

**THE EXHORTATION TO WIVES IN 1 PETER 3: 1-7 TO BE
SUBMISSIVE TO THEIR HUSBANDS: A SOCIO-HISTORICAL
STUDY**

E.B. Connock Hons BA

**Dissertation submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for
the degree Magister Artium in New Testament Theology of the
Potchefstroomse Universiteit vir Christelike Hoër Onderwys**

Supervisor: Prof. Dr . J.J. Janse van Rensburg

**May 2000
Potchefstroom**

To my mother and father

PREFACE

At the completion of this study I would like to thank the following for all they have done:

My mother and father for the sacrifices they have made, without which none of this would have been possible. I thank them also for the opportunities afforded to me for my education.

Prof. Fika J. van Rensburg, my supervisor. I thank you for your enthusiasm and guidance, but most of all for having always gone the extra mile, above and beyond the call of duty. You have been a constant source of ideas, corrections, and words of good cheer that are essential to such a project. My gratitude is also expressed for the love of New Testament which you have instilled and inspired in me.

To Prof. Wim Vergeer for his help with this research. His example and enthusiasm in the field of New Testament research remain a constant source of encouragement to me.

In the area relative to the theme of this thesis I would like to express my gratitude to Dr. Elma Cornelius for her help and her passion for this area of study. It has proven to be both a highly interesting and stimulating contagion, which I can only hope will continue to infect me in the years to come.

To the staff of the Ferdinand Postma-Biblioteek and the Jan Lion Cachet-Biblioteek as well as to the staff associated with Theology at the libraries of the Universities of Pretoria and South Africa whose help and expertise enabled me to access some of the more difficult to find texts relevant to this study.

The Faculty and staff of George Whitfield College for their ongoing encouragement and support as well as for the Theological foundation they nurtured in me.

To the HSRC for the research bursary, which they allocated to me.

Finally, my most heartfelt thanks goes to God for all His provision and strength which carried me to the finish line to complete this race.

Potchefstroom

May 2000

CONCISE CONTENTS PAGE

FORWARD	i
CONCISE CONTENTS PAGE	ii
CONTENTS	iii
CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION	1
CHAPTER 2: THE HUSBAND/WIFE CODE IN GRAECO-ROMAN SOCIETY	7
CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH ON THE NEW TESTAMENT HUSBAND/WIFE CODE	25
CHAPTER 4: THE PROBABLE RECEPTION OF 1 PETER 3: 1-7 BY THE FIRST READERS/HEARERS	42
CHAPTER 5: 1 PETER 3: 1-7 AND THE ROLE OF WOMEN IN SOUTH AFRICAN CHURCHES	75
CHAPTER 6: CONCLUSION	84
SAMEVATTING	87
ABSTRACT	91
BIBLIOGRAPHY	93

CONTENTS

CHAPTER 1

Introduction

1.1 Introduction	1
1.2 Problem statement	2
1.3 Aim and Objectives	3
1.4 Central Theoretical Argument	3
1.5 Methodology	4
1.6 Schematic Summary	5

CHAPTER 2

The husband/wife code in Graeco-Roman society

2.1 Introduction	7
2.1.1 <u>Husbands and Wives in antiquity</u>	7
2.2 The writings of Graeco-Roman antiquity	7
2.2.1 <u>Plato, Middle Platonism and Platonism in Stobaeus</u>	7
2.2.2 <u>Aristotle and the Peripatetics</u>	13
2.2.3 <u>Independent writers</u>	17
2.3 The Jewish writers	21
2.3.1 <u>Josephus and Philo</u>	21
2.3 Conclusive Summary	22

CHAPTER 3

Research on the New Testament husband/wife code

3.1 Introduction	25
3.2 <i>Haustafeln</i> by definition	26
3.2.1 <u>Recent research on <i>Haustafeln</i></u>	28
3.3 Christian <i>Haustafeln</i>: prehistory and development of the discipline	29
3.3.1 <u>Prehistory of the discipline</u>	29
3.3.2 <u>Development of the discipline</u>	31
3.4 New Testament husband/wife <i>Haustafeln</i>: General	32
3.4.1 <u>The New Testament household code</u>	32
3.4.2 <u>Husband/wife code in New Testament research</u>	33
3.4.2.1 Husband/wife codes and contemporary feminist interpretation	34
3.4.2.2 Husband/wife codes and the contemporary gender debate	35
3.5 New Testament: 1 Peter with reference to its husband/wife code	38
3.6 Conclusive Summary	40

CHAPTER 4

The probable reception of 1 Peter 3:1-7 by the first readers/hearers

4.1 Introduction	42
4.2 Canon and context in 1 Peter	43
4.2.1 <u>Specific canonicity</u>	44
4.2.1.1 Authorship	44
4.2.1.2 Dating	45
4.2.1.3 Addressees and their situation	46
4.3 The thought structural analysis of 1 Peter 3:1-7	48
4.4 An interpretation of 1 Peter 3:1-7	54
4.4.1 <u>Introduction</u>	54
4.4.2 <u>Wives, defer to husbands (3:1-4)</u>	55
4.4.3 <u>The example of Sarah (3:5-6)</u>	64
4.4.4 <u>Husbands honouring of wives (3:7)</u>	68
4.5 Conclusive Summary	71

CHAPTER 5

1 Peter 3:1-7 and the role of women in SA churches

5.1 Introduction	74
5.2 Christian women in practice: A look at marriage and conduct	75
5.2.1 <u>Marriage to the modern unbeliever</u>	75
5.2.2 <u>Marriage to the man of God</u>	79
5.3 1 Peter 3:1-7 and possible questions for the 21 st century	81
5.4 Concluding Summary	83

CHAPTER 6

Conclusion	86
Samevatting	89
Abstract	91
Bibliography	93

CHAPTER 1

Introduction

Overview:

- 1.1 Title
- 1.2 Problem statement
- 1.3 Aim and objectives
- 1.4 Central theoretical argument
- 1.5 Methodology
- 1.6 Schematic summary

1.1 Title

The exhortation to wives in 1 Peter 3: 1-7 to be submissive to their husbands:
A socio-historical study.

1.2 Problem statement

A cursory perusal of the literature of related interest gives a clear indication of the diversity within the field of study, which concerns itself with the role of women in church and society, also in South Africa.

With particular reference to the church, it can be seen among the ranks of churches that, whilst they devote themselves to the authority and inspiration of Scripture, there occur nevertheless with uncanny frequency what must be termed as incongruencies. All too often key passages are used *eisegetically* to substantiate various doctrines peculiar to given denominations. Confirming the lack of consensus among scholars on the interpretation of 1 Peter 3:1-7, Thurén (1995:148) argues that to search for support for or against a patriarchal view of the society behind this unit is off the mark.

This research will focus attention specifically on the pericope 1 Peter 3:1-7 forming a part of the domestic code found in 1 Peter 2:11-3:12. Due also to the relevance of other *Haustafeln*, which refer also to husband-wife household codes, relevant allusions will be made where necessary.

In focusing on the exhortation to wives to be submissive to their husbands it is necessary to investigate a number of contributing factors which will jointly clarify the interpretation of 1 Peter 3:1-7. These are as follows:

1. What were the characteristics of the husband/wife code in Graeco-Roman society?
2. What is the present status of research on *Haustafeln*, particularly the husband/wife code in the New Testament?
3. What was the probable reception of the exhortation to wives in 1 Peter by the first hearers/readers?

-
4. How should the exhortation to wives in 1 Peter 3:1-7 be applied in South African churches today?

1.3 Aim and objectives

The aim of this research is to contribute to a better understanding of the pericope 1 Peter 3:1-7. Elliott (1993:9) expounds correctly on the necessity of the sociological aspect of hermeneutics. He clearly points out that each text as well as the context always had a further *social dimension* that becomes evident within a larger constellation of social, economic, political, and cultural currents. The pericope 1 Peter 3:1-7 seems to be no exception, as it too has a social dimension that the present author will seek to elucidate upon. To reach this aim involves the fulfilment of the following objectives:

1. To have an understanding of the husband/wife code in Graeco-Roman society.
2. To gain an understanding of the present status of study with reference to *Haustafeln* in the New Testament, with particular emphasis on husband/wife relationships.
3. To identify the probable reception the exhortation to wives to be submissive to their husbands would have had from the first hearers and/or readers of 1 Peter 3:1-7.
4. To understand 1 Peter 3:1-7 and the role of women in South African churches.

1.4 Central theoretical argument

The central theoretical argument is that 1 Peter 3:1-7 is misused by proponents of the view that state that women should not hold positions of office in the church.

Furthermore, that the exhortation for a wife to be submissive to her husband was not foreign to Graeco-Roman society. The probable reception of 1 Peter 3:1-7 would have meant that the Christians addressed were in actual fact

being exhorted to still live by this generally accepted submission code, providing it did not compromise their Christianity.

This argument will seek to expose the abuse of this text as a substantiating premise or force for a theological position that limits the role which women play in the church and society. In turn the argument will furnish the prospective reader with a valid interpretation and application for this particular passage.

1.5 Methodology

This study is a socio-historical study, as utilised in the works of Meeks (1983) and Malherbe (1983). This method is described by Garrett (1992:94,95) as falling into one branch of biblical sociology, which she calls "Social Historical" studies (the other being "Social Scientific" studies as represented by the work of Elliott, 1990).

Firstly, to accomplish the goal set out the reader will be taken to the source documents (the text editions in the Loeb classical library will be utilised where possible), which best give indication as to how the submission of a wife to her husband was understood from a Graeco-Roman perspective.

Having reached the first objective, the research will take the reader In dealing with the present status of research on *Haustafeln* in the New Testament, a range of computer based data searches as well as a thorough study of printed bibliographies have been done, so that interaction with some of the most recent scholarship will be done.

The following chapter will make use of the grammatico-historical method of exegesis (Osborne, 1991:19-62,127-144) from a reformed perspective so as to give an understanding of the probable reception by the first readers/ hearers of the exhortation to wives. Toulmin's (1969:29-73) model will also be applied so as to analyse the structure of argumentation in 1 Peter 3: 1-7 which will facilitate a better understanding of this Petrine text.

In answering the question of how the exhortation to wives in 1 Peter 3:1-7 be applied in South African churches today, the method of Coetzee *et al*

(1980:12; cf also Coetzee, 1997) will be utilised. Attention will be given to the process which they describe as "*Hermeneuse*" whereby "*die oorspronklike bedoeling van die teks oorgebring word op die konkrete werklikheid van vandag*" (Coetzee *et al*, 1980:12). Their "*Hermeneutiese vertrekpunte*" and its content (Coetzee *et al*,1980:15) will be utilised to establish how the role of women in South African churches should be understood.

1.5 Schematic summary

The following schematic summary represents the relationship between the problem statement, the objectives and the methodology that this thesis will follow.

PROBLEM STATEMENT	OBJECTIVES	MEHODOLOGY
What were the characteristics of the husband/wife code in Graeco-Roman society?	To have an understanding of the husband/wife code in Graeco-Roman society.	Socio-historical methodology as utilised in the works of Meeks (1983) and Malherbe (1983), defined by Garrett (1992).
What is the present status of study with reference to <i>Haustafeln</i> in the New Testament with emphasis on the husband/wife code?	To gain an understanding of the present status of study concerning the husband/wife code in New Testament <i>Haustafel</i> .	Computer based data searches and use of printed bibliographies.
What was the probable reception by the first hearers/readers of the exhortation to wives in 1 Peter 3:1-7.	To understand how the first readers/hearers probably had understood the exhortation in 1 Peter 3:1-7.	Gramatico-historico exegesis from a Reformed perspective (Osborne:1991).
How should the exhortation to wives in 1 Peter 3:1-7 be applied in South African churches.	To understand 1 Peter 3: 1-7 and the role of women in South African churches.	The method propounded by Coetzee, de Klerk, Floor (1980:12-26) and Coetzee (1997).

