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On this week's episode of Chosen and Cherished, we talked about where we find our hope. Believe it or not, it's in Jesus. If you'd like to listen to the podcast, here's the link... <https://summitpoint.org/chosen-and-cherished/>

*Blessings,
Jonna*

1 Peter 3:7, Psalm 15

Last week, the focus was on being a godly wife and mother. What does godly mean? It means being devoted to God. That's a big calling, a supernatural calling... impossible to live without the power of the Holy Spirit working in me. The same is true for being a godly husband and father, which is the focus this week. I always want to be careful when I look at scripture about the husband because I don't want to use it as ammunition against my husband and I don't want to use it to rate my husband. I want to focus on MY relationship with the Lord and PRAY for my husband.

But... I can't really look at 1 Peter 3:7 without noticing that it's directed to the husband, so I can use it as a scripture to pray for him without judging him. I can also use Psalm 15 to pray for my husband AND to look at my own heart. Psalm 15 is for ALL people.

How does 1 Peter 3:7 help me to pray for my husband?

"Likewise, husbands, live with your wives in an understanding way, showing honor to the woman as the weaker vessel, since they are heirs with you of the grace of life, so that your prayers may not be hindered."

First... just as it did for the wife in vs. 1, this verse starts out with the word "likewise", which takes me back to 1 Peter 2:23. Likewise... in the same way that Jesus did not revile when He was reviled against, and He did not threaten when He suffered, but CONTINUED ENTRUSTING HIMSELF TO THE FATHER... I can pray for my husband to entrust himself to the Father. The Lord has a lot more power and authority to work in my husband's life than I

ever will. So rather than trying to tell my husband how he should change, I need to entrust him to the Father. Truly, some of the ways I might want my husband to change may not even be biblical!!!

Next... I can pray for my husband to show honor to me as the weaker vessel. Now, I may get offended by the term "weaker vessel", but it doesn't mean that I'm inferior. This verse makes it clear that I'm not inferior when it says we're "heirs together of the grace of life." We're partners! We're on the same team. He's just the captain of the team, but he answers to the coach!

The truth is, at the very least, I AM physically weaker than my husband. This is why there's such a huge fight trying to get men out of women's sports.

The obvious biological difference between male and female that is indisputable is that males are born with the XY chromosomes and females are born with XX chromosomes. No surgery can alter that. Also, males produce exponentially more testosterone than females, and females produce exponentially more progesterone and estrogen than males. Males have an extra layer of muscle than females. Males have a different center of gravity than females. Males have more bone density. The male brain is literally structured differently than the female brain. This doesn't make women inferior. It makes us different. The beauty of living according to God's plan is that we get to complement each other's differences.

I remember asking a woman to tell me what her husband's strengths and what her strengths were. We wrote them on a white board. And then we compared. It was so cool. We noticed that the places she did not have as much strength were areas that he was strong, and the places he did not have as much strength were areas that she was strong. Instead of resenting the differences, we can delight in the differences, and worship God for putting us together.

So... I can pray for my husband to honor me (as the captain of the team honors the members of the team so that they play better), not for the sake of MY comfort or pleasure, but for the sake of HIS relationship with the Lord and HIS submission to the coach and owner of the team.

I need to pray for my husband to trust the Lord and lead me with honor as an heir with him of the grace of life SO THAT his prayers will not be hindered. My husband's prayers are HINDERED, blocked, when he refuses to trust the Lord and show honor to me. This is not good.

Does God really block prayers??? Yes. Sadly, I think that a lot of believers don't understand how important prayer is... so we might not even care that God hinders our prayers... until we really need Him. There are other scriptures that speak to Him hindering our prayers...

- *Psalm 66:18 ~ "If I had cherished iniquity in my heart, the Lord would not have listened." Asking God for help when I cherish the very things Jesus had to die for hinders Him from answering me. When I'm cherishing sin in my heart, I'm probably asking for things that He has to say no to because saying yes would hurt me, and it would teach me to keep cherishing things that hurt me.*
- *Proverbs 28:9 ~ "If one turns away his ear from hearing the law, even his prayer is an abomination." If I ignore what His word says, He won't help me to keep doing that. My words become like fingernails on a chalkboard to Him.*
- *James 4:2 ~ "You do not have because you do not ask." For me to say that I shouldn't have to ask because God already knows what I want or that He's gonna do what He wants anyway is to miss the whole point of prayer. It is about relationship with God, not about treating Him like a magic genie.*
- *James 4:3 ~ "You ask and do not receive, because you ask wrongly, to spend it on your passions." Sometimes I ask with the wrong motives. Even things that God calls good, when asked with the wrong motives, will be withheld sometimes until I allow God to transform my heart so that my motives are not about my comfort, but about my King.*

So... I can pray for my husband to entrust himself to the Lord, to honor me as an heir with him, and to grow so close to the Lord that he doesn't want to miss out on the incredible relationship he has with the Lord as he prays and communes with God. What is the greatest prayer I can pray for him and for me? That we would glorify God and bear fruit for Him (John 15:8).

