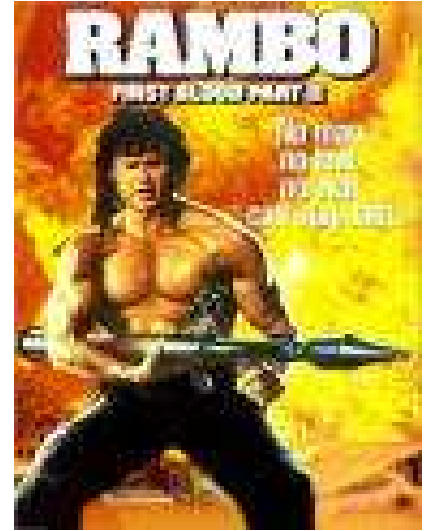


Study 2.

Christians in action. 2:11-3:12

Submission is a dirty word. After all, people who submit are "wimps." The world's heroes are guys who won't let anyone push them around - the Rambo types who are ready to take on injustice, who stand up for their rights, who kill, maim and destroy if anyone gets in their way. Businesses run "assertiveness training courses" for their employees that teaches them how to assert themselves instead of being submissive.

As Christians, we're called to be DIFFERENT - especially in the area of submission. The original readers of Peter's letter faced hard times in a number of areas - with many pressures just like the ones we face today. Let's look at Peter's radical advice.



1) Submitting to Government.

Read verses 11 to 17. What attitude did Jesus have to human authorities?

What attitude are WE to have to human authorities? Why? (From verse 13).

What is the God-given role of human Governors and Kings? What is OUR role?

Whose servants are we?

Describe in your own words how Peter portrays the character of a Christian Citizen.

2) Submitting to Masters.

Read verses 18 to 20. Why are slaves called to submit respectfully even to harsh masters?

Thought: Submission is easy with a good and considerate master. But we don't really learn what Christian submission is all about until we're faced, like Jesus, with UNJUST SUFFERING. That's our opportunity to REALLY SHOW THE DIFFERENCE! But note not all Christian suffering is unjust.

How do you go at submitting in the work place? Be honest!

3) Women in Marriage.

Read 3:1-6. What does Peter refer to in verse 1 when he says "Wives, in the same way, submit to your husbands"? In the same way as WHAT? (hint check out 2:13)

What is the AIM of this wifely submission?

Read Peter's description of beauty in verses 3 and 4. Are these the marks of beauty the world teaches us to appreciate?

Are they the marks of beauty that ...

a) you as a man look for?

OR

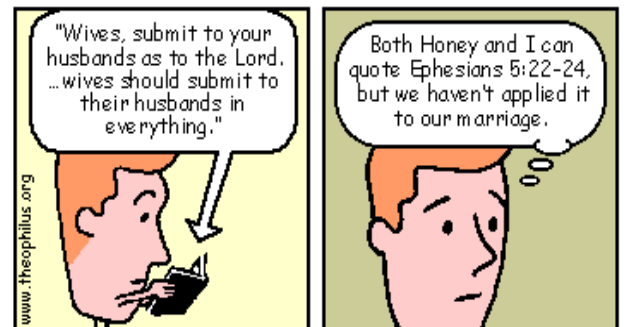
b) you as a woman aim for?

Consider verse 5 carefully. Can you see that the thing that is most likely to STOP US from following the example of Jesus in submitting is a lack of hope or trust in God.

Do you think the same problem applies to other areas, like our attitude to Government, or to our "masters"? How can we avoid falling into this trap?

4) Men in Marriage.

Husbands need to note carefully that verses 1 to 6 are addressed to wives - don't be tempted to take matters into your own hands and IMPOSE what the passage is saying on your wife, or you'll become one of those "harsh masters" Peter talks about in chapter 2.



Instead, read verse 7, and take on the qualities Peter mentions there...

How should Christian husbands treat their wives? (look up Ephesians 5:25. Does this answer the question?)

What is the usual, sinful, way to treat a "weaker partner"? In what way are Christian husbands to reverse this attitude?

5) The Christian Community.

Verses 8-12 depict the Christian community as a community of humble, loving, compassionate people, who do good in spite of evil.

How well do you think we are going in this area?

What reasons or motivations does Peter give as to why Christians ought not to repay evil with evil or insult with insult?