CHAPTER 2

The husband/wife code in Graeco-Roman society

Overview:

2.1 Introduction

2.1.1 Husbands and wives in antiquity

2.2 The writings of Graeco-Roman antiquity

2.2.1 Plato, Middle Platonism and Platonism in Stobaeus

2.2.2 Aristotle and the Peripatetics

2.2.3 Independent writers

2.3 The Jewish writers

2.3.1 Josephus and Philo

2.4 Conclusive summary

2.1 Introduction

As the focus of this study now hones in upon the Graeco-Roman as well as Jewish contributions to what has been referred to as the *Haustafeln*, it becomes necessary to investigate some of the key views evidenced in the writings of the Graeco-Roman as well as Jewish authors. This will serve to give a better understanding of the social context into which 1 Peter 3:1-7 was written as well as insight into the husband/wife code form as seen from the perspective of non-Christians.

2.1.1 Husbands and wives in antiquity

With the advent of hermeneutical models which cross some of the boundaries of old by making use of socio-historical research methods, a large amount of research has been undertaken concerning the social world of the New Testament. These studies cover a broad spectrum of topics. Most of this research depends heavily upon extra-Biblical writings as penned by prominent philosophers and ethicists of antiquity.

De Jonge (1990:340-352) shows in his article "Rachel's virtuous behaviour in the Testament of Issachar" which relates mostly to marriage and procreation some primary concepts of what types of conduct were acceptable in marriage. In order to do so he has quoted many authors of antiquity. Following a similar topic the adopted *modus operandi* will echo that as represented by De Jonge¹ so as to uncover the deeper 'social dimension'.²

2.2 The writings of Graeco-Roman antiquity

2.2.1 Plato and the Middle Platonists

In dealing with Plato (c 429-347 B.C.) son of Ariston and Perictione both Athenians of distinguished lineage, Robinson (1970:839-842) identifies a writer whose life and writings gave evidence of the enormous influence of

¹ This approach is also seen in the works of Meeks (1983), Malherbe (1983) and Garrett (1992:94, 95).

² This term has been coined by Elliott (1993:9) and has been put into practice in his exegesis of 1 Peter in the work: A Home for the Homeless (Elliott, 1990:1-306).

Socrates. His writings consist of some twenty-five dialogues and the "Apology", as well as thirteen letters of which genuineness are debated.

Balch (1981:14) interacts with the early work of Weidinger (1928), who stated that much of the Stoic material was in fact a repetition of the earlier work of Plato and Aristotle. Balch maintains that because this Stoic material was largely neglected until Thraede's (1980:359-368) discussion on New Testament household ethics a great deal of confusion resulted. However, the reality is that investigation of this material yields rich results and sheds new light on the Stoic material itself.

Balch (1981:14) accurately identifies two essential points, which he claims must be borne in mind in approaching the material in Plato and Aristotle. Firstly, he correctly sides with Wilhelm (1915:161-223) who was the first to observe that the three *topoi* "concerning the constitution" (περὶ πολιτείας), "concerning household management" (περὶ οἰκονομίας), and concerning marriage" (περὶ γάμου) were so combined and interrelated that it was difficult to distinguish them clearly. Secondly, Balch (1981:14) observes that the second of these three *topoi* is nearly identical with the *topos*, which often is referred to by the German word *Haustafel*, the New Testament pattern of submissiveness. Not only do Aristotle and Plato show an interest in the relation between the "city" and the "house", a relation seen in these respective *topoi*. The quest we have then is to examine to what extent this discussion on the household have relevance on the New Testament.

Starting with Plato's *Laws* written shortly before his death in 347 B.C., one sees a writing primarily concerned with the "constitution" and "laws".

"Ath. Next after this form of liberty would come that which refuses to be subject to the rulers; and following on that, the shirking of submissions; to one's parents and elders and their admonitions; then, as the penultimate stage, comes the effort to disregard the laws; while the last stage of all is to lose all respect for oaths or pledges or divinities, - wherein men display and reproduce the character of the Titans of story who are said to have reverted to their

original state, dragging out a painful existence with never any rest from woe."
(Plato *Laws*, III 701B) ³

Even here, whilst alluding to various duties, Plato foreshadows what becomes more evident in some later writings. Certainly the foundations of some of the typical *topoi* begin to appear here even though not fully developed yet. It should however be noted that according to Lacey (1970:1139), Plato's '*Laws*' shows an abandonment of Plato's ideals seen in his '*Republic*' to oust the family from its central position in society.

Balch (1981:25) correctly points to the issue of submission, which makes its entrance, saying that one's "submission" or lack of it, in one's relationships spills over into other relationships. Plato goes on to state that such a lack of submission has disastrous consequences which he relates to the character of the 'Titans of story' who slipped to their original state which lead to an existence that dragged on painfully without any rest.⁴

Plato (*Laws* IV 720C-721C) goes on to refer both to the relationship between slaves and free men and then strikingly, he alludes to some laws concerning the age at which men ought to marry.

Plato says specifically concerning marriage that:

"ATH. ...A man shall marry when he is thirty years old and under thirty five; if he fails to do so, he shall be punished both by a fine in money and degradation, the fine being of such and such an amount, and the degradation of such and such a kind." Plato (*Laws* IV 721 B)⁵

³ ΑΘ. Ἐφεξῆς δὴ ταύτῃ τῇ ἐλευθερίᾳ ἢ τοῦ μὴ ἐθέλειν τοῖς ἄρχουσι δουλεύειν γίγνοιτ' ἂν καὶ ἐπομένη ταύτῃ φεύγειν πατρὸς καὶ μητρὸς καὶ πρεσβυτέρων δουλείαν καὶ νουθέτησιν καὶ ἐγγύς τοῦ τέλους οὖσι νόμων ζειτεῖν μὴ ὑπηκόοις εἶναι πρὸς αὐτῷ δὲ ἤδη τῷ τέλει ὄρκων καὶ πίστεων καὶ τὸ παράπαν θεῶν μὴ φροντίσειν τὴν λεγομένην Τιτανικὴν φύσιν ἐπιδεικνῦσι καὶ μιμουμένοις·

⁴ Plato gives more attention to such disregard to submission and the law in *Laws* (IV 713E-714A).

⁵ ΑΘ. γαμεῖν δέ, ἐπειδανέτων ἢ τις τριάκοντα, μέχρι ἐτῶν πέντε καὶ τριάκοντα· εἰ δὲ μὴ, ζημιοῦσθαι χρήμασί τε καὶ ἀτιμία. χρήμασι μὲν τόσοις; τῇ καὶ τῇ δὲ ἀτιμία.

The bulk of the material encompassed in *Laws* IV 771-VII 824 deals on a broad scale with both marriage and slavery. Much of the same material not only appears in later discussions but has had a marked influence on the later writers. Since this *topos* is not originally Platonic, it can be observed that Plato is giving his version of topics which would commonly have been discussed in Greek politics, using the *topoi* "concerning constitution" (περὶ πολιτείας), "concerning household management" (περὶ οἰκονομίας), and concerning marriage" (περὶ γάμου).

With this on the agenda it is evident that even though there is a strong relationship between codes of duties here and those of the New Testament, they are not as developed in Plato's *Laws* while it remains true that strong influencing factors as well as similarities exist.

The "Middle Platonists" is typified by Dodds (1970:686) as being marked by the Platonism of the period between Antiochus and Ascalon (d. c. 68 B.C.) and Plotinus (b. A.D. 205). They are characterised by a revulsion against the sceptical tendency of the New Academy and by a gradual advance, with many individual variations, towards a comprehensive metaphysics often drawn from Stoicism, Aristotelianism, or Neopythagoreanism.

In looking at the material of the Middle Platonists, Balch (1981:26) quotes Giusta (1964:13) who identifies the three sources for tracing the later interpretation of Platonic ethics. These three sources are personified by Albinus⁶, Apuleius⁷ and Diogenes Laertius⁸. All three of these eminent writers deal with the ethics and politics of Plato, but primarily it is the works of Laertius and Albinus which give relevant interpretations to the study of Plato's contributions which remained alive in the later Platonic school as well as in the Academy.

⁶ Albinus the second century Platonic Philosopher. See further discussion by Dodds (1970:34).

⁷ Apuleius (born c. A.D. 123). For a compendium of his works consult the article by Harold Edgeworth Butler and Martin Stirling Smith (1970:88)

⁸ Consult Balch (1981:26,27) for more depth on Laertius and his writings.

Early in the 3rd century A.D. when Laertius probably lived, Balch (1981:26) informs us that Plato was incorrectly interpreted as teaching that women were to be ruled by men and the children by attendants. This was done in accordance with the framework of thought pertaining to "cities". Laertius in his own view records Plato as implying that men "by nature" rule women, the view of course being Aristotelian.

Balch (1981:27) contends that Apuleias was more accurate than Albinus in interpreting what Plato intended. He argued that "Plato wished (male and female) to be united in all arts that are thought to be peculiar to men, and even in those of war; since to both there is the same power, as their nature is one..."

One has no choice but to concur with Balch correctly concludes that from the texts in Diogenes Laertius, Albinus, and Apuleius that Plato's political thought, which dealt with ruling and being ruled in city and house was referred to but was not a dominant element in the Middle Platonists. Balch identifies Laertius as referring to the necessity of "rule" over women, while Albinus hints at it. Apuleias discussed Plato's regulations about women and children without any relation to the topic of ruling and being ruled, although in the same context Apuleias stressed that some are rulers in the "state" and others are inferior.

Lastly, one cannot discuss the development and the occurrence of ethical codes in antiquity, especially those which were given impetus by the work and thought of Plato without seeing the long term impact he had on the writer Stobaeus some seven hundred years later, who in turn determined the future availability of such texts and ideas since there is no evidence that any writer in the New Testament ever directly made use of Plato's writings. It can be seen in the work of Stobaeus that the *topoi* as common in Plato's time were repeated, namely those concerning laws, justice, constitution, household management and lastly, marriage. The Stobaeian chapter concerning the *topos* of "household management" in the collected fragments cited in Stobaeus' Anthologium (1958) quotes Dio Chrysostom's (Domestic affairs 1-

6) oration of the same title in which we can only see some six fragments that have survived.

DOMESTIC AFFAIRS

1. We shall begin with that which especially benefits a household; and that would be reproof of slander, for slander is the most painful of all evils and the most insidious. (IV. Stob. Flor.3, XLII 12 p. 762 Hense)⁹

2. Therefore one ought to act the master with moderation and permit any whom so desire to relax at times. For intervals of relaxation are preparatory for labors – both bow and lyre and men as well are at their best through relaxation. (V. Stob. Flor. 4, XIX 46 p. 430 Hense)¹⁰

3. But wifely piety is love of husband. (VI. Stob. Flor. 4, XXIII 59 p. 588 Hense)¹¹

4. But laughter which is continuous and boisterous is worse than anger; therefore it abounds especially among courtesans and the more foolish of children. As for myself, I hold that a face is adorned with tears more than by laughter. For with tears as a rule there is associated some profitable lesson, but with laughter license. Moreover, by tears no one gives encouragement to a licentious person, whereas by laughter one fosters his expectations. (VII. Stob. Flor. 4, XXIII 60 p. 588 Hense)¹²

⁹ Δίωνος ἐκ τοῦ Οἰκονομικοῦ·

Ἄρξόμεθα δὲ ἀπὸ τοῦ μάλιστα ὠφελούντος οἰκίαν· εἴη δ' ἂν τοῦτο ἐπιτίμησις διαβολῆς· διαβολὴ γὰρ κακῶν τὸ ὀξύτατον καὶ ἐπιβουλότατον.

