a child (Gen 16:1-3)
7. She was mocked by Hagar and blamed Abram. (Gen 16:4-6)
8. She was promised a child by God; she doubted and laughed! (Gen 18:1-15)
9. She birthed a son of promise at 90 years of age! (Gen 17:17/21:2)
10. She died at 127 years old. (Gen 23:1)

Sarah was beautiful and faithful, but had weaknesses and insecurities like we all do. Nevertheless, in the end God blessed her faith greatly and through her, all of us:

Hebrews 11:11 (KJV) *Through faith also Sara herself received strength to conceive seed, and was delivered of a child when she was past age, because she judged him faithful who had promised.*

Romans 9:6-7 (KJV) *Not as though the word of God hath taken none effect. For they are not all Israel, which are of Israel: **7** Neither, because they are the seed of Abraham, are they all children: but, In Isaac shall thy seed be called.*

Galatians 4:25-26 (NLT) *And now Jerusalem is just like Mount Sinai in Arabia, because she and her children live in slavery to the law. **26** But the other woman, Sarah, represents the heavenly Jerusalem. She is the free woman, and she is our mother.*

The Beauty of Sarah's Daughters in our Text

1. She is submitted. (v.1)

- Submission is often viewed as such a negative thing. But the Daughters of Sarah understand the privilege they have been given: to represent the Church of Jesus Christ to the world:

Ephesians 5:22-24 (KJV) *Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as unto the Lord. **23** For the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the church: and he is the saviour of the body. **24** Therefore as the church is subject unto Christ, so let the wives be to their own husbands in every thing.*

Ephesians 5:31-32 (KJV) *For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall be joined unto his wife, and they two shall be one flesh. **32** This is a great mystery: but I speak concerning Christ and the church.*

- When submission is viewed in a more Kingdom light, one can see how powerful it really is:
 1. As the Church submits to Christ, she is protected.
 2. As the Church submits to Christ, she is honored.
 3. As the Church submits to Christ, she is powerful and anointed.
 4. As the Church submits to Christ, she advances on the devil's kingdom.

5. As the Church submits to Christ, she is a purified bride, beautiful adorned for her husband. (Rev 21:2)
- A married woman's submission also has a powerful impact upon her husband, even if he is an unbeliever!
- 2. She is pure and fears God. (v.2)**
- *Chaste* means *pure* or *without defilement*. A Daughter of Sarah models a life (conversation, KJV) of purity. This too has a powerful impact on her husband, and I would say on ALL those who know her.
 - Incredibly, Peter is teaching that those who observe a chaste woman who reverences and honors God are wonderfully influenced by her. They, by the power of the Holy Spirit moving in her, are eventually changed!
 - How much do we need women like this in 2024? Beloved, a woman's influence is powerful, whether she is godly or not. Please understand and embrace this!
- 3. She adorns herself with modesty. (vv.3-4)**
- This is so important. The word for *adorning* is *kosmos* in Greek. Just about everywhere else it is used in the NT it is translated *world*.
 - What is the *world* in a biblical sense? 1) It is the physical world, the planet. 2) It is a system of people and ideologies that fight against Christ. 3) It is also "an adornment; an orderly arrangement" that God created for His glory. (Strong/Thayer)
 - It is in this last sense that we find its meaning in our Text. A godly woman arranges or decorates herself in such a way that she pleases God. She isn't going to arrange her hair or clothing in a way that brings glory to herself. Rather her focus is the LORD.
- 4. She has a meek and quiet spirit. (v4)**
- One way she adorns herself by cultivating the inner life unto godliness.
 - This results in the outworking of humility: a meek a quiet spirit. This is in contrast to the loud, stubborn, and lascivious woman Solomon warned about in Proverbs 7.
 - I love the KJV on this verse. This is an "*ornament*." It beautifully decorates her!
 - Not only that, but God considers such traits in women "precious" (NLT) in His sight!
- 5. She is holy. (v.5)**
- A Daughter of Sarah strives after inner and outer holiness. She is born again, submitted to the Spirit and the Scriptures, and her life is an increasingly sweet smelling aroma unto God.
 - We love the phrase "the holy women." Where are they in 2024? Again, they are so needed!
 - May the LORD usher in a return of these fierce but humble sisters in our day!
- 6. She trusts God. (v.5)**
- Like Sarah, her Daughters are women of faith. Imperfect faith to be sure, but she has a strong trust in the God of the Bible nonetheless.
 - She simply believes God's Word. Learning from the mistake of Sarah we mentioned earlier, she patiently obeys what God says concerning her, trusting Him for His timing in her life!
- 7. She sees the above as adornment. (v.5)**
- Because this is such a contrary message, even in church circles, it is worth highlighting again.

- A true Daughter of Sarah sees purity and holiness, meekness and quietness, submission and modesty, etc. as *adornments*! These are characteristics that beautify her! This is the holy arrangement of God for her! And she powerfully influences those around her with these holy decorations!

