

Discussion on 1 Peter 3:1-6
Sunday School – January 14 and 21, 2018
Sleater Kinney Road Baptist Church, Olympia, WA

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 - d. Instead, let your beauty be [from] the inner person, from the heart, through the immortal [character] of a gentle and peaceful spirit, which is very precious in God's eyes.
 - e. Because, this is also how the holy women from the past who hoped in God made themselves beautiful - by submitting themselves to their own husbands. That's what Sarah did; she obeyed Abraham by calling him, "Sir." You've now become her daughters!
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1. TEXT (1 Peter 3:1-6):¹

In the same way, you wives must submit yourselves to your own husbands, so that even if some are being disobedient to the word, they might be won over without a word by your way of life when they see your holy conduct, along with your respect towards God.

¹ This is my own original translation from the UBS-5 Greek text.

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Don't let your beauty be simply external, like the braiding of hair and wearing of gold, or putting on [fancy] clothes. Instead, let your beauty be [from] the inner person, from the heart, through the immortal [character] of a gentle and peaceful spirit, which is very precious in God's eyes.

Because, this is also how the holy women from the past who hoped in God made themselves beautiful - by submitting themselves to their own husbands. That's what Sarah did; she obeyed Abraham by calling him, "Sir." You've now become her daughters!

So, do what's right and don't fear any husband who is intimidating.

2. THINKING THROUGH THE TEXT:

Q1: What is this passage about, in a nutshell? How would you sum it up?

- Here it is:
 - o (1) It's a message for Christian wives,
 - o (2) telling them to submit themselves to their unbelieving husbands,
 - o (3) so that these husbands might be saved by their holy way of life
- The passage is the same as the one about government, and slaves:
 - o (1) submit to authority,
 - o (2) and live a holy life in the midst of a potentially bad situation,
 - o (3) for the sake of the Gospel – God uses your testimony and your way of life to save people
- This passage is about Christian wives who have unbelieving husbands, and how they should live their lives as Christians in that context – a situation which has several potential minefields in secular culture:²
 - o (1) The wife was expected to follow her husband's lead in matters of religion; and Romans would later be quick to blame Christianity for their social problems – their pagan "gods" were angry, etc., etc.³

² This list is from Karen Jobes, *1 Peter*, in BECNT (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 2005), 203.

³ See, for example, Justo Gonzalez's brief discussions of the persecutions under Marcus Aurelius (ca. 161 A.D.) and Decius (ca. 249 A.D.) in *The Story of Christianity*, combined ed. (Peabody, MA: Prince Press, 2007), 45-46, 85-86.

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- (2) This means that, in the wider culture, the wife's Christian faith could cause a scandal and be considered "rebellion" – social pressure and embarrassment could result
- (3) The wife's mingling with Christians (i.e. outside the husband's immediate control and orbit) could have interpersonal and social status implications

Q2: Why do you think God doesn't have Peter tell us to fix all the social injustices right now? Why should we submit to ungodly governments, masters who own us as slaves, and unbelieving husbands who might be hostile towards their Christian wives?

- Because all these things will only be fixed by a radical transformation of the heart, and universal submission to Christ as Lord and King
 - Things won't be "set right" until the Messiah returns, and establishes peace, righteousness and justice on this earth, when He rules from David's throne in Jerusalem over all the earth
 - **Read Micah 4:1-7; Rev 21:22 – 22:5**

Q3: Does Peter go into details and give concrete examples about how this should be done? Why not?

- No, he just tells them to submit, and leaves the details out
- He probably does this because the individual dynamics of each relationship are very different, and so the precise details are going to look different:
 - (1) for different people,
 - (2) in different contexts,
 - (3) depending on their particular situation,
 - (4) and their particular temperament and personality
- The fact of the matter is that **both the husband and the wife** are commanded to *be submitting to each other continually*, and put one another's needs ahead of the other (cf. Eph 5:25-30; 1 Pet 3:7)
 - **Why is this command hard for us to pull off?**
 - Because of the fall!

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- The complementary relationship, where the husband and wife are a loving team, with the husband taking the lead role, was ruined by the fall
- Both husbands and wives are tempted to push against God's boundaries, or ignore their responsibilities altogether
- The result is a never-ending struggle against sinful selfishness within the marriage, and every marriage is a work in process – except mine! 😊
- It's difficult for two Christians to pull this off, and it's **even more difficult** for a Christian woman to pull off when she's married to an unbelieving husband

a. In the same way,

Q4: In the same way as what?

- Peter is continuing the "submission" theme he began in 2:13-17, which recurs in 2:18-25; 3:1-6; 3:7 and 3:8
 - **2:13:** "Be subject for the Lord's sake to every human institution ..."
 - **2:18:** "Servants, be submissive to your masters with all respect ..."
 - **3:1:** "you wives must submit yourselves to your own husbands ..."
 - **3:7:** "Likewise, husbands, live with [your wives] in an understanding way ..."
 - **3:8:** "Now, finally, each [of you] must make it a habit to be like-minded, understanding, have brotherly love [and] be tender-hearted and humble-minded ..."

b. you wives must submit yourselves to your own husbands, so that, even if some are being disobedient to the word, they might be won over without a word by your way of life when they see your holy conduct, along with your respect towards God.