¹⁰ Δίωνος ἐκ τοῦ Οἰκονομικοῦ·

Χρὴ οὖν δεσπόζειν ἐπιεικῶς καὶ ἀνεθῆναί ποτε βουλομένοις ἐπιτρέπειν. αἱ γὰρ ἀνέσεις παρασκευαστικαὶ πόνων εἰσὶ, καὶ λύρα καὶ ἄνθρωπος ἀκμάζει δι' ἀναπαύσεως.

¹¹ Δίωνος ἐκ τοῦ Οἰκονομικοῦ·

Εὐσέβεια δὲ γυναικεία ὁ πρὸς τὸν ἄνδρα ἔρωσ.

¹² Ἐν ταύτῳ·

Γέλως δὲ συνεχῆς καὶ μέγας θυμοῦ κακίων· διὰ τοῦτο μάλιστα ἑταίραις ἀκμάζων καὶ παίδων τοῖς ἀφρονεστέροις. ἐγὼ δὲ κοσμεῖσθαι πρόσωπον ὑπὸ δακρύων ἡγοῦμαι μᾶλλον ἢ ὑπὸ γέλωτος. δάκρυσι μὲν γὰρ ὡς ἐπὶ τὸ πλεῖστον σύνεστι καὶ κλάων μὲν οὐδεὶς προυτρέψατο ὕβριστήν, γελῶν δὲ ἠΰξησεν αὐτοῦ τὰς ἐλπίδας.

5. For great humiliation is the engendering of self-control. (VIII . Stob. Flor. 4, XXVIII 12 p. 679 Hense)¹³

6. For while the begetting of offspring is an act of necessity, their rearing is an act of love. (IX. Stob. Flor. 4, XXVIII 13 p. 679 Hense)¹⁴

The text itself clearly is typical of the household *topos*. However, it also has something to say of the husband/wife code. It is evident that Stobaeus would have opted for male mastery in the home although to his credit he argues that it should be done with “moderation”. The wife’s piety on the other hand was reduced to her love of her husband. The wife was also required to produce offspring as a part of her duty toward her husband. Contained in Dio Chrysostom’s work one sees many popular ideas represented and these would have been accessible to early Christian writers. Dio Chrysostom is also reported to have lived near the same time and place as when and where 1 Peter was written. This fact in itself suggests that the author of Peter may very well have been aware not only of the *Haustafeln* itself but also of specific writings that related particularly to the husband/wife code itself.

2.2.2 Aristotle and the Peripatetics

Before dealing with the use of *Haustafeln* with reference to the required conduct of the husband and wife in the writings of the Peripatetics, appropriate attention must be given to the work of Aristotle.

Both Schrenk (1990:90) and Owen (1970:114-115) record with some detail the life and legacy of this famous philosopher who at the age of 17 entered Plato’s school at Athens. His work conservatively described is at least to be regarded as mammoth, in fact encyclopedic. His writings¹⁵ would be most

¹³ Δίωνος ἐκ τοῦ Οἰκονομικοῦ
Μέγα γὰρ δυσώπημα σοφροσύνης τέκνωσις.

¹⁴ Ἐν Ταύτῳ·
Τὸ μὲν γὰρ τίκτειν ἀνάγκης ἐστὶν ἔργον, τὸ δὲ ἐκτρέφειν φιλοστοργίας.

¹⁵ It should be pointed out that the influence and the availability of Aristotle’s writings was not really seen in the two centuries after his death or for that matter were they to be regarded as important in the Hellenistic age. The Romans deemed them as important and they were used late in the first century B.C. when his writings became available again (Owen, 1970:115).

influential and have bearing upon those who would come after him. Unlike Plato who attempts to oust the family from centrality in Greek society, Aristotle is holding it basic (Lacey, 1970:1139). While Aristotle holds to the idea that family is basic to the structure of society, he still maintains strict adherence to the functionality of roles in society, which also reach fruition in the home. This can be traced in Aristotle's attitude to the family. There is agreement between Plato and Aristotle concerning authority and its differing types. Aristotle rejects Plato's comparison between house and city, but both, however, agree that discussion must begin with the topic of marriage which is the union of natural ruler and natural subject¹⁶ (Balch, 1981:33). This Aristotle (*Nicomachean Ethics*, VIII vii) does in dealing with the issues of friendship where he makes the following statements concerning the husband and the wife:

“But there is a different kind of friendship, which involves superiority of one party over the other, for example, the friendship between father and son, and generally between an older person and a younger and that between a husband and a wife and between any ruler and person ruled.” (Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics*, VIII. 7.1)¹⁷

Elsewhere Aristotle (*Politics*, I. V. 8-11) makes statements which analyzed, show the importance he placed on authority and subordination. These have their foundation in the hierarchical way in which he sees man as being the most rational, the woman less rational, the child immature, and the slave irrational. It must be seen that Aristotle is a disciple to a deep-seated hierarchical structure. To the distinguishing of specific roles Aristotle also pays attention while expounding comparatively the various forms of authority in the household with authority in the state in *The Nicomachean Ethics* where he states the following:

¹⁶ Consult Aristotle (*Politics*, I. 1.2-5).

¹⁷ Ἐτερον δ' φιλίας εἶδος τό καθ' ὑπεροχὴν, οἷον πατρὶ πρὸς υἱὸν καὶ ὅλως πρεσβυτέρῳ πρὸς νεώτερον, ἀνδρὶ τε πρὸς γυναῖκα καὶ παντὶ ἄρχοντι πρὸς ἀρχόμενον.

“The relationship of husband to wife seems to be in the nature of an aristocracy: the husband rules in virtue of fitness, and in matters which belong to a man’s sphere; matters suited to a woman he hands over to his wife.” (Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics*, VIII. X. 5)¹⁸

What is brought over here is the evidence of the constitution in the household. The husband, while being the master of the home, delegates to his wife those matters that are accordingly befitting to a woman. Aristotle maintains that in a case where the husband controls everything he transforms the relationship into an oligarchy, for he governs in violation of fitness, and not in virtue of superiority. Balch (1981:36) points out correctly that here Aristotle goes beyond merely asserting that the authority of men is natural and necessary, but that in some ways various forms of ruling may either be right or wrong. Such would be the case of a father who is wrongly tyrannical.¹⁹

Aristotle is also said to have dealt specifically with three²⁰ of the household codes in the fragment “Concerning the Association of Husband and Wife”²¹. In this fragment regarded by some to be spurious, Aristotle (1966, *Ethica* IV. 182) identifies the following reciprocal pairs concerning the *Haustafeln*²² and

¹⁸ ἀνδρὸς δὲ καὶ γυναικὸς ἀριστοκρατικὴ φαίνεται· κατ’ ἀξίαν γὰρ ὁ ἀνὴρ ἄρχει, καὶ περὶ ταῦτα αἴδει τὸν ἄνδρα· ὅσα δὲ γυναικί ἀρμόζει, ἐκείνη ἀποδίδωσιν.

¹⁹ Compare this to what we read in Colossians 3:21:
Οἱ πατέρες, μὴ ἐρεθίζετε τὰ τέκνα ὑμῶν, ἵνα μὴ ἀθυμώσιν.

²⁰ Whilst the text itself refers to another pair, namely that of the relation of income to expenditure it will not be dealt with it at any point.

²¹ This work found in the Teubner series (Aristotle, 1966) of Greek texts which contain a collection of fragments of writings, is disputed in terms of authorship and have thus been regarded as spurious. Of interest here is that Owen (1970:114-118) who deals with both accepted and spurious writings accredited to Aristotle, makes no mention of either the fragment or the writing containing the collection of fragments. Balch (1981:37), however, is cautious and while quoting the work, does suggest the possibility that it may not be the work of Aristotle but still feels that it is important enough to cite. Balch (1981:38) in his footnote (27) also discusses the question of the authenticity of the document and the fragments referred to.

²² The Greek text in which these references are made, is as follows:

Anon. Prologue. Phil. (cod. Par. 1973 f. 17^b):

καὶ δηλοῖ Ἀριστοτέλης ἐν τινὶ αὐτοῦ μονοβιβλίῳ περὶ οἰκονομίας ἀρίστης διαλεγόμενος· καὶ λέγει ταύτην ἐκ τεσσάρων γενέσθαι σχέσεων, πατρὸς πρὸς τέκνα, δούλου πρὸς δεσπότην, γυναικὸς πρὸς ἄνδρα ...

the relevant relationships between: father and child, slave and master and husband and wife. Balch (1981:37) comments on these pairs in which he includes the fourth, saying that it was most likely that Aristotle would have dealt with the husband/wife code at length.

Keaney (1970:1058-1059) records that after the termination of Aristotle's position as scholarch of the Peripatos came a successor in the person of Theophrastus (c. 370-288/5 B.C.) of whose writings very few remain documented. His two most valuable and influential writings have, however been preserved under the titles, *Concerning Laws* and *The Doctrine of Natural Philosophers*. In his work on laws one sees the evaluation and comparison of customs and laws of various cities and countries.²³

The *topos* of the so-called Pseudo-Aristotelian *Magna Moralia* or *Great Ethics* (1935:l 1194b5-28) as seen previously is one "concerning household management" which serves as a witness to the peripatetic use of the form. Balch (1981:38) appears to side with Dirlmeier (1939:214-243) whom he quotes as suggesting that the work itself was probably a compendium of peripatetic doctrine produced in the second half of the 2nd century B.C. Balch's opinion would as such be diametrically opposed to the views of those that maintain that Aristotle was the author.

What is clear within the Peripatetic school is typified in the so called pseudo-Aristotelian work *Oeconomica* (*Concerning Household Management*) which gives an early Peripatetic discussion of the *topos* which has as it's focal point a concern with husbands and wives; masters and slaves; children and the household income.

Balch (1981:39), in his evaluation of the Peripatetic school, concludes correctly by saying that not only did the work of Theophrastus and the unknown author of *Great Ethics* represent and demonstrate that the constitutions as well as the household management were kept alive; but also,

²³ Concerning the evaluation and comparison of cultures and laws see Josephus (Against Apion, 1.166-167) and his quote of the work of Theophrastus.

that there were other texts from Dicaearchus found in the work under the editorship of Wehrli (1944-1959) which echoed the same sentiments. The work of the author of the *Great Ethics* must still be regarded as both unique and pivotal, for in it are found references to the three relationships dealt with in the New Testament codes.

Clearly, there can be no disputing the evidence of the *Haustafeln* form as found in both Aristotle and the Peripatetics. The *topos* which relates to husbands and wives; masters and slaves; children and the household, while not being confocal with the embellished Christian form of the same *topos* as seen in the *Haustafeln*, remains influential in the later Christian development and use of the *Haustafeln* form. The investigation will now address some of the independent writers so as to ascertain their respective interests and uses of the husband/wife code.