Now I turn to Psalm 15. What can I pray for my husband and pray for the Lord to do in my own heart? (Also, for a single person, this can be the type of person to ask the Lord to bring to you... and to ask Him to help you to be that as well.)

Vs. 1 ~ "O Lord, who shall sojourn in Your tent? Who shall dwell on Your holy hill?"

This is about fellowship with the Lord... dwelling with Him... not just visiting Him here and there but doing life with Him. I need to pray for myself and for my husband to WANT to do life with the Lord first and foremost. Sometimes, that's the greatest struggle because my flesh wants nothing more than to rule my heart. I need to surrender to the Lord so that I even WANT this.

So... what is a person like who does life with the Lord? That person becomes like HIM. Everything described in these verses is who Jesus is. O Holy Spirit, please make me like Jesus!

Vs. 2 -5 ~

"He who walks blamelessly and does what is right and speaks truth in his heart..."

How do we walk blamelessly? Galatians 5:16 says we do this by walking with the Spirit. This is a supernatural call. I can't do this without His supernatural help.

How do I even WANT what is right, let alone DO what is right? Only with the help of the Holy Spirit. On my own I might think righteousness is kind of boring... until unrighteousness is done against me!

I will speak truth in my heart. Ohhhh... this is a tough one. There is only one truth... Jesus is the truth. My feelings are NOT truth. My heart is where my feelings, desires, and choices live. My mind needs to speak TRUTH to my feelings, desires, and choices because left to itself, my heart will go the wrong direction. I need to allow God's word, which is called the sword of the SPIRIT, and His SPIRIT to have control of my heart. I can only do that by dwelling with Him.

"who does not slander with his tongue and does no evil to his neighbor, nor takes up a reproach against his friend..."

I won't slander with my words, which means I won't have slander... backbiting... in my heart. "Out of the abundance of the heart, the mouth speaks" (Luke 6:45).

I won't do evil to my neighbor. Who is my neighbor? Well, the story of the Good Samaritan tells me that my neighbor is EVERYONE. I just won't do evil. I for sure need the Lord's help for this to be true.

I won't try to disgrace or shame ANYONE... even when they try to disgrace or shame me.

"in whose eyes a vile person is despised, but who honors those who fear the Lord..."

My loyalty will be to the Lord and I will align myself with those who also love Him. Ephesians 5:7 says not to "become partners" with those who do not actively love and obey the Lord. 2 Timothy 2:22 say to "flee youthful passions and pursue righteousness, faith, love, and peace, ALONG WITH THOSE WHO CALL ON THE LORD FROM A PURE HEART." Love everyone, but align myself with those who are also loyal to God.

"who swears to his own hurt and does not change..."

Make a commitment and keep a commitment even if it's hard. Don't make a commitment and go back on it if something better comes along. Let me not forget the incredible way Jesus swore to His own hurt by committing to die for my sins while taking on a punishment whose consequences were worse than I will ever comprehend.

"who does not put out his money at interest and does not take a bribe against the innocent."

Don't let money rule my heart. Don't use money to get power. Don't ignore who I may hurt by prioritizing wealth and power over people. That's the trait of Satan, not of Jesus Christ my Lord.

"He who does these things shall never be moved."

Praise the Lord. As I dwell with Him and become like Him, He will not allow me to be moved from Him. Psalm 55:22 says, "Cast your burden on the Lord, and He WILL sustain you; He will never permit the righteous to be moved." The LORD is my answer. Everything starts with trusting Him, hoping in Him, loving to do life with Him.

O Lord, I see that my job is not to make all these things true in my life... and if I can't make them true for me, I definitely can't make them true for anyone else. I need You. Please help me to dwell with You and pray for myself and for my husband that You will continue to make us more and more like Jesus, who lived Psalm 15 without fail. Praise Your name!!!