Q5: Why does Peter want Christian wives to submit themselves to their unbelieving husbands?

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- For evangelistic reasons!
 - o It's important to note that Peter **doesn't** tell her to leave the husband!
- Peter doesn't define what "submission" is, yet – he'll give an example later in the passage

Q6: What *single thing* does Peter point out that *might* win these unbelieving husbands over to Christ?

- The wives' way of life

Q7: What two proofs of a holy "way of life" does Peter point out?

- Holy conduct, and respect towards God
- There are two ways to translate this phrase:
 - o **(1)** "when they see your holy conduct, **along with** your respect [towards God]"
 - e.g. ESV, NIV, NET, KJV
 - These actions have **God as their object**
 - That is, the husband may come to faith when he sees the wife's Christlike character and conduct for the glory of God
 - o **(2)** "when they see your reverent/respectful **and** chaste behavior"
 - e.g. NKJV, NASB, RSV
 - These actions have the **husband as their object**
 - That is, the husband may come to faith when he sees the wife's respectful and chaste behavior towards him
 - The choice of "chaste" (from ἀγνήν, with the sense of "purity") has clear sexual overtones – it means these translators (probably) think Peter is talking about sexual ethics within the marriage
 - It **makes no sense** for Peter to suggest a husband may come to Christ because his Christian wife is sexually pure – what nonsense!
 - o I believe the first option is the best one; I think the sexual ethics interpretation is far-fetched and incorrect

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- The point is that a way of life that has a fighting chance in influencing an unbelieving spouse to come to Christ is proven by:
 - o (1) Holy conduct, and
 - o (2) Respect towards God – *fear, respect, reverence*
- A paraphrase of this section would read something like this:
 - o **Peter:** “You wives must submit yourselves to your husbands!”
 - o **Reader:** “Why?”
 - o **Peter:** “So that, even if some of your husbands are unbelievers, your Christlike way of life (proven by holy conduct and respect towards God) might win them over to the Lord!”
 - *Don’t knock the spiritual power of a godly lifestyle* – especially when its done day after day, week after week, month after month, year after year, as you share your life with the spouse who knows and loves you better than anyone on earth

c. Don’t let your beauty be simply external, like the braiding of hair and wearing of gold, or putting on [fancy] clothes.

Q8: What’s Peter’s point here, with this negative example? What’s he getting at? What does “beauty” or “adornment” have to do with submission?

- We’ll wait to answer this question, until we get to the end of the passage
- We know a few things:
 - o (1) I don’t think Peter is saying you be submissive by looking pretty; in fact, looking “pretty” or “beautiful” in an external way isn’t his point
 - o (2) Peter is using feminine imagery (“external beauty”) to make a larger point about the state and disposition of your heart
 - *Repeat for emphasis!*
 - Peter’s talking about how a Christian wife ought to submit to her husband in a loving, Christlike way, so he might get saved
 - He’s *not* giving her advice about modesty - that’s *not* his point!

d. Instead, let your beauty be [from] the inner person, from the heart, through the immortal [character] of a gentle and peaceful spirit, which is very precious in God’s eyes.

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Q9: What's Peter's point here, with this positive example?

- Whatever “submission” is (we’ll look at that in a moment, below), part of Peter’s point is fairly simple:
 - o (1) It’s *completely different* than external beauty (“instead”); it’s an internal thing
 - o (2) It flows from your inner person – from your heart
- **How do you do this? What does it mean? How does Peter put teeth on this command, so we can understand it?**
 - o (3) You do this through the immortal character (“beauty,” “quality”) of a gentle and peaceful spirit
- Remember – Peter’s point is that a wife needs to submit to her unbelieving husband, so he’ll see her holy way of life, and *maybe* get saved. **What does a “gentle and peaceful” spirit have to do with anything?**
 - o (4) He’s describing her attitude, demeanor, her heart, her entire disposition and way of life – it’s gentle and peaceful (i.e. Christlike)
- A paraphrase might go like this:
 - o *“Ladies, if you want to be “beautiful” in God’s eyes, then forget about external things; like hair, jewelry, or fancy clothes!*
 - o *Instead, in God’s eyes, true “beauty” comes from your inner person, from your heart – through an immortal, imperishable, Christlike character that’s gentle and peaceful – this is the kind of beauty that’s precious in God’s eyes!”*
- Peter uses “beauty” as a **figurative reference** for Christlike character; to be beautiful in God’s eyes is to have the immortal character of a gentle and peaceful spirit inside your heart, your soul, and your inner person

e. Because, this is also how the holy women from the past who hoped in God made themselves beautiful - by submitting themselves to their own husbands. That’s what Sarah did; she obeyed Abraham by calling him, “Sir.” You’ve now become her daughters!