2.2.3 Independent writers

In discussing the works of some independent writers the intent is to show their interest with regard to the codes already discussed. It will be seen that differences in opinion did exist.

A brief look at the contribution of the Epicurean Philodemus (c. 110-35 B.C.) informs the reader that while he does not say much about the husband/wife code, he does offer his critique on earlier interpretations of household management.²⁴ Philodemus does however make an allusion to the fact that he thinks that Theophrastus' opinion about wives is incorrect. This is indicated when in his work *περὶ οἰκονομίας* (*Concerning Household Management*) he objects by raising the Question: "Why is it that man must first be concerned about marriage when one can live a happy life without a wife?" (Philodemus, *Concerning Household Management*, 29,7-11). Clearly, Philodemus is not a proponent of the marriage institution. He is seemingly more favourably disposed toward celibacy. For Philodemus marriage is not a priority as it was

²⁴ For a detailed understanding of this particular discussion, consult Balch (1981:39-40) who identifies the sources with which Philodemus interacts.

for others. He is even of the opinion that the issue of living with a wife is not even a proper topic to include with reference to the *topos* of household management. Much of that which refers to Philodemus' rejection of the Peripatetic concern for "the manner of living with a wife" and "how to live well at home" was inherent to Philodemus. This was due to the fact that his teacher Epicurus had been most critical toward the work of Aristotle upon which much earlier work had been based. Similarly Philodemus also rejected the discussion of three of the four parts of the Aristotelian form with exception to the reference to economy. In the New Testament however, we see the later authors²⁵ as doing just the opposite in that they only discuss the three relationship pairs, which Philodemus rejects.

Balch (1981: 40) identifies a Stoic writer, Areius Didymus, who was a younger contemporary of Philodemus who wrote on the outlines of Aristotle's *topos* on household management, thus highlighting the knowledge available concerning the household form in the first century B.C.

Balch (1981:42) gives a translation of what Areius²⁶ deems as important with reference to household ethics. Much of what is said relates to civic affairs, which of course have also played a part in the derivation of parallels in the household. Areias does mention the relationship between a husband and wife and states how the two are interrelated:

"There is a primary constitution (πολιτεία) in the union of a man and a woman according to law for the begetting of children and for community of life. This is called a house (οἶκος), which is the beginning (source) of a city, concerning which we must also speak. For the house is like a small city, if as is ideal, the marriage increases and children come; and if the first house is coupled with others...

²⁵ As seen in the second chapter, the authors referred to are those who penned the "more complete codes" such as seen in Ephesians 5:21-6:9, Colossians 3:18-4:1 and 1 Peter 2:17-3:9.

²⁶ The complete set of readings referred to by Balch (1981:41, cf. 1988:41) are: Areias (Stob. II.7.26; II.147, 26-149, 11 Wachsmuth).

for the house is also a pattern for monarchy as well as aristocracy and democracy. For the relation (κοινωνία) of parents to children has monarchic character; of men and women, aristocratic; of children to one another, democratic. For the male is joined to the female by a desire to get children and to continue the race...

...The man has the rule (ἄρχή) of the house by nature. For the deliberative faculty in a woman (τὸ βουλευτικόν) is inferior..."

Rational household management, which is the controlling of a house and of those things related to the house, is fitting for a man. Belonging to this are, fatherhood (τό πατρικόν) the art of marriage (τό γαμικόν) being a master (τό δεσποτικόν), and moneymaking (τό χρηματιστιόν).

Areius clearly opts for a position of hierarchy. This thread works its way though both his views of the constitution within the city as well as in the house. Areius Didymus, in summarising the philosophy of Aristotle, holds to a view which rings true with that of Diogenes Laertius (vol. V. 28), who distinguishes between: "the practical part including ethics and politics, and in the latter not only the doctrine of the state but also that of the household is sketched²⁷."

Seneca (*Ad Lucilium Epistulae Morales* 89.10-11)²⁸ similarly notes: "Certain of the Peripatetic school have added a fourth division, 'civil philosophy' because it calls for a special sphere of activity and is interested in a certain subject matter. Some have added a department for which they use the Greek term for 'economics', the science of managing one's own household." Whilst the age was one of eclecticism many authors such as Seneca still knew that these ideas of the household management were Aristotelian.

²⁷ ...πολιτικόν, οὗ τὰ τε περὶ πόλιν καὶ τὰ περὶ οἶκον ὑπογεγραφθαί.

²⁸ *Quidam ex Peripateticis quartam partem adiecerunt civilem, quia propriam quandum exercitationem desideret et circa aliam materiam occupata cit. Quidam adiecerunt his partem, quam οἰκονομικὴν vocant, administrandae familiaris rei scientiam.*

It must be said that the Classical Greek philosophers revered the importance of authority and subordination in the household and in the city. It has been seen that the ideas themselves were accessible to persons who were not technical philosophers as late as the Roman Period. And while the Academy remained interested in Plato's household regulations, many more ethicists and philosophers as we have seen wrote concerning both Plato's and Aristotle's household regulations. The first post-Aristotelian reference to the three pairs of *Haustafeln* is found in the Peripatetic *Great Ethics* that makes up the same three pairs as found in the New Testament. The only exception here is the fourth *topos*, namely that which is referred to as the "relationship of income to expenditure."

From what has been investigated it can be seen that the philosophical discussions "concerning the constitution" and "concerning household management" must have influenced the New Testament writers. The ideas behind the *Haustafeln* could not have been original to the authors. Therefore one must in conclusion side with Bailey & Vander Broek (1992:70-71) who have argued that the New Testament writers borrowed the typical form of the *Haustafeln* so as to embellish it as Christian by making its basis one in accordance with Christianity and its doctrines.

2.3 THE JEWISH WRITERS

In approaching the question of the origins of the *Haustafeln* it is not sufficient merely to focus primarily on the Graeco-Roman authors because the society also included many Jews who also contributed to the development of the *Haustafeln* form. Recognition of this fact necessitates a short discussion relating to some of the Jewish authors.

2.3.1 Josephus and Philo

Balch (1981:52) argues that not only did the Platonic-Aristotelian ideas of political science influence the Roman Stoics, but it also influenced the Hellenistic Jews. Philo we are told, in writing *On Joseph, That is, The Life of*

the statesman, related that Joseph was sold into Egypt where not only was his nobility recognized but he was also placed in charge of a household. This surely seems to echo some of the ideas of the Graeco-Roman authors. Philo was not sympathetic with the idea which was put forward by Aristotle saying

the statesman, related that Joseph was sold into Egypt where not only was his nobility recognized but he was also placed in charge of a household. This surely seems to echo some of the ideas of the Graeco-Roman authors. Philo was not sympathetic with the idea which was put forward by Aristotle saying that a ruler in the state governed differently from the master of a household. Philo was more committed to the Platonic view on the identity of city and household management. Philo expands upon three exerts namely: *Special laws III.169-171* (dealing with the issue of a woman's modesty), *The Decalogue 165-167* (dealing with social class and order) and *Special Laws II. 225-227*.

In dealing with *The Decalogue* from the perspective of both Aristotelian and Platonic ethics Philo suggests that the relations between parents and children were analogous to those between masters and slaves. While not well explained it can be seen that for Philo submission is essential. This idea he explains better in his *Hypothetica* (7.3 and 5) where he says:

"Wives must be in servitude to their husbands, a servitude not imposed by violent ill treatment but promoting obedience in all things. Parents must have power over their children... The same holds of any other persons over whom he (a man) has authority..."²⁹ Josephus, (*Against Apion*. II.199) states similarly,

"The woman, says the law, is in all things inferior to the man. Let her accordingly be submissive, not for her humiliation, but that she may be directed, for the authority has been given by God to man."³⁰

²⁹ γυναίκασι ἀνδράσι δουλεύειν, πρὸς ὕβρεως μὲν οὐδεμιᾶς, πρὸς εὐπειθειαν δ' ἐν ἅπασιν· γονεῖς παίδων ἄρχειν ἐπὶ σωτηρίᾳ καὶ πολυωπία·...καὶ ἐπὶ τῶν ἄλλων ὧν κυριεύει ὁ αὐτὸς λόγος.

³⁰ γυνὴ χείρων, φησὶν, ἀνδρὸς εἰς ἅπαντα. τοιγαροῦν ὑπακούετῶ. μὴ πρὸς ὕβριν, ἀλλ' ἵν' ἄρχηται· θεὸς γὰρ ἀνδρὶ τὸ κράτος ἔδωκεν.

Much of what can be observed here seems to be constructed from earlier influences by Plato and to a much lesser degree, Aristotle. This is not to suggest that these two authors depended entirely upon the work of the Graeco–Roman writers. What one must recognize is the independent and interactive thought shown in both the works of Philo as well as Josephus. It can be seen that both Philo and Josephus have differed in many ways with other ethicists and philosophers in their portrayal of the *Haustafeln* form as well as their views on the relationship between husbands and wives.

2.4 Conclusive Summary

Having studied at some length the variants of how the relationship between husbands and wives could have been understood in the context of Graeco-Roman antiquity, upon the basis of some of the relevant writings it must be concluded that the following observations have been made.

Firstly, within Graeco-Roman society where the Christians addressed in 1 Peter are situated differing moral codes and belief systems are found. The belief spectrum is stretched even further by way of a number of philosophical writers who also contributed toward that ancient societies value systems.

Secondly, it must be noted that while moral and ethical codes existed such as were referring to those relationships of master to slave, child to parent and husband to wife, they were usually in accordance with the belief system from which they originated. This is why so many diverging views can be seen pertaining to the conduct and place of women in society, ranging from the suppressive inequality forced upon women to the view which afforded to women many rights not available to others.

Lastly, having gained a better understanding of the social context of Graeco-Roman society, with special reference to the husbands/wife code, attention will be given to the current status of research on the New Testament husband/wife code. This will be seen to draw upon the wealth of material used by many of the authors we have just dealt with. In the chapter which follows we will investigate the implication and application of these differing

views relating to the exhortation to wives to submit to their husbands in 1 Peter 3:1-7.

CHAPTER 3

Research on the New Testament husband/wife code

Overview:

3.1 Introduction

3.2 *Haustafeln* by definition

3.2.1 Recent research on *Haustafeln*

3.3 Christian *Haustafeln*: prehistory and development of the discipline

3.3.1. Prehistory of the discipline

3.3.2. Development of the discipline

3.4 New Testament husband/wife *Haustafeln*: General

3.4.1 The New Testament household code

3.4.2 Husband/wife code in New Testament research

3.4.2.1 Husband/wife codes and contemporary feminist interpretation

3.4.2.2 Husband/wife codes and the contemporary gender debate

3.5 New Testament: 1 Peter with reference to its husband/wife code

3.6 Conclusive summary

3.1 Introduction

“Traditional societies often had value systems that were not fully articulated, and which, indeed, often defied articulation. In the religious expressions of a people, these traditional orientations usually acquired elevated and rhetorical formulation, so that men were exhorted to live to do the will of God or to fulfil the law, or to strive for perfection, or to overcome harmful desire, or to enhance the lives of others. These are all substantive values and it is possible to give them refined expression by reference to a variety of human virtues.” (Wilson, 1982:48)

Wilson, in the broadest of brushstrokes presents a picture to his reader of what for the purposes of this research can best be described as a painting made up of juxtaposed belief systems in which we see evidence of the divergence of value systems held to by differing groups. Of paramount importance here is the fact that we are forced to bear cognisance of differing value systems. It is on this premise that much can be learned about not only the social world of the first Christians but also the influencing factors which contributed to the construction of Christian values as we see them today.