8. She embraces biblical models of womanhood. (v.5-6)

- She therefore looks to the right models for womanhood. She studies the holy women. She learns from their successes and their failures.
- She understands that just as a husband is committed to love, a wife is commanded to be in subjection. She doesn't fight against this, but rather demonstrates her willingness to obey God by her words, actions, and attitude.
- People don't like verse six! Here is the old testament reference:

Genesis 18:12 (KJV) Therefore Sarah laughed within herself, saying, After I am waxed old shall I have pleasure, my lord being old also?

- Of note, Sarah didn't call Abraham lord verbally, but rather had a submissive posture toward him as her head and authority.³ And her daughters don't fear these things!

9. She understands she is the weaker vessel. (v.7)

- Most women are physically weaker than most men. But this verse *may* be about more than physicality. Perhaps this is a reference to her overall divine design.
- Woman was made for man and from man. She is designed to be his helper. She conceives and bears children. She has been granted greater emotional and nurturing capacity. All these things are good in God's sight!

10. She rejoices that she is a joint heir of the grace of life. (v.7)

- But she is in no way inferior. She is a joint-heir with man. William MacDonald writes:

But the fact that a woman is weaker in some ways does not mean that she is inferior to man; the Bible never suggests this. Neither does it mean that she might not actually be stronger, or more competent in some areas. As a matter of fact, women are generally more devoted to Christ than men. And they usually are better able to bear prolonged pain and adversity.

Being a Daily Blessing to a Daughter of Sarah:

1. **Love and cherish her.** (Eph 5:23) Don't just say it, show it. She thrives in the tender and self-sacrificing love of the men in her life.
2. **Do not be harsh with her.** (Col 2:19) This feels like rejection to her. Instead, be careful with your words, tone and actions. Treat her like a lady.
3. **Listen to her.** (Jam 1:19) She is designed differently than men. Her increased empathy and desire to nurture often manifests itself in her need to share her heart and feel connected.
4. **Compliment her.** (Eph 4:29) (For you husbands, be affectionate!) She, at times due to many factors, may be insecure. Edifying words can help her see herself in a more godly and beautiful way.
5. **Protect her.** (1 Sam 30) As the weaker vessel, she can be at a disadvantage in areas in which men are divinely designed to operate. Be willing to step in front of her, bear the load, take the hit, engage an enemy, and die if necessary to ensure her safety.

³ Of note, "lord" (small "l") has been a term of respect to leaders, husbands, royalty, and civil magistrates for thousands of years.

6. **Lovingly provide for her.** (1 Tim 5:8) Husbands, fathers, and sometimes sons have the honor of providing. God so loves His daughters that He designed a lifetime of care for them, from birth (father) to marriage (husband), to widowhood (family and church). This is, of course, in a unpopular sentiment today, disliked by both men and women. But a *Daughter of Sarah* will appreciate the effort to keep her secure.
7. **Spend time with her.** (Deut 24:5) In the Old Testament, when a man married, even if the nation was at war, he was excused for one year in order to be at home to “cheer up” (KJV), “give gladness to” (LSB) and “bring happiness” (NLT) to his wife. As a general principle, most godly women (and girls) love when you prioritize them and give them attention!
8. **Gently teach and correct her.** (1 Cor 14:35; Eph 6:4) (For husbands and fathers.) One of a man’s most important duties is to humbly provide both spiritual instruction and emotional stability in the life of his wife and daughters.
9. **Stay strong for her.** (1 Tim 5:3-5) In Bible times, a widow was in dire straights, especially if she had no family. Men, let us give due attention to our spiritual AND physical health for the glory of God and to stay fit and strong for our wives and children.
10. **Give her the occasional gift.** (Acts 20:35) We give to those we love. This is our Father’s example; He gave us His beloved Son. Gifts (both presents and acts of service) tend to demonstrate thoughtfulness. Get into the habit of giving to the women in your life.

Final Thoughts and Prayer:

Words from Scott Brown many years ago:

The world needs Christ loving, husband helping, home making, dominion taking, kingdom making women. The Bible not only teaches women to be possessors of gentle and quiet spirits, it also teaches them to exercise their God-given wisdom and strength. They are vigorous and strong and distinctively feminine. They are supremely secure and are not frightened by any fear. They are brimming with confidence in the future and are not tossed to and fro by every wind of doctrine. They are happy because they fear the Lord and love His ways. Their worth is far above rubies, and they bring gain to their households. They are girded with strength and their clothing is of fine linen. The law of kindness is upon their lips. They do their husbands good all the days of their lives. They are “pillars sculptured in palace style” (Ps 144:12) with adornments that radiate the beauty of Christ and diffuse the fragrance of the aroma of Christ in every place.⁴

Go forth and take dominion CRC Ladies! Stand unashamedly upon the Rock of God’s Word. Trust our LORD and set forth the example of Sarah, whose daughters you are because you do not fear the repercussions of obeying God.

And may those of us who thrive under the blessing of your ministry continue to love, honor, cherish, and protect you, unto the glory of God.

Amen!

⁴ Scott Brown, *Feminine by Design*.