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Q10: How did godly women from days past (i.e. the Old Testament) make themselves “beautiful?”

- By submitting themselves to their husbands

Q11: So, putting thigs together, what on earth is this “beauty?” What does it consist of?

- It means a Christlike character which is “attractive” to God
- In this context, it means submission to your unbelieving husband with a gentle and peaceful spirit, so that the guy might get saved!

Q12: What did Sarah’s submission look like?

- Peter doesn’t bother going into detail; he only gives us one single example, and it’s a quick one:
 - o **Read Genesis 18:1-12**
- **What did Sarah mean by calling Abraham “Lord?”**
 - o (1) It could mean she worshipped him, like she worshipped Yahweh!
 - o (2) Or, it could be a simple term of respect and honor (e.g. “Sir”)
 - This one is clearly the right option
- **What about Sarah’s action is so special, so noteworthy, that Peter decided to use it as an example for us?**
 - o It shows that, *even in the casual thoughts inside her own head*, Sarah was submissive to her husband and thought of him in a respectful way
 - o This wasn’t something she said aloud; *it was something she said to herself* – that means she clearly respected and loved Abraham from her heart, from her inner person
 - She had true Christlike “beauty,” which is very precious in God’s eyes
 - o This is why Sarah is the role model Peter reaches for; her submission and love for her husband is:
 - (1) real, and not fake;
 - (2) internal, not just external fakery

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Q13: What does it mean to be one of Sarah’s “daughters?” What’s Peter’s point?

Note: I know your translation probably connects the end of this passage to what comes next, and mine doesn’t – just wait on that, for now!

- It means you’re a member of God’s family; what’s different here is that Peter says this by reaching for a *female* patriarch, *not a male one* (e.g. “**And if you are Christ’s, then you are Abraham’s offspring, heirs according to promise,**” Gal 3:29)
- **So, since these Christian wives are members of God’s family (i.e. Sarah’s daughters), then what’s Peter’s point?**
 - o His point is to follow her example!
- Here is Peter’s point for this section:
 - o **(1)** Sarah was a holy woman, who hoped in God and His promises
 - *You’re a holy woman, who hopes in God and His promises*
 - o **(2)** Sarah made herself “beautiful” in God’s eyes by submitting to and respecting her husband
 - *You should make yourself “beautiful” in God’s eyes by doing the same thing*
 - o **(3)** If you’re a Christian, that means you’re one of Sarah’s daughters,” and a member of the same family of God
 - *So you should follow her example!*

f. So, do what’s right and don’t fear any husband who is intimidating.

- It’s important you know there are two different interpretations of this passage:
 - o **(1) It’s a command;** Peter urges these Christian wives to do something, in light of what he’s just said (e.g. “**You’ve now become her daughters! So, do what’s right and don’t fear any husband who is intimidating**”)
 - This is how I translated it
 - o **(2) It’s conditional;** Peter says these Christian wives become Sarah’s children **if** or **when** they do what is right

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- This is what most English translations do, and I don't think it makes much sense
- If you don't do what's right, do you **stop being** Sarah's daughter in the faith?
- Bottom line:
 - (1) Peter isn't trying to obliquely threaten these poor women ("you're only Sarah's daughter **as long as** you do right, heh, heh!"); he's trying to encourage them!
 - (2) that's why it's best to see Peter as:
 - (a) giving them Sarah as an encouraging and godly example (e.g. "You've now become her daughters!")
 - (b) then commanding them to follow that example (e.g. "So, do what's right ...")

Q14: What do these commands mean?

- (1) It means these Christian wives should do right, no matter what – which means being submissive to their husbands from the heart, like Sarah
- (2) It also means they shouldn't be intimidated by anyone as they do right
 - There's only one "other person" in the context, and that's the unbelieving husband

3. THOUGHT-FLOW DIAGRAM & GREEK TRANSLATION NOTES:

I can hardly think of anybody who'd be interested in these notes. I made them for myself as I studied the passage, and I need somewhere to store them so I find them later. This is as good a place as any. Please feel free to ignore all this, if you wish! These are not preaching notes, and are not intended to be. Nobody in his right mind should mistake them for teaching notes. They're simply translation notes about particular points of grammar and syntax.

a. Translation (1 Peter 3:1-6):

In the same way, you wives must submit yourselves to your own husbands, so that even if some are being disobedient to the word, they might be won over

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without a word by your way of life when they see your holy conduct, along with your respect towards God.

Don't let your beauty be simply external, like the braiding of hair and wearing of gold, or putting on [fancy] clothes. Instead, [let your beauty be from] the inner person, from the *heart*, through the immortal [character] of a gentle and peaceful spirit, which is very precious in God's eyes. Because this is also how the holy women from the past who hoped in God made themselves beautiful - by submitting themselves to their own husbands. That's what Sarah did; she obeyed Abraham by calling him, "Sir."