The spectrum into which we will gaze in this chapter is far more limited because our primary concern is with the husband/wife codes of the New Testament and the present status of scholarship in this area.

The objective of this chapter is to introduce the reader into the realm of work relating to the *Haustafeln* in the New Testament, which for the sake of this thesis plays an integral part in the broader aim of doing a socio-historical study of the exhortation to wives to submit to their husbands as found in 1 Peter 3:1-7. In order to successfully accomplish this the reader must be enlightened with regard to the question of the definition of the term *Haustafeln*. Using this as a springboard the reader will then be catapulted into an arena in which the prehistory and development of the discipline will be investigated. Having completed the groundwork the reader will then be taken on an excursion which will not only focus on the *Haustafeln* generally but will seek to elucidate its use with reference to husbands and wives not only in the New Testament but also in 1 Peter 3:1-7. In drawing the chapter to a close its content and conclusions will be looked at in brief.

3.2 *Haustafeln* by definition

Fitzgerald (1992:80) defines the German word *Haustafeln* as the technical term referring to “tables of Household rules” which designate lists of duties for members of a household. There can be no doubting the accuracy of such a definition, brief though it may be.

Schrage (1988:269) holds to a differently stated view, which is evident in the source¹, which Martin (1992:125) holds in high esteem. In short Schrage (1975:2) says:

“Under *Haustafeln*, I understand, as is customary, those paraenetic pieces whose form stands out from otherwise freer, disorderly eclectic series of New Testament exhortations by consistency and distinct disposition and whose content seeks to order the relationships of various groups.”

Schrage clearly has a differing but also exacting definition that not only highlights the use of exhortation but also the sub-genre of Christian Paraenesis.² Similarly in addressing the *Haustafeln*, Lohse (1968:220) states:

“Die Ermahnung, die nacheinander an Frauen und Männer, Kinder und Väter, Sklaven und Herren gerichtet werden, setzen ohne verbindende Überleitung ein und stellen innerhalb des Briefes einen in sich geschlossenen und abgerundeten Abschnitt dar, zu dem sich Parallelen in Eph 5²²⁻⁶ 9 1 Tim 2⁸⁻¹⁵ 6¹⁻² Tit 2¹⁻¹⁰ 1 Petr 2¹³⁻³⁷ und in den Schriften der Apostolischen Väter finden. In diesen Sätzen ist also offensichtlich paränetische Tradition verwertet worden, die in der Belehrung der Gemeinden eine wichtige Rolle gespielt hat.”

As can be seen Schrage is not alone in his emphasis of the paraenetic component of the *Haustafeln*. This is of course not to imply that wherever one identifies the use of paraenesis in the New Testament that it automatically qualifies the passage as a household code.

¹ See for further discussion: Schrage (1975:2).

² This emphasis has embodied in the recent work of Thurén (1995).

On the other end of the scale there are those such as Goppelt (1993:165) who dispute with and reject the designation of the so-called "household code"³ arguing that in the case of 1 Peter 2:13-3:7 it is inadequate for its genre and tradition. Goppelt prefers the term "station code" for this Petrine text denying that 1 Peter 2:13-3:7 could even be regarded as a "household code". This he substantiates by saying that the designation of "station code"⁴ does more justice to the sequence in Colossians and Ephesians since they are not restricted fundamentally to the Christian household but in fact conform more to the instruction in Romans 13:1.

Goppelt it would seem is trying to be perhaps overly cautious in the identification of the given code and tradition. He appears to depend heavily upon the addressees as he tries to identify how and to whom the given code should be applied.

One may on the basis of the parameters imposed upon the definition of "station code" laid down by Goppelt, sympathise with his position, but it does seem as if he is far too hasty with his harsh judgement on the use of the term *Haustafeln* or household code, since the term up to date has been adopted by many New Testament scholars of distinction.

The lists themselves were largely used in antiquity as a part of moral guidance pertaining to a desirable conduct which was to be pursued whether the focal point was ones conduct to the gods, the state, friends or even members of the household. In the New Testament however, the focus of the *Haustafeln* relates specifically to what Balch (1984:161) classifies as 1) Wives being subject to their husbands. 2) Children and their obedience to their parents and 3) slaves' obedience to their masters. Sampley(1971:19) correctly points out that the classification of the *Haustafeln* genre does not presuppose the tabulated presence of all three pairs in one given pericope.

³ Schnackenberg (1982: 246) in dealing with the *Haustafeln* goes forward with caution as he refers to the: "Sogenannte *Haustafel* 5,21-6,9" preferring not to go with a conformist description of the genre but instead highlighting the lack of consensus among New Testament scholars on the subject.

⁴ The term "station" according to Goppelt (1993:165) must be seen in terms of the meaning it had at the time of the Reformation where one's "station" was the place in society's institutions to which one was assigned by God's sovereignty in history, or put another way, the role with which one was charged.

In terms of form, the *Haustafeln* genre also has what Balch (1981:63-116)⁵ identifies as an apologetic function, which is in keeping with the defence of a belief system, which was represented as a minority group. Bailey & Vander Broek (1992:69) rightly show that in its typical form, the *Haustafeln* could be embellished or “Christianised” so as to function in the same way as it was first used but with its object and basis being Christian. Poythress (1991:236) referring to 1 Timothy 3:4-5 validly summarises the husband/wife *Haustafeln* and also the *Haustafeln* genre correctly. All considered, it must be recognised that the fundamental household analogy is not merely confined to one or two incidental illustrations or colourful flourishes of rhetoric. Rather, it is used as a basis for arguments and the inferences concerning Christian responsibilities.

Having discussed some of the varying definitions attached to the German term *Haustafeln* it can be clearly be seen that many are valid but usually lack some important ingredient, it follows then that the present author while agreeing with many of the definitions would rather take a far more eclectic approach and combine some three or more definitions to tabulate one final form. Included in this definition would be Balch’s identification of the *Haustafeln*, which includes its apologetic function. Schrage includes the use of paraenesis and Sampley alludes to the content of the three pairs or part thereof. To conclude this section it must be seen that the *Haustafeln* form must be defined as follows: The German term *Haustafeln* is commonly used to designate an apologetic portion of scripture which is paraenetic in genre and which deals with the required conduct within the confines of a household between one and three relationships.

3.2.1 Recent research on *Haustafeln*

As the reader has been furnished with a working definition of the *Haustafeln* as well as a brief introduction to the problems of divergent definitions, attention must now be given not only to the origins of the *Haustafeln* but also to the present status of research on the *Haustafeln* where it relates to the husband/wife code not only in the New Testament but also 1 Peter.

⁵ For a detailed discussion on the apologetic use of the subordination ethic by minority religious groups in Roman society see Balch (1981:65-80).

3.3 Christian *Haustafeln*: Prehistory and development of the discipline

As seen in the work of Hartman (1987:237-238) on the *Haustafeln*, research had been dominated by key persons such as Weidinger and Dibelius up until the early nineteen seventies, when a renaissance took place prompted first by the work of Crouch (1972). From midway through the seventies a marked a new stage of research on the *Haustafeln* could be seen. With this in mind, let the present author focus upon the development up to 1970.

3.3.1 Prehistory of the discipline

Having stated above in 3.2 that typical forms of *Haustafeln* were used prior to what must be regarded as the New Testament era, the reader must conclude that the literary genre was pre-existent. This naturally gives rise to the important question of its origin, which has been dealt with in some detail by various scholars.

It is important that those who study the given portions of Scripture which are generally regarded as examples of the *Haustafeln* be well versed in its uses and forms which are found in earlier literature. This follows the same motif as laid down by Verner, (1981:3) where he quotes Deissmann's classic text *Light From the Ancient East* (1927:9;466). Verner argues along with Deissmann that the Early Church drew its membership from the lower classes of the Roman Empire. This they agree offers parallels in terms of Language and its uses, which could then be utilised to illumine the language of the New Testament and to describe the social circumstances of life in the Early Church.

Others side with Lohmeyer (1973:54,87)⁶ contending that the church originally drew on the same classes as Pharisaic Judaism: skilled craftsmen and professional people which caused in their opinion a measure of hostility between the two groups. Furthermore, it is also argued that the church's membership included at least a small percentage from the upper classes especially women and that this basic social pattern held true for the whole period of the early church from its beginnings to the time of Hermas.

⁶ Compare Theissen (1974:232-274).

Malherbe (1983:31), with whom the present author agrees, contends that rather than to say that early Christianity was made up of either Jew or Gentile, rich or poor it was in fact a movement made up of a diversity of peoples representing a broad spectrum of social strata. Malherbe continues by suggesting that it was characteristic that the church leaders would have come from the upper strata.

Both Verner (1981:5) and Jeffers (1991:121-135) are unanimous when differentiating between the societal standing of the Roman citizen and the Christian within the context of the Roman ranking system as they agree that Christians did not belong to the upper classes of Roman society. This however, is diachronically opposed to the view of Malherbe. The opinions of Jeffers and Verner do have integrity insofar as they were most likely applicable to the first century to a greater or lesser degree. It seems most logical however, that as time passed and Christianity spread there would be no stopping the infiltration of Christians even into some of the highest echelons of the Roman or Greek society thus giving Christianity representation at the highest social levels.

Up to this point three basic trends have been seen in terms of the composition of the early church and it is evident that in the very fibre of these three views there exist at least two concepts pertaining to the origin/s of the household code.

The first, which relates to the Graeco-Roman origin, seem in this author's opinion to have had an influence. It should be born in mind that there is a generally accepted notion held that the *Haustafeln* have their roots based on Graeco-Roman Philosophies. An example of which can be seen in the Stoic tradition and it's influence upon St Paul's Epistle to the Colossians.⁷

Secondly, it can also be seen that Jewish tradition has played a major role in terms of its influence on the *Haustafeln*. Balch (1988:25) points out that whilst the Stoic lists of duties did play their role, it was the Jewish texts of Philo that are most suited to New Testament codes due to the fact that they address groups or social classes, whilst those of the Stoics were addressed to individuals. This may also be given further momentum by the article of Cohen (1986:47) where a breakdown of the

⁷ Consult Balch (1988:25), Fitzgerald (1992:80), Jeffers (1991:121-141), Koester (1987:266) for discussion relating to the *Haustafeln* in Colossians 3:18-4:1.

Jewish social, religious and economic strata can be seen⁸. This clearly shows the existence of hierarchical systems within Judaism, which would have needed instructions concerning their respective positions and conduct. Fitzgerald (1992:80) insightfully concludes, having recognised the divergent influences, that each *Haustafel* must be interpreted individually as some codes do not simply assume the authority of the *paterfamilias*⁹ but in fact criticise aspects of it.

3.3.2 Development of the discipline

As has been seen the *Haustafeln* concept is by no means new. It can however be stated that the twentieth century has witnessed something of a renaissance with regard to an increased interest in this discipline. Hartman (1987:237) credits the German scholar Martin Dibelius as first identifying the originally Stoic “schema” which lay behind the Colossian *Haustafel* early in the 20th century. From this finding it was thought that someone such as Hierocles¹⁰ was one of the main proponents of such “schemas”. It is seen then how such “schemas” in a visible way organised discussions of what was “fitting”¹¹ “towards the gods, one’s parents, one’s brothers, one’s country, and towards foreigners” (Epictetus. 2.17.31). He saw the Church’s adoption of this pattern as a sign that it was on the way to abandoning the eschatological perspective which was thought to characterise its attitude from the beginning, and adjusting itself to a life in this world.

