



# KING'S CHAPEL

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## Daily Devotional - 1 Peter Study

Week 4 - Day 1

### Approaching God

**Read Isaiah 55:1-2** - *"Come, all you who are thirsty, come to the waters; and you who have no money, come, buy and eat! Come, buy wine and milk without money and without cost. Why spend money on what is not bread, and your labor on what does not satisfy? Listen, listen to me, and eat what is good, and you will delight in the richest of fare."*

**Prayer:** Isaiah 55 is an invitation to come into the Lord's presence, and to experience the soul transforming power of his salvation. Who is it that receives this invitation? Who are the people who are satisfied in Isaiah 55? They are the ones who come empty-handed and bare. Those who yield and surrender experience the very goodness of God. Start today by coming into his presence with wherever you feel most needy today and ask for God, fountain of joy, to fill you.

### Introduction to 1 Peter 3:1-7

**Husbands & Wives** - Peter now turns to the subject of marriage. In your bible, the likely heading for this section reads: *"Husbands & Wives"* Since marriage is such a big topic, and because much of what the bible has to say about marriage has been misunderstood, the focus for this week will be directed towards looking at the theme of biblical marriage. This, however, is not just a topic for married people. Its teaching is relevant for you whether single, married, divorced, widowed, or remarried. As always, our challenge is to be a hearer and doer of God's word. You should only reject the teaching on marriage roles in this week's study if you find it unbiblical, and not just because it seems distasteful to you in some way. On the other hand, if you find this teaching to be scripturally sound, then as we saw last week in our study on submission, our lives will be blessed as we embrace, yield, and bring our lives in arrangement under the word of God.

### Bible Reading & Meditation

**1 Peter 3:1-2** - *1 Likewise, wives, be subject to your own husbands, so that even if some do not obey the word, they may be won without a word by the conduct of their wives, 2 when they see your respectful and pure conduct.*

**Genesis 1:26-28** - *26 Then God said, "Let us make man in our image, after our likeness. And let them have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over the livestock and over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth." 27 So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them. 28 And God blessed them. And God said to them, "Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth and subdue it and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over every living thing that moves on the earth."*

**Galatians 3:25-29** - **25** *But now that faith has come, we are no longer under a guardian, 26 for in Christ Jesus you are all sons of God, through faith. 27 For as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ. 28 There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is no male and female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus. 29 And if you are Christ's, then you are Abraham's offspring, heirs according to promise.*

**1 Peter 3:7** - *In the same way, you husbands must give honor to your wives. Treat your wife with understanding as you live together. She may be weaker than you are, but she is your equal partner in God's gift of new life. Treat her as you should so your prayers will not be hindered.*

## **Read: Male & Female - God's Design for Marriage**

Perhaps it would be best to begin this study on marital roles with an acknowledgement that the scriptural teaching on this subject has often been abused. Some people within the church have distorted what the Bible says about the submission of a wife to her husband to argue that men are superior to women, or that women should be subjugated to men. Nothing could be further from the truth, but sadly, this false teaching has caused many to reject both the teaching itself and the Bible that supposedly supports it. So before diving into the study this week, let's make a few things very clear.

First, the Bible does not teach that men are in any way superior to women. Rather, it reveals that God designed men and women to be equals who share the same inherent value in His sight. And secondly, the Bible does not teach that women should be subjugated to men. In fact, it forbids the exploitation of any advantage – whether physical, economic, or social – to lord control over women. So what does the Bible teach about men and women? It does teach that *God established a pattern for the marriage relationship of a man and woman, each with a unique role to fill, which is intended to bring mutual benefit, harmony and fulfillment.* True, the Bible uses the “H” word (headship) and “S” word (submission) to describe these marital roles, but it does so for the benefit of each partner, and not to give ascendancy to men.

Later this week we will explore what is meant by the terms *headship* and *submission*, but let's lay some groundwork today by simply understanding how God made men and women to be both equal and unique. Imagine for a moment that you are watching the Olympic pairs ice skating competition. You're watching a particular couple glide down the ice preparing for their next throw-jump element. You see them pick up speed, they maneuver into position, and then...the female skater throws her partner twisting into the air. He sticks the landing and the audience erupts in thunderous applause. Is there anything wrong with this picture? Why shouldn't the woman toss the man? Why shouldn't the man get the applause for his perfect landing? Does it matter who throws who? Doesn't the woman have as much right to throw her partner as to be thrown? Doesn't the man have as much right to be thrown by his partner as to throw? And yet, this scenario feels as strange as it is unrealistic.