You've now become her daughters! So, do what's right and don't fear any husband who is intimidating.

b. Thought-flow Diagram:⁴

TOPIC OF SUBMISSION (see 2:13, 18)		- In the same way,
	COMMAND FOR SUBMISSION	○ you wives must submit yourselves to your own husbands,
	why (purpose)	▪ so that
	possible scenario	• even if some are being disobedient to the word,
	possible result of wife's submission	• they might be won over without a word by your way of life
	description of submission which might produce this result (external and internal)	• when they see your holy conduct,
		• along with your respect towards God.
NEGATIVE DESCRIPTION OF THIS SUBMISSION		- Don't let your beauty be simply external,
	example #1	○ like the braiding of hair and wearing of gold,
	example #2	○ or putting on [fancy] clothes.
CONTRAST – POSITIVE DESCRIPTION OF SUBMISSION		- Instead,
	what submission is	○ let your beauty be [from] the inner person,

⁴ This format is based off Richard Young's discussion on thought-flow diagrams (*Intermediate Greek* [Nashville, TN: B&H, 1994], 268-271) and the format in the ZECNT commentary series. It blends both versions, and I'm not entirely sure it gets the point across well, but I'm using it for now.

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		further explanation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ from the heart,
		how you accomplish this submission	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ through the immortal [character] of a gentle and peaceful spirit,
		result - God is pleased with this submission	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ which is very precious in God's eyes.
	REASON – APPEAL TO BIBLICAL EXAMPLES		- Because
		general example	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ this is also how the holy women from the past who hoped in God made themselves beautiful - by submitting themselves to their own husbands.
		specific example - Sarah	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ That's what Sarah did;
		what Sarah did	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ she obeyed Abraham by calling him, "Sir."
		covenant status and implied responsibilities to follow Sarah's example	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ You've now become her daughters!
	REPEAT OF COMMAND FOR SUBMISSION		- So, do what's right and
			- don't fear any husband who is intimidating.

c. Translation Notes:

- **Row #1:** Greek text (UBS-5);
- **Row #2:** parsing;
- **Row #3:** gloss;
- **Row #4:** brief syntax notes;
- **Row #5:** rough, ugly, but more "literal" translation;
- **Row #6:** smoother, slightly more colloquial translation

<i>Ὁμοίως</i>
adv
likewise, in the same way
In the same way,
In the same way,

Ὁμοίως. What is Peter referring to? Is he saying wives must submit themselves to their husbands, in the same way slaves submit themselves to their masters? Or, is he simply continuing the theme of the Christian life as one of submission, while awaiting Christ's return (2:13 onward)? I don't see a functional difference, really. Christians have relationships where they must submit themselves, and they must

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do so joyfully for evangelistic reasons. The Lord is using people everywhere, and has people everywhere.

αἱ	γυναῖκες	ὑποτασσόμεναι	τοῖς	ιδίοις	ἀνδράσιν
npf	npf	pm(pass)pnf	dpm	dpm	dpm
the	wives	submit/subject/subordinate yourselves	the	your own	husbands
	<i>subject; vocative sense</i>	<i>descriptive; direct middle; imperatival</i>	<i>reference</i>		
you wives must be submitting yourselves to your own husbands,					
you wives must submit yourselves to your own husbands,					

αἱ γυναῖκες. The subject here clearly has a vocative sense, even though (if this be the case), the article serves no apparent purpose (see Wallace).⁵ Some printed Greek texts dropped the article altogether (e.g. WH, Tregelles). Because Peter goes on to tell these women to submit themselves to their *husbands*, it is clear the word should be translated “wives,” not “women.”

ἵνα
conj
so that
<i>purpose</i>
so that
so that

καί	εἴ	τινες	ἀπειθοῦσιν	τῷ	λόγῳ
conj		indef. pronoun, npm	3 rd ,pl,p,a,i	dpm	dpm
even	if	certain ones	they are being disobedient	the	word/message
<i>ascensive</i>	<i>protasis of third-class conditional</i>	<i>subject; refers to husbands</i>	<i>descriptive, mod. τινες</i>	<i>reference</i>	
even if certain ones are being disobedient to the message,					
even if some are being disobedient to the word,					

ἀπειθοῦσιν. I could render this as “not believing,” but I think it’s helpful to remember that Jesus commands everybody to repent and believe the Gospel. If you refuse, you’re being disobedient to God. I don’t want to lose that nuance. It’s important to

⁵ Max Zerwick, *Biblical Greek Illustrated by Examples* (Rome: Pontificio Istituto Biblico, 1963), 11 (para. 34). See also C.F.D. Moule, *An Idiom Book of New Testament Greek* (Cambridge, UK: CUP, 1959), 117. The best discussion on nominatives (*with* and *without* the article) as vocatives is by Daniel B. Wallace, *Greek Grammar Beyond the Basics* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1996), 56-58

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note that this disobedience is active and ongoing⁶ – rebellion against God always is.