Hartman (1987:237) goes on to inform the reader that some fifteen years later in the year 1928 Karl Weidinger, one of Dibelius’ students, elaborated on Dibelius’ ideas presenting more material from the philosophers as well as “Judaism”. It was also

⁸ Here Cohen clearly identifies the Jewish view on the place allocated to women, children and slaves in the broad scheme of the society. This is also typical of the pyramid structures within Graeco-Roman society as represented similarly in the works of Stambaugh & Balch (1986:110-113), Meeks (1986:33), Jeffers (1991:36-47) and Van Wyk & Van Rensburg (1997: 231).

⁹ For an in depth discussion of the *paterfamilias* consult the work of Jeffers (1991: 121 ff.).

¹⁰ For relevant translations of Hierocles consult Malherbe (1986:85-104).

¹¹ “καθηκον” to be fitting or right with the implication of possible moral judgement involved-‘to be fitting, to be right’. Louw & Nida (1988:627).

Weidinger's opinion that "Hellenistic Judaism"¹² had also used the "schema" and he argues that it was probably the milieu from which the Christians got it. In addition to this, not only had they accepted the "schema" which lay behind the text, but the texts themselves were also accepted. Particularly in Colossians 3:18-4:1 the text has been adopted for Christian use. By adding "in the Lord" at suitable places the same "schema" has been used to convey a Christian exhortation.

It was no surprise then that for some forty-two years up to the year 1970 Dibelius' and Weidinger's ideas set the trend and dominated the research and understanding of household codes¹³. It is obvious that since then a great deal of work has been done pertaining to the *Haustafeln* but more recently it has exhibited more of a focus upon the individual pairs within the genre itself. From here on attention will be focussed particularly upon current trends and research on the *Haustafeln* with specific reference to those in the New Testament and then those referring to the husband/wife codes.

3.4 New Testament husband/wife *Haustafeln*: General

3.4.1 New Testament Household codes

Sampley (1971:19) would have all believe that the passages as listed below his name represent the general position of New Testament scholarship pertaining to the lists of accepted New Testament *Haustafeln* as at the publishing date of his monograph.

In all fairness he must be given credit for his insight, for comparatively speaking there exist only a very few discrepancies or anomalies between his work of the early seventies and the far more recent works of Fitzgerald (1992:80) and Balch (1981:1) both of whom are regarded by many as doyens in their fields of research.

¹² Hartman (1987:245) uses "Hellenistic Judaism" in parentheses as it who argues that whilst it is the common term used by his cited authors, what is really meant is: "Greek speaking, largely non-Palestinian Judaism" or something similar.

¹³ Verner (1981:16ff) substantiates this in his discussion on the work of Karris (1973) which depends heavily on an understanding of Weidinger's research.

Sampley	Fitzgerald	Balch
Ephesians 5:21-6:9	Ephesians 5:21-6:9	Ephesians 5:21-6:9
Colossians 3:18-4:1	Colossians 3:18-4:1	Colossians 3:18-4:1
1 Peter 2:17-3:9	1 Peter 2:13-3:12	1 Peter 2:18-3:9
1 Timothy 2:8-15	1 Timothy 2:1-2; 8-15	1 Timothy 2:8-15
6:1-10	5:1-8; 6:1-2	5:1-2; 6:1-2
Titus 2:1-10	Titus 2:1-10; 3:1-2	Titus 2:1-10; 3:1

All considered, there is sufficient evidence to go along with Sampley with reference to what Balch (1981:1) and Fitzgerald (1992:80) regard as the “more complete codes”,¹⁴ even when we have only referred to two recent scholars. A cursory perusal of the above comparative chart in spite of the apparent incongruencies concerning the exact parameters of passages in 1 Peter shows a thread of consistency between the scholars represented in their views of the “more complete codes”. It should be pointed out that the “more complete codes” do not necessarily all contain exhortation to each of the three pairs.¹⁵

Having discussed the New Testament texts referred to as *Haustafeln* in general terms focus will be directed to the *Haustafeln* with specific emphasis on the husband/wife pair.

3.4.2 Husband/wife code in New Testament research

As has already been seen in the New Testament we find some five books that give good examples of *Haustafeln*. The task at hand is now to focus specifically on research that has as its objective the *Haustafeln* dealing with husbands and wives.

¹⁴ Namely those codes in Ephesians, Colossians and 1 Peter. The problem, if it is to be considered as such, arises when dealing with the lesser codes such as already seen in the Pastoral Epistles. For it is here where one finds anomalies concerning the classification of the exact text verses and the nature of each one's respective form and function. Regarding the Pastoral material there is no congruency seen between the works of Sampley (1971:19), Fitzgerald (1992:80) and Balch (1981:1). There may however be agreement in terms of the text parameters of the *Haustafeln* between other schools.

¹⁵ For suitable discussion on this consult Balch (1988:46).

3.4.2.1 Husband/wife codes and contemporary feminist interpretation

Balch (1984:161) in an article dealing with the question of patriarchal authority comes to the defence of the well known feminist theologian Fiorenza (1983:257) who claimed that Western misogyny had its root in the rules for the household as a model of the state.

Fiorenza (1990:68) later expanded on this expressing her vehement displeasure with the way in which key biblical texts and household codes propagate both the repression of woman's leadership roles and support for ongoing patriarchy. As a result of these tendencies and the ongoing formative power of these biblical texts that propagate patriarchy women have been marginalized and silenced. This only serves to strengthen politically antidemocratic elements by reproducing ancient patriarchal structures of inequality and slavish conditions in family and economy (1990:68-69).

Fiorenza states her opinion of the abuse of the Christian *Haustafeln* and sadly, in many respects she does so correctly. At the same time, however, she cannot implicate all theologians as being proponents of an ideology that has as its root male gender superiority.

Other feminists like Ruether (1983:178-179) embrace far more militant approaches saying of sexism that it pollutes the channels of human communication. Ruether sides with Maguire (1982:63-64) who defines the evil of macho-masculinity in terms of:

- 1) Violence
- 2) Hierarchical and anticomunitarian bias¹⁶
- 3) Abstractionism¹⁷
- 4) Consequentialism¹⁸

¹⁶ This sees all relationships in terms of being the controller or the controlled.

¹⁷ Maguire (1982: 63-64) sees abstractionism as the turning of reality into theoretical fantasies that do not need to be checked and corrected by real persons, or put another way: one abstracts one's self, others, social groups, nature and God into concepts and goals that can be pursued without noting the consequences to human persons including oneself.

¹⁸ This term is an extension of abstractionism and implies the putting of theoretical goal above the actual effects created by the means used to reach the goals.

5) Misogyny¹⁹

Such radical views are seemingly held by the most obsessive feminist theologians who no longer seem to pursue biblical truth through honest conscientious exegesis but rather, eisegetically seek to further the ideals of feminism at the expense of valid hermeneutical process.

Clearly, one must bear cognisance of the dangers of either being overly conservative or overly feministic in approaching issues of gender roles, whether they relate specifically to the individual roles of husbands and wives or for that matter to their respective roles within society, politics or the church. This warning is to prevent the abuse of Scripture for the furtherance of ideologies which embrace one sided eisegetical insights, which exhibit unbiblical views that are put forward to support male or female roles of dominance.

3.4.2.2 Husband/wife codes and the contemporary gender debate

The importance of research related to husband/wife *Haustafeln* becomes obvious when observed against the context of modern debate pertaining to the respective gender roles in society and their application.

While the topic of *Haustafeln* has been addressed in some detail over the past few decades, not only in articles and various monographs but also in the standard commentaries²⁰, there are a lot fewer which relate to the specific husband/wife *Haustafeln* of the New Testament. Hurley (1981:160) who has done research into the roles of men and women as seen from a biblical perspective maintains that with the exception of 1 Peter 3:1-7 the major apostolic discussions of marriage all appeal to the divine institution of marriage as at creation as a ground for the present ordering of it (Ephesians 5:31;1 Timothy 2:13-14). These discussions not only prescribe the institution of marriage but also demand a particular structure in it. In discussing authority with reference to slavery, parenting and marriage as well as a civil sense of authority the differences of the New Testament handling of them readily appear. It is here, however, where the four issues have been reduced to include only the three following issues: (1) divine establishment (is the institution

¹⁹ This term is defined as the hatred of women.

²⁰ See Porter & McDonald for information on these sources (1995: 80-101, 105-120, 130-155).

seen as positively ordained by God?); (2) divine specification of roles and assignment of them to individuals (did God designate set roles and specify categories of persons who should fill them?); (3) regulation of conduct (is the conduct of those in given roles regulated?). This Hurley (1981:161) illustrates graphically as follows:

	Institution divinely established?	Roles divinely specified?	Conduct regulated?
Slavery Master slave	- no	- no	+ yes
Civil Ruler/citizen	+ yes	- no	+ yes
Parental Parent/child	+ yes	+ yes	+ yes
Marital Husband/wife	+ yes	+ yes	+ yes

From this representation, Hurley (1981:161) concludes that the apostolic lists of relationships in which submission to authority was urged, was intended to regulate behaviour within relationships but not to convey equal approval of them or to imply that they are essentially of the same order.

Hurley (1981:161), for the purposes of this study, is correct in identifying the distinct differences between the husband/wife, parent/child and master/slave *Haustafeln*, but fails at this point to deal more carefully with the individual *Haustafeln* texts which relate to the husband/wife *Haustafeln*.

Barth (1974:714) astutely identifies the crux of the issue²¹ in dealing with Ephesians 5:21 and 1 Peter 3:1-7 and showing how they should be seen as applying to the

²¹ Lincoln (1990:366) in addressing this same issue also identifies the potential difficulty of the interpretation of Ephesians 5:21. He correctly rejects the view of Sampley (1971:117) who holds that verses 22-33 are merely a critique of what has been stated in Ephesians 5:21 and then goes on to say that many modern interpreters have perceived the first admonition as undermining or deconstructing the others, but clearly the original author did not find them incompatible.

husband and wife. In the opinions of some this comparison may seem unwarranted since in Ephesians 5:21 we read: “be subject to one another out of reverence for Christ.”²² Unlike the remaining “more complete codes”²³ this code exhorts the parties within the marriage to be submissive to one another in the fear of Christ²⁴. Whilst this verse is not echoed in any other husband/wife *Haustafeln* it is still authoritative insofar as it does not teach any new doctrine which is contrary to those evidenced in the other examples of the *Haustafeln*. Barth (1974:714) maintains that both the teaching of Aristotle and 1 Peter 3:6 require subordination (obedience) of the wife. The *Haustafel* in Ephesians 5-6 however does not share the same feature. Barth suggests that even though the apostle Paul may have used the words “subordinate” and “obey” synonymously elsewhere, such is not the case in Ephesians 5-6 where it is the slaves and children who are told to “obey” (Ephesians 6: 1, 5). Certainly, “obedience” is in the same sense as “love” to be interpreted as a form of mutual submission.

In dealing with the *Haustafeln* as found in Colossians 3:18-4:1 we see another example of a self-contained paraenetic unit consisting of three reciprocal exhortations. Amongst others O'Brien (1982:215) has argued that it is the oldest extant *Haustafel*. It is also the reason why Crouch (1972:32) in his survey concludes that: “the study of *Haustafeln* is at an impasse”.