Peter's aim is that spouses understand God's unique design of men and women and embrace the unique roles that have been designed for each to assume in marriage. There is no universal agreement in our culture about the nature of manhood and womanhood, or about the roles and functions of men and women in marriage. This lack of agreement can be traced to a rejection, or ignorance of, the biblical account of creation. For many, the creation story of Genesis is, at best, a myth that carries a few moral lessons. For these people, Genesis has nothing to say about the

intrinsic nature of men or women. Even many who accept the Genesis account as historical fail to see how the facts of God's design of men and women apply to marital roles. The result is that many of us have an understanding of manhood and womanhood that may be more informed by culture, family history or popular philosophy than by Scripture. This was not always the case. A century or more ago, the vast majority of Americans accepted the historic biblical definitions of manhood, womanhood and their respective marital roles. Today, the divorce rate has increased significantly, and it is likely that one of the contributors to this rise in divorces is as a result of the modern ambiguity that men and women are not uniquely designed and have no unique roles to fill in marriage. Therefore, understanding how God made men and women, and how He intended them to relate to one another in marriage is a crucial key to developing your own life-long, fulfilling marriage.

So let us turn to Scripture. There we see a historical record that provides an overview of God's intelligent design of all things. Genesis tells us the very first things that can be said about cosmology, geology, botany, zoology, as well as human nature, because these were all designed with a purpose. It shows us that God purposely designed humanity with inherent rational capability, value, responsibility and glory, irrespective of gender. Biblical scholars call this their *ontological equality*, meaning that they are equal as beings before God. However, Genesis also reveals that God purposely designed the male and female to correspond to one another. In other words, they were designed with unique, complementary features that would define the roles they assumed in their relationship. So while men and women share in their ontological equality before God, they are *functionally unique* before each other.

Let's focus first on how the man and woman were created equal. In Genesis 1:27 you read, "*So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them.*" From this you know that both men and women received the gift of being created in God's image. No other beings, not even angelic beings, have been given this privilege. His image may be thought of as the mark of His glory upon humanity that places us in special relationship with Him. That both male and female equally bear this image speaks to their equality in value to God, in their ability to relate to God and in their responsibility before God.

In addition, verses 26 and 28 show that the man and woman were designed to share equally in their dominion over the earthly creatures, and in their responsibility to do so by filling the earth with their descendants. In the New Testament their ontological equality before God is proven by the fact that neither men nor women have any advantage over the other with respect to redemption. Rather they both benefit equally as fellow "...heirs...of the grace of life..." (1 Peter 3:7). Paul uses the phrase, "...there is no male and female" in Galatians 3:28 to impress upon his readers that in respect to being a recipient of grace, gender – like ethnicity and social status – is a non-issue.

But all this does not mean that God created male and female to be the same in all respects. In actual fact, male and female differences can be observed in spheres ranging from our physical capabilities to our emotional make-up and social behaviors. Are these differences merely cultural? Or we're men and women created to complement each other, to fit together? Tomorrow we'll continue our study by looking more closely at the differences between men and women and discover how God designed for these differences to be reflected in marriage.

## Questions for Study

- Based on today's study, list 3 or 4 ways in which the first man and woman were created equal.
- According to the passages we studied today, what are some ways that men and women are alike? And what are some ways in which they are different?
- What intellectual or emotional objections might you have to the teaching that God designed the woman to correspond to man, and that to be male is to lead, to be female is to help and support? Do you disagree that this is the teaching of Scripture, or do you disagree for other reasons?
- From your point of view and regardless of your gender or marital status, make a list of potential advantages or disadvantages of modeling a marriage after this pattern?

## Close in Prayer

Remember as you close in prayer today that God knows your needs - even before you ask. Are you married? Ask God to make your marriage honoring to him. Are you single? Ask God to use your life to bring Him glory. What can you rejoice in today? What might you need to repent of? What requests do you have of God?