τῷ λόγῳ. The word here (pun intended ☺) is a synonym for “Gospel.” But, I wanted to conserve the wordplay in the original (“disobedient to the **word** . . . won over without a **word**”), so I rendered both instances as “word.” J.N.D. Kelly remarked, “The older translation (AV; RV; but not RSV; NEB) ‘without the word’ is plainly wrong. The writer is not questioning the part of the gospel in their conversion. It must of course be the converting instrument, but in certain cases the eloquent silence of Christian deportment is its most effective vehicle. The presence of the definite article before the first word and its absence before the second in the Greek confirm that a verbal play is intended.”⁷

διὰ	τῆς	τῶν	γυναικῶν	ἀναστροφῆς	ἄνευ	λόγου	κερδηθήσονται
prep	gsf	gpf	gpf	gsf	prep	gsm	3 rd ,pl,fut,pass,i
by, through	the	the	wives	way of life	without	word, message	they will be won over
means		subj. gen		obj. prep		obj. prep	apodosis of third-class conditional; predictive, mod. τινες
through the wives' way of life, apart from the message, they will be won over							
they might be won over <i>without</i> a word by your way of life							

κερδηθήσονται. Proper grammar suggests this might be a subjunctive (paired with the ἵνα), and the *Textus Receptus* has a subjunctive. However, there has only been one Greek manuscript ever found (#1751, ca. 15th century) which contains this reading (see CNTTS). The standard textual critical resources don't even mention this variant at all. Even though the future tense-form here is predictive according to strict categories, the real sense seems to be subjunctive.

ἄνευ λόγου. Michaels suggests, “[t]he author’s point is not to forbid verbal testimony by Christian wives but to suggest tactfully that such testimony is not obligatory, and sometimes not helpful.”⁸

ἐποπτεύσαντες	τὴν	ἐν	φόβῳ	ἀγνῆν	ἀναστροφὴν	ὑμῶν
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⁶ See J. Ramsey Michaels, *1 Peter*, in WBC, vol. 49 (Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson, 1988), 157.

⁷ J. N. D. Kelly, *The Epistles of Peter and of Jude*, in Black's New Testament Commentary (London: Continuum, 1969), 128.

⁸ Michaels (*1 Peter*, 158).

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aapnpm	asf	prep	dsm	asf	asf	2 nd ,pl,g
they saw	the	in	respect	pure, holy	way of life	your
<i>adverbial-temporal; mod. κερδηθήσονται; futuristic (tied to verb)</i>	<i>obj.participle</i>	<i>association</i>	<i>obj.prep</i>	<i>obj. participle</i>		<i>partitive</i>
when they see your pure way of life, accompanied by your respect [towards God].						
when they see your holy conduct, along with your respect towards God.						

φόβος. In context, the word does not imply fear or terror, but reverent respect (cf. BDAG, s.v. “7787 φόβος,” 2.b.). Is this respect towards the husband, or towards God? I think it is towards God.⁹ Kelly wrote, “what is meant is clearly not that Christian wives should dread their husbands, but that ‘godly fear’ (cf. 1:17) should be the mainspring of their lives.”¹⁰ Michaels observes that the husbands could hardly be in view, because Peter goes on to caution the wives to not be terrified of their unbelieving husbands!¹¹ Rather, it is reverent respect for God *that enables* Christian wives to persevere in such an atmosphere. Biggs also agrees the reference is to God.¹²

ὧν	ἔστω	οὐχ	ὁ	ἔξωθεν
rel pro; gpf	3 rd ,s,p,a,imp	neg	nsm	adv
which	let it	not	the	from outside
<i>refers back to ὑμῶν</i>	<i>refers to ὁ κόσμος</i>		<i>connected with κόσμος</i>	
Whose adornment must not be only external,				
Don't let your beauty be simply external,				

ὁ κόσμος. This is a difficult one. The sense here is beautification by decoration (BDAG, s.v. “4371 κόσμος,” 1). Most English translations opt for “adornment.” I struggled with this one, because it sounds unnaturally stuffy. It’s a technical definition, not a literary translation. Nobody uses this word in normal conversation. We *deck* the halls with boughs of holly. We *doll ourselves up* for fancy events. We *beautify* ourselves. But, we don’t *adorn* ourselves. This is language from a dictionary, not real life.

⁹ D. Edmond Hiebert, *1 Peter*, revised ed. (Winona Lake, IN: BMH, 1992), 198. See also Michaels (*1 Peter*, 158).

¹⁰ J.N.D. Kelly (*1 Peter*, 128).

¹¹ Michaels (*1 Peter*, 158).