At first glance Colossians 3:18, 19 makes no mention of mutual submission as was seen in Ephesians 5:21 which poses a problem for those who argue for mutual submission.

Colossians 3:18, 19

18 Wives, be in subjection to your husbands, as is fitting in the Lord.

²² ὑποτασσόμενοι ἀλλήλοις ἐν φόβῳ Χριστοῦ.

²³ For references to the “more complete codes”, please refer to 3.3.2.1 above.

²⁴ This important verse may not be ignored, as it is paramount for understanding the husband/wife code not only in the New Testament but also in Ephesians. De Bruyn (1989:76) appears to ignore this verse completely which seems to support his argument against feminism. The requirement of Ephesians 5:21 is that there be mutual submission, De Bruyn only argues for the submission of wives to their husbands.

19 Husbands, love your wives, and be not bitter against them.²⁵

The precise injunction has been a matter of dispute among New Testament exegetes who argue as does Lohse (1968:224-225) that submission to a husband by a wife was based on the following: “*Was sich ziemt, is durch Sitte und Tradition festgelegt.*” This is incorrect insofar as the present author understands Lohse, in that what he seems to say must naturally flow into the process of acculturation which would ultimately rob Christians of their own identity forcing them to become desensitised and eclectic in their beliefs.

The other “lesser codes” as found in the Pastoral epistles differ in their form and content in relation to the “more complete codes”. Verner (1983:127-139) gives a good summary in his work of women in the household. Here he declares that women referred to in the Pastorals are identified as having the same task of submitting to their husbands who rule the household. Verner (1983:135) concludes that the picture given of the matron looks very much like that seen in the Egyptian marriage contracts where the wife was required to be a loving wife and mother chaste in her attitudes and behaviour.²⁶

This reformulation or embellishment of the *Haustafeln* as seen in the Pastoral Epistles represents not so much the household itself,²⁷ but rather broader groups of people, e.g. community officers, widows and the wealthy. Furthermore, the context of the exhortations changes, e.g., to men’s roles and women’s behaviour in worship. Passages on the qualifications of bishops and elders are also in evidence.

3.5 New Testament: 1 Peter with reference to its husband wife code

The nineteen-seventies as stated previously, marked an awakening of scholarship not only on the *Haustafeln*, but also, according to Talbert (1986: 3,40) on 1 Peter. It had been quite some time since Dibelius and Weidinger had pioneered the investigation into the *Haustafeln* as far as Hartman (1987:237) records, and so up to

²⁵ Αἱ γυναῖκες, ὑποτάσσεσθε τοῖς ἀνδράσιν, ὡς ἀνήκεν ἐν κυρίῳ. Οἱ ἄνδρες, ἀγαπᾶτε τὰς γυναῖκας καὶ μὴ πικραίνεσθε πρὸς αὐτάς.

²⁶ For a detailed discussion on the instruction given to women consult the useful work of Knight (1992:130-149; 305-315).

²⁷ The household codes in 1 Peter, Colossians and Ephesians do not represent the household in the strictest sense but rather broader groups of people.

date research was in demand. Not only does Balch (1981:109) reject the outdated theories put forward by Crouch, but Hartman (1987:237) identifies both Lührmann (1980/81:86) and Thraede (1980:359-368) as having done likewise. It was works by such scholars that furthered study on the Christian *Haustafeln*.

In 1976 a similar growth was experienced in terms of scholarship relating to 1 Peter. This came as a response to an article by Elliott (1976:243-254) who levelled the accusation at New Testament scholars that research on 1 Peter had come to a neglected standstill. Not long after the publication a marked response could be seen. This came from the pens of both Elliott and Balch who in 1981 both first published related works on 1 Peter respectively, namely Elliott's *A Home for the Homeless* and Balch's *Let wives be submissive*. These works are characterised by Talbert (1986:1) who maintains that Elliott sees 1 Peter mainly as a call to social cohesion within the community of the addressees while Balch emphasises 1 Peter's advocacy of social adaptability as a style of life for Christian communities. These specific works of Elliott and Balch gave further impetus to the quest of research on 1 Peter.

In describing 1 Peter 3:1-6 Balch differentiates between the husband/wife code in 1 Peter and Colossians saying that the *Haustafeln* in Colossians follows a pattern which first addresses the wives, then children and finally the slaves. In Peter, however, the slaves are addressed first and then the women are addressed. Balch (1981:96) stipulates that for the author of 1 Peter, the relevant sections of the *topos* concerned precisely "How to live well at home," i.e., how Christian slaves should relate to pagan masters and how Christian wives must relate to their pagan husbands. This particular insight is exclusive to the husband/wife code of 1 Peter in that it addresses situations where the wife is a Christian and her husband is not. The original author prescribes the conduct for such a case.

Goppelt (1993:217) has argued more recently in his commentary on 1 Peter which takes sociological approaches²⁸ that the prosaically styled and extensive paraenesis for wives appropriates to a large extent elements of transmitted material that also make an appearance in the other so-called "station-codes". The key phrase for the "station code" in 1 Peter, "proper conduct," summarises in chapter 3:6b what has

²⁸ Consult Elliott (1993:36-87) for a detailed introduction to sociological approaches.

been said; for the Christian wife what “proper conduct” is in marriage is developed in 3:3-6a with the aid of paraenesis.

3.6 Conclusive Summary

It has been seen that research on the New Testament husband/wife code has as a field of study been well served in recent times. While many scholars have differing opinions of the nature and purpose of the *Haustafeln* genre, there can be no denying the fact that *Haustafeln* in its typical Graeco-Roman form has been embellished or “Christianised” so as to function in the same way as it was first used but with its object and basis being Christian. Christian *Haustafeln* and Graeco-Roman *Haustafeln* are both seen to refer to the three pairs of relationships, namely:

- 1) Husbands and wives
- 2) Parents and children
- 3) Masters and slaves

The main concern of this chapter has been the relationship of husbands and wives as indicated in the New Testament.

The *Haustafeln*, which deals with the husband/wife pair, is crucial for a Christian understanding of the relationship between husbands and wives. Also of note is the fact that the *Haustafeln* form with reference to the husband/wife code is both paraenetic and apologetic in function. In turning to the next chapter these functions will be seen at work in 1 Peter 3:1-7 in the way in which it addresses the first readers/hearers.

CHAPTER 4

The Probable reception of 1 Peter 3:1-7 by the first readers/hearers

Overview:

4.1 Introduction

4.2 Canon and context in 1 Peter

4.2.1 Specific canonicity

4.2.1.1 Authorship

4.2.1.2 Dating

4.2.1.3 Addressees and their situation

4.3 A structural analysis of 1 Peter 3:1-7

4.4 An interpretation of 1 Peter 3:1-7

4.4.1 Introduction

4.4.2 Wives defer to husbands (3:1-4)

4.4.3 The example of Sarah (3:5-6)

4.4.4 Husbands' honouring of wives (3:7)

4.5 Conclusive summary

4.1 Introduction

Osborne (1977:337) correctly points out that the proliferation of material regarding the position of women in Christian society has brought about four distinguishable positions. The positions which manifest themselves are based upon 1 Corinthians 11:2-16, 14:34-36 and 1 Timothy 2:8-15. The identified positions express the following views:

- 1) Women are subordinate to men and cannot have positions of authority in the Church.
- 2) Women are subordinate to men but may have positions of authority in the Church.
- 3) Women are equal to men and should have positions of authority in the Church.
- 4) Women are equal to men but should not have positions of authority.

Of pertinence to this study as seen earlier, are three other passages which deal with the principles behind the above issues by discussing the husband/wife relation namely: Ephesians 5:22-33, Colossians 3:18,19 and of course 1 Peter 3:1-7.

Prior to further investigation of 1 Peter 3:1-7 it is important to take cognisance of potential hermeneutical pathways. The first pathway contends that all biblical command passages are literal and normative and must be obeyed. The second pathway holds that all command passages are cultural and can only be reinterpreted with regard to problems today. The third approach, the category into which most evangelicals including the present author would fall, suggests that both cultural and normative commands are found in Scripture, and it must be decided which category an individual command fits before we apply it to this age. This principle will be borne in mind for both this chapter as well as the following chapter. In continuing then, 1 Peter 3:1-7 will be addressed methodically in order to establish its probable reception by its first readers/hearers. It is a forgone conclusion that the first readers/hearers of the paraenetic literature expressed in 1 Peter 3:1-7 are wives and husbands. It is specifically they who are addressed. The study will now continue under the

next heading, which deals with the canonicity and context in 1 Peter. Of note is that only certain aspects of the specific canonicity will be addressed, since only certain aspects relating to 1 Peter are relevant for the sake of this study.

4.2 Canon and context in 1 Peter

The place of 1 Peter 3:1-7 in the context of the whole Petrine *Haustafeln* is seen in the context of 1 Peter 2:11-4:19. The following schema based on the work of Van Rensburg (1997:170) shows the context in which the exhortation to wives and husbands is given. This schema represents the context on a macro scale in order that the reader can first familiarise him/herself with the position of 1 Peter 3:1-7 in its larger context and in relationship to the exhortations to political authorities and with employees. As this study deepens the investigation will zoom in on the micro scale to enable more attention to be given to the detailed thought structure of 1 Peter 3:1-7.

2:11-4:19: The exhortation founded on the basis of the new birth

The basic exhortation: Live good lives in all relationships

2:11-12: As aliens abstain from sinful desires, live good lives among the pagans

Applied to the relationship with the political authorities

2:13-17: Submit yourselves for the Lord's sake to every authority instituted among men

Applied to the relationship with employers

2:18-25: Submit yourselves even to harsh masters, following in Christ's steps

Applied to the relationship with marriage partner

3:1-7: Also in a society where women are being discriminated against, God's guidelines for marriage apply

Applied to the relationship with the neighbour in general

3:8-12: The key to a happy life lies in the implementing of God's instructions regarding the neighbour

Applied to the attitude toward/reaction to unjust suffering

3:13-4:19: Even if you suffer for what is right, you must consider it a privilege and continue to do what is right

From the above diagram it can be seen on a broad scale that the exhortation with which this study is concerned, finds itself represented as the third set of *Haustafeln* pairs being addressed on the basis of the exhortation to live good lives in all relationships. This idea has as its basis 1 Peter 2:11-12, which represents the new birth.

4.2.1 Specific canonics

In the context of the specific canonics of 1 Peter the relevant emphasis will be placed upon the authorship, dating and addressees of the epistle, all of which are interrelated and form a foundational starting point to this study.

4.2.1.1 Authorship

The question of the authorship of 1 Peter has been a point of contention over the years with diverging views. Three differing views exist concerning the authorship amongst contemporary scholarship:

- 1) Peter as author of 1 Peter¹
- 2) An amanuensis theory with Silvanus as the amanuensis²,
- 3) A pseudonymous author³.

It can be seen that since the advent of critical scholarship, agreement relating to Petrine authorship, has been compromised. It is apparent that the controversies surrounding the issues⁴, which seem to hinder the possible acceptance of Petrine authorship, have promoted a lack of certainty in the minds of many scholars.

¹ For this view see Clowney (1988:18-20), Goppelt (1993:7-15), Grudem (1988:21-33) and Kelly (1969:30-33).

² This view is supported by amongst others Reicke (1964:69,70) and Selwyn (1947:7-38).