¹² Charles Biggs, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Epistles of St. Peter and St. Jude*, in ICC (New York, NY: Charles Scribner’s Sons, 1903), 151.

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What should we use in place of this? I think the best option is to opt for *beauty*. We’re talking about women, and the things they do to make themselves look pretty in a superficial sense (of course, Peter has a larger point in mind). But, think about the analogy – *why* do women do these things? To *beautify themselves*. To *make themselves beautiful*. What is the goal such a woman is aiming for with this preparation? She’s aiming for *beauty*, plain and simple.

But true beauty, Peter warns, isn’t an external thing at all. It’s internal, from the heart – from the imperishable character of a quiet and peaceable spirit, which is precious in God’s sight.

Translations with a more essentially literal translation philosophy usually stick with “adornment,” (e.g. RSV, ESV, KJV, NASB). Many others use “beauty,” (e.g. Phillips, NEB, REB, NLT, NET).

ἐμπλοκῆς	τριχῶν	καὶ	περιθέσεως	χρυσίων
gsf	gpm	conj	gsf	gpn
braiding	hairs	and	putting on	gold
<i>apposition to ἔξωθεν</i>	<i>obj.gen</i>		<i>apposition to ἔξωθεν</i>	<i>obj.gen</i>
like [the] braiding of hairs and putting on of gold,				
like the braiding of hair and wearing of gold,				

ἢ	ἐνδύσεως	ἱματίων	κόσμος
	gsf	gpm	nsm
or	putting on	garments	adornment
	<i>apposition to ἔξωθεν</i>	<i>obj.gen</i>	<i>subj</i>
or [the] putting on of garments.			
or putting on [fancy] clothes.			

ἀλλ’
conj
but
<i>contrast</i>
But,
Instead,

ἀλλ’. The imperative carries over here from ἔστω οὐχ with the contrasting conjunction.

ὁ	κρυπτὸς	τῆς	καρδίας	ἄνθρωπος
nsm	nsm	gsf	gsf	nsm

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the	inner, secret, internal	of the	heart	man
	<i>implied predicate of ἔστω οὐχ, which itself referred to external adornment</i>		<i>apposition</i>	<i>subj.</i>
[your adornment must be] the inner person; that is, the heart,				
[let your beauty be from] the inner person, from the heart;				

κρυπτὸς ἄνθρωπος. This is in contrast to the “external” adorning, so the word should probably be translated to reflect that, which is why I rendered it as “inner person.”

ἐν	τῷ	ἀφθάρτῳ	τοῦ	πραέως	καὶ	ἡσυχίου	πνεύματος
prep	dsm	dsm	gsm	gsn	conj	gsn	gsn
in	the	imperishable, immortal	of the	gentle, considerate, humble, meek	and	quiet, peaceful, tranquil	spirit
<i>manner</i>		<i>obj.prep</i>		<i>attributive</i>		<i>attributive</i>	<i>subj.gen</i>
through the imperishable [character] of the gentle and peaceful spirit,							
through the immortal character of a gentle and peaceful spirit,							

ἐν. The preposition further explains what this beauty of the inner person, from the heart, actually looks like. It spells it out and describes the *manner* in which this is done. Really, it is a second apposition, following on the heels of the first apposition τῆς καρδίας. Your beauty must be from the inner person; that is, from your heart. What on earth does this mean? What does it look like? Well, you accomplish this in the following way – through the immortal character of a gentle and peaceful spirit. This choice shades over to *means*, but I think the more foundational role of the phrase is in apposition to the previous statement, to explain *how* this is done.

Many English translations render the preposition as a dative of association (e.g. “**with** the immortal character ...”). I disagree. As I mentioned above, this is really a second apposition. A wife’s “beauty” must be from the inner person; that is, from the heart. What does this mean? How is it done? How do we put “teeth” on this command? Well, it’s done **through** (manner [i.e. “how do I do it”]) the immortal character of a gentle and peaceful spirit.

τῷ ἀφθάρτῳ. If this is an adjective, then we’re left asking the question, “through the immortal *what?*” The text doesn’t explicitly say, so we’ll have to infer. Peter is referring to true beauty, to real beauty. It shouldn’t be external and superficial. It must come from the inner person, from the heart, through the immortal . . . *something* . . . of a gentle and peaceful spirit. Is it *beauty* again (e.g. ESV)? What about *character* or *quality* (e.g. NASB)?

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The word conveys the sense of something permanent, that will never fade away. Because Peter is talking about real beauty here (or adornment, take your pick), I think it may be better to see him contrasting beauty that is superficial, with beauty that is immortal and everlasting. But, the word *character* speaks of the quality of a thing. Real beauty, lasting beauty, has an immortal quality, nature and character.¹³

Either option is good. For stylistic reasons, I think another *beauty* is one too many for this sentence. I'd go with *character*.

But, it may not be an adjective at all. It could be an abstract noun, in which case you'd render it, "through the **immortality** of a gentle and peaceful spirit." No English translation takes this view, and nearly every commentator agrees with the consensus view. In the end, it really doesn't make any interpretive difference. But, I'm *sorely* tempted to understand this as a noun ... ☹.

ὅ	ἐστίν	ἐνώπιον	τοῦ	θεοῦ	πολυτελής	οὕτως
rel pro, nsn	3 rd ,s,p,a,i	prep	gsm	gsm	nsn	adv
which	it is	in sight of, in opinion of, in judgment of	the	God	very costly, precious, valuable	thus
refers to πνεύματος	refers to ὅ		obj,prep		predicate	manner
which is very precious in the sight of God.						
which is very precious in God's eyes.						

ὅ. Technically, this refers to πνεύματος. However, more generally, it really refers to the entire point of v.4, which itself is summed up by the phrase "immortal character of a gentle and peaceful spirit."

γάρ
conj
for
grounds
For
Because

ΠΟΤΕ	καὶ	αἱ	ἅγιοι	γυναῖκες	αἱ	ἐλπίζουσαι
adv	conj	npf	npf	npf	npf	parnpf
once	even, also	the	holy	women, wives	the	they are hoping

¹³ See Hiebert (1 Peter, 200 – 201).

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	<i>ascensive or adjunctive</i>	<i>predicate</i>	<i>subject</i>	<i>attributive; historical</i>
in this way also the holy women who hoped				
this is also how the holy women from the past who hoped in God				

	εἰς	θεὸν	ἐκόσμου	ἑαυτὰς	ὑποτασσόμεναι	τοῖς	ἰδίοις	ἀνδράσιν
	prep	asm	3 rd ,pl,impf,a,i	apf, reflexive	pm(pass)pnprf	dpm	dpm	dpm
	for	God	they were adorning	themselves	they are submitting themselves	the	their own	husbands
<i>reference</i>	<i>obj.prep</i>	<i>iterative</i>	<i>d.obj.verb</i>	<i>adverbial (manner – shading to apposition) mod. ἐκόσμου; direct middle; refers to αἱ ἅγαι γυναῖκες</i>			<i>obj.participle</i>	
in God used to adorn themselves by submitting themselves to their own husbands.								
made themselves beautiful - by submitting themselves to their own husbands.								

ἐκόσμου. In this context, the idea behind the standard gloss “adorn” is the sense of “make pretty,” “decorate,” etc (see BDAG, s.v. “4364 κοσμέω,” 2). When we’re talking about a woman, it doesn’t make much sense to say, “Mary adorned herself well this morning!” What on earth does that even mean? In real language, you’d say, “Mary made herself very pretty this morning!” In this translation, I went with “made themselves beautiful.”

ὡς	Σάρρα
adv	nsf
like, as	Sarah
<i>manner</i>	<i>subj</i>
Sarah, for example,	
That’s what Sarah did;	

ὡς Σάρρα. Here, the adverb points out Sarah as an example (BDAG, s.v. “8075 ὡς,” 2.d.α). So, it would be rendered something like, “Sarah, for example . . .” Commentators have made much of Peter’s citation. They’ve pondered why Abraham is brought in as a parallel, because he clearly wasn’t an unbeliever. And, in the context of Genesis 18, Sarah is amused and disbelieving when she calls Abraham “Lord.”

What should we do with this? Common sense would answer that Peter was reaching for a quick analogy, not making a profound theological point. It’s possible

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to think *too* hard. Michaels agrees; “the solution to these varied difficulties lies in not reading too much profound theology into Peter’s simple language.”¹⁴

ὡς	Σάρρα	ὑπήκουσεν	τῷ	Ἀβραάμ	κύριον	αὐτὸν	καλοῦσα
adv	nsf	3 rd ,s,aor,a,i	dsm	dsm	asm	asm	papnsf
like, as	Sarah	she obeyed	the	Abraham	lord, sir, master	him	she is calling
manner	subj	constative	direct obj.		direct obj. (dbl. accusative)		adverbial (manner); mod. ὑπήκουσεν; refers to Σάρρα
obeyed Abraham by calling him, “Sir.”							
she obeyed Abraham by calling him, “Sir.”							

ἧς	ἐγενήθητε	τέκνα
rel pro, gsf	2 nd ,pl,aor,pass,i	npr
who	you have become	children
refers to Σάρρα	divine passive; ingressive	subj.
whose children you have become!		
You’ve now become her daughters!		

ἀγαθοποιῶσαι	καὶ	μὴ	φοβούμεναι	μηδεμίαν	πτύησιν
papnprf	conj	neg	pm(pass)pnpf	asf	asf
they are doing what is right	and	not	they are fearing	nobody, no one, no	terrify, intimidate
imperative; iterative; substantival			imperative; iterative; substantival	direct obj.; substantive; refers to husbands	apposition
So, do what is right and do not fear anyone who is intimidating.					
So, do what’s right and don’t fear any husband who is intimidating.					

ἧς ἐγενήθητε τέκνα ἀγαθοποιῶσαι καὶ μὴ φοβούμεναι μηδεμίαν πτύησιν. This is the most difficult portion of this passage to translate. There are several difficult decisions to be made:

- (1) What does it mean to become “Sarah’s child?”

Is Sarah an ethical example for Christian women, or is this a reference to covenant membership through God’s grace in salvation? You could argue either way, here. Clearly, Sarah is a role model. She called Abraham, “Sir,” indicating she submitted herself to her husband “from the heart.” Christian women should follow her example. No doubt about it. The phrase “child of . . .” is a common Semitic term which often indicates nature (e.g. Barnabas is the “son of encouragement,” Acts 4:36).

¹⁴ Michaels, (1 Peter, 165).

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But, is this Peter's point? Is he saying, "Look, you gals need to follow Sarah's example and respect your husbands and submit to them from the heart, just like Sarah did!" Or, he is saying, "Listen, you gals are now Sarah's children, which means you're Christians who've been brought by God into covenant relationship with Him. He saved you, and adopted you!" See especially Hiebert on the covenant concept.¹⁵

Both of these options are theologically correct. However, the parallel breaks down if you take it too far – these Christian women Peter is writing to have unbelieving husbands, and Sarah's husband was a believer. This makes me skeptical about the "Sarah as holy example" option, and lean towards "Sarah's daughter = covenant child of God," instead (but, see especially Jobes¹⁶). But, the crux of the matter comes when you try and figure out what on earth to do with the participles . . . which brings us to the next issue:

- (2) Is the exhortation conditional ("if you do what is right . . ."), temporal ("when you do what is right"), or a command ("so, **you must do** what is right . . .")?

If being "Sarah's child" is an ethical concept here, with Sarah as an example, then you can render the participles as conditional or temporal. The conditional option implies a works system of perseverance – if you *don't* do what is right, and if you *do* fear something, then you're no longer Sarah's child. That's not a good option!

The temporal option is better; it implies you're only following Sarah's proper example *when* you act like her. But this still leaves the door open for a loss of status. If you stop acting like Sarah, and don't submit to your husband from the heart are you not Sarah's daughter anymore? What happens to this status? This was my initial translation choice.

However, if being "Sarah's child" is a *covenant* concept (i.e. you're part of God's family, a child of Abraham and Sarah), then the participles should be rendered as

¹⁵ Hiebert (*1 Peter*, 203).

¹⁶ Jobes (*1 Peter*, 205).

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commands. You're a child of Sarah (and, by extension, of God), so you must do what is right and not fear intimidation from anyone.

Here are how English translations have handled the participles:

- Conditional: ESV, NASB, RSV, NIV, NKJV, NEB, Phillips
- Temporal: Tyndale, KJV, NET, NLT
- Instrumental: REB (this is a weird rendering! 😞)
- Command: None

The scholarly data is mixed. J. Ramsey Michaels believes the conditional sense is too awkward and believes the participles are commands.¹⁷ Karen Jobes sees Sarah as an ethical example who Christian women should follow.¹⁸ D. Edmond Hiebert opts for a conditional rendering, but cautions the condition explains the natural result of covenant membership, not a condition of it. He dismisses the imperative option out of hand.¹⁹

Greg Forbes argues for a covenant understanding of “children of Sarah,” and argues that the imperatival force is the more natural translation choice.²⁰ Peter Lange argues for the participles describe the *manner* in which the wives are Sarah's children (“as those who . . .”).²¹

Hart argued for the conditional sense.²² So did Tom Schreiner, who argued strongly for the conditional sense,²³ and argues for perseverance as a necessary corollary to true salvation. It is difficult to imagine how a Pastor will explain that obedience to Peter's command is the inevitable result of true salvation, without eventually issuing an exhortation to do what is right and not fear! The end of the

¹⁷ Michaels (*1 Peter*, 166-167).

¹⁸ Jobes (*1 Peter*, 206).

¹⁹ Hiebert (*1 Peter*, 203-204).

²⁰ Greg Forces, *1 Peter*, in EGGNT (Nashville, TN: B&H, 2014; Kindle ed.), KL 3306.

²¹ John P. Lange, et al., *A Commentary on the Holy Scriptures: 1 Peter* (Bellingham, WA: Logos Bible Software, 2008), 53.

²² J.H.A. Hart, *The First Epistle General of Peter*, in Expositors Greek Testament (London, UK: Hodder & Stoughton, n.d.), 64.

²³ Thomas R. Schreiner, *1, 2 Peter, Jude*, vol. 37, in NAC (Nashville, TN: B&H, 2003), 157-158.

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road here is an exhortation – a *command!* Why don't we just skip right to it, and translate the participles as imperatives?

It is a close call, between the temporal and the imperative options. I chose the imperative.