³ For a supporter of this view consult Beare (1970:29)

⁴ Davids (1990:4-7) echoes the concerns of Sylva (1980:155) as he identifies the issues which relate to the presence of advanced Greek (see Grudem, 1988:27-31 who argues that Peter could have been well versed in the use of Greek), the evidence of Paulinisms, the question relating to the possibility of Peter's contact with the Christians in the provinces named in 1 Peter 1:1. Finally, objections have been put forward that the date of 1 Peter is too late for the writer to have been Peter. For a discussion of this objection see Best (1977:63-64).

Apart from the standard objections to the Petrine authorship of 1 Peter scholars such as Best (1977:49), have isolated certain objections to Petrine authorship. The argument which states that since Peter was raised as a Galilean Jew, he would not have made use of the Septuagint from which many of the Old Testament references have been made.

In the light of all the objections it seems clear that recent scholarship has made an effort to accommodate the ideas of the liberal schools of thought. This idea has manifest itself by way of the fact that many commentators are tending to be non-committal in their responding to the question of authorship. The present author is convinced that the many steps taken to investigate the authorship of 1 Peter, have not been as fruitful or productive as they may have been. Theologians and commentators working with the text of 1 Peter have clearly shown, to the satisfaction of scholarship the world around, that they are well versed in all the objections to Petrine authorship. As a consequence for some scholars wanting to take the more radical liberal objections too seriously they stand in danger of losing their footing, which may be deleterious to the testimony of Holy Scripture.

To conclude then, even in the face of the many arguments that strongly deny Petrine authorship, the present author holds that Peter is indeed the author of 1 Peter.

4.2.1.2 Dating

The question regarding the date of the writing of 1 Peter is not unlike the issue of the letter's authorship in that many differing views concerning to possible dates of writing exist. Kelly (1969:26-30), while arguing for a date before A.D. 64 mentions some of the criteria which might affect the date. Much of what Kelly writes is based upon conditional acceptance of some of the events and circumstances, which are said to have affected the first readers/hearers of the content of the epistle. An example of this is seen in the way that Kelly (1969:28) raises the objection put forward to argue a date after A.D. 64, namely that 1 Peter's recipients faced persecution. The persecutions, if government inspired, would by nature make the mere profession of

Christianity an offence. This would lead to the conclusion of a date of writing after the great fire of Rome, which took place in A.D. 64. The date, if accepted, would be founded on the fact that prior to A.D. 64 there was no full-blown persecution from the imperial authorities. Other objections to an early date are expressed by Best (1977:63-64) who holds to a date of somewhere between A.D. 80-100, i.e. during the reign of Domitian⁵.

Grudem (1988:36) argues that Peter was in Rome until the end, in other words, the destruction of Rome. Grudem goes on to suggest that factors indicate that Peter did not write 1 Peter until after the apostle Paul had left Rome, perhaps in AD 62. This theory is based on the acceptance of the events narrated in 1 and 2 Timothy and Titus as referring to genuine events in Paul's life after he had been released from his first imprisonment in Rome.

Broadly speaking there is a gamut of permutations regarding the intricacies of establishing the date of writing with accuracy, especially if one feels the need to refute the arguments expressed by the critical scholars. Any one of a range of commentaries⁶ on 1 Peter may be consulted for the related discussions. In closing let it be said that since it has already been expressed that the present author holds to Petrine authorship, it holds that the dates AD 62 and AD 64 represent the time period during which Peter must have penned the Epistle of 1 Peter.

4.2.1.3 Addressees and their situation

The recipients are identified in 1 Peter 1:1 as: "... the exiles of the Dispersion in Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia ...". Whilst the verse concerned indicates the geographical domiciles in which the recipients resided, it also informs the reader that the recipients were "chosen by God" and were to be considered as exiles or aliens, depending on the translation

⁵ Whilst it is unlikely that Best (1977:63-64) is correct, his commentary may be consulted for arguments for a late date.

⁶For a selection of writings relating to the discussions surrounding the date of 1 Peter the works of Casarella (1996), Carson (1993:81-83) and Porter & McDonald (1995:211) should receive priority apart from the notated bibliographies in the respective commentaries referred to in this study.

used. Van Rensburg (1998:580) correctly champions the translation of *παρεπιδήμους* as being aliens. The idea of aliens is preferential due to its inference, which signifies the status of those to whom it refers. For Van Rensburg (1998:579) the description as aliens for the first readers/hearers is not merely to be seen as a metaphoric figurative description but it also implies the literal socio-political sense of the word.

A real problem faced by the addressees was according to Balch (1986:86) that of acculturation, a pressure to be assimilated into the mainstream of unbelievers which presupposed the transmission of beliefs, ideas and cultures. This would of course have meant a compromise of Christian ideas. The alternative to this was that these first hearers could keep a low profile as has been suggested by Van Rensburg (1998:580). As he points out this would result in their lack of personal testimony concerning their Christianity.

Van Rensburg (1998:580) states that Peter's purpose is to give the addressees a new perspective on their situation. This is achieved by reminding them of , and by nurturing their awareness of specific truths in their faith and the prescriptions of their behaviour and by re-applying old truths to new circumstances. As a part of this application Peter makes the point that being a part of God's elect does not exclude adversity, such as they were experiencing because of their status as aliens.

The underlying exhortation in the epistle then, is that, even amidst adversity, which they should expect, they should persist in doing good and continue to acknowledge Christ as their only Lord. The reward for such behaviour will be overflowing joy when Christ returns.

With the above analysis of the situation faced by the first readers/hearers in mind, our attention turns to the specific situation as faced by the addressees of 1 Peter 3:1-7. Clearly, this pericope addresses at some length wives (v.1-6) and then almost in passing, the husbands (v.7). While the general situation faced by the first readers/hearers of 1 Peter is applicable to those addressed here in 3:1-7, the text offers a solution to the problems which have arisen

because of the circumstances faced. The main problem at hand is that the Christian wives of non-Christian husbands as well as husbands still in doubt about the Christian faith (see 1 Peter 3:1-4), are being discriminated against by their husbands. The passage offers a solution to this obstacle and goes on to give parameters to Christian wives of Christian husbands (see 1 Peter 3:5-6). Finally, Christian husbands are addressed in 3:7.

This investigation has as its purpose the task of establishing how the first readers/hearers could have understood this passage of Scripture.

4.3 The thought structural analysis of 1 Peter 3:1-7

As can be seen represented below, the analysis of the thought structure is self explanatory in many respects. The basic exhortation is introduced with the exhortation to wives encouraging them to be submissive to their husbands (3:1a). If the exhortation is put into practice it will result in the husbands who do not believe, being won over to Christ without a word (3:1b+2b). The means whereby the unbelieving husbands may be won over to Christ is by the behaviour of their wives (3:1c), without saying a word (3:2a) and when the husband sees the purity and reverence of their wives' lives (3:2c).

Peter now explains exemplary behaviour as practised with reference to beauty. In a negative light the reader is told that external beauty should not be sought (3:3), but rather that inner beauty should be sought as it is the unfading beauty of a gentle and quiet spirit (3:4a). The beauty of the inner self is explained in that it is seen to be of great worth in God's sight (3:4b). The motivation for the exhortation to seek inner beauty is founded on the lives of the holy women of the past who were concerned with inner beauty, and whose hope was in God. They too, were submissive to their husbands as already seen in 3:1 (3:5).

Peter goes on to give an example of the submissive women from the Old Testament in the person of Sarah, who obeyed Abraham and called him master/lord (3:6a). Light is shed on the bond between Sarah and the women who have conditionally become her daughters (3:6b). The status is conditional

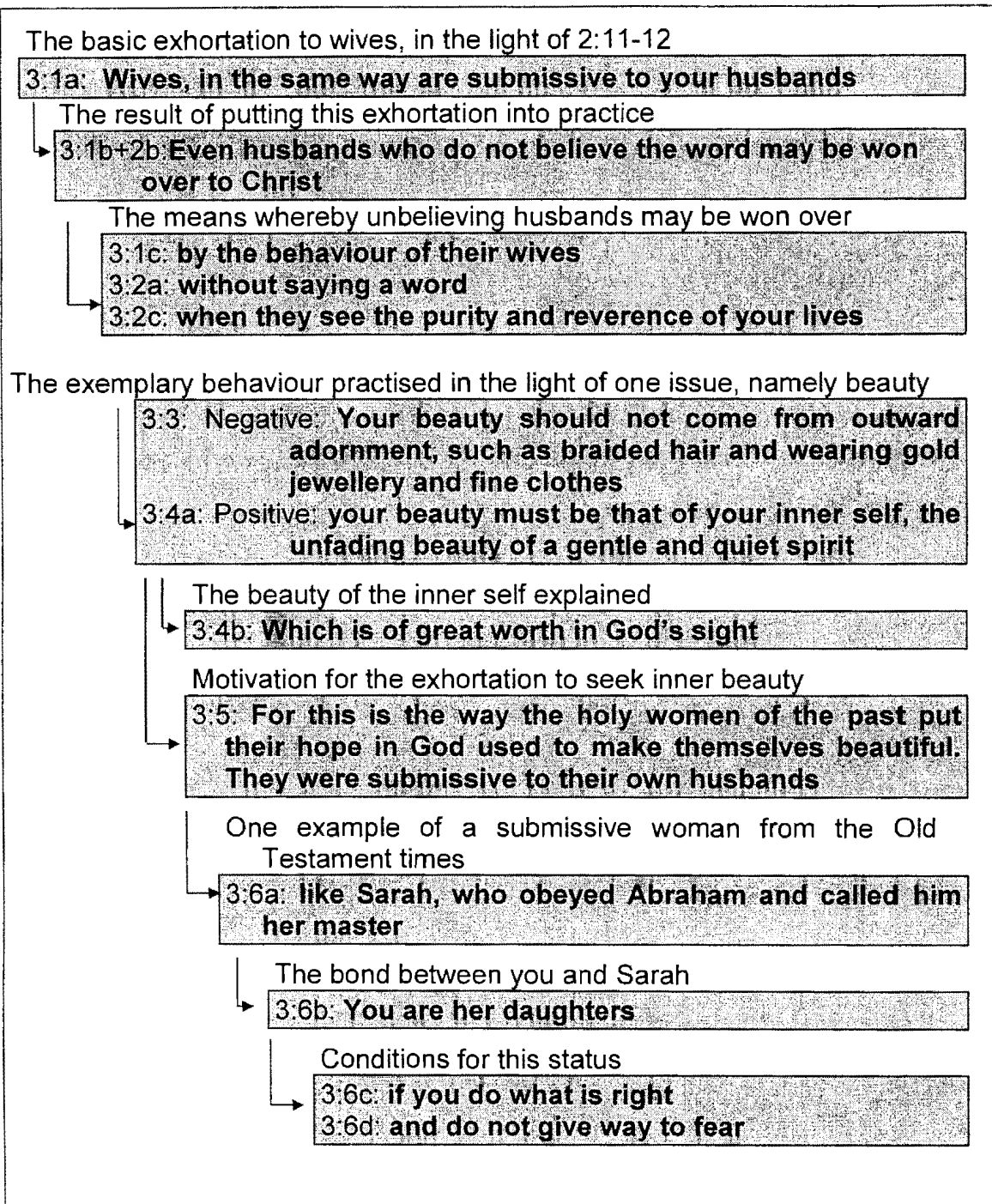
insofar as it requires that Sarah's example be followed with reference to doing what is right (3:6c) and not giving way to fear (3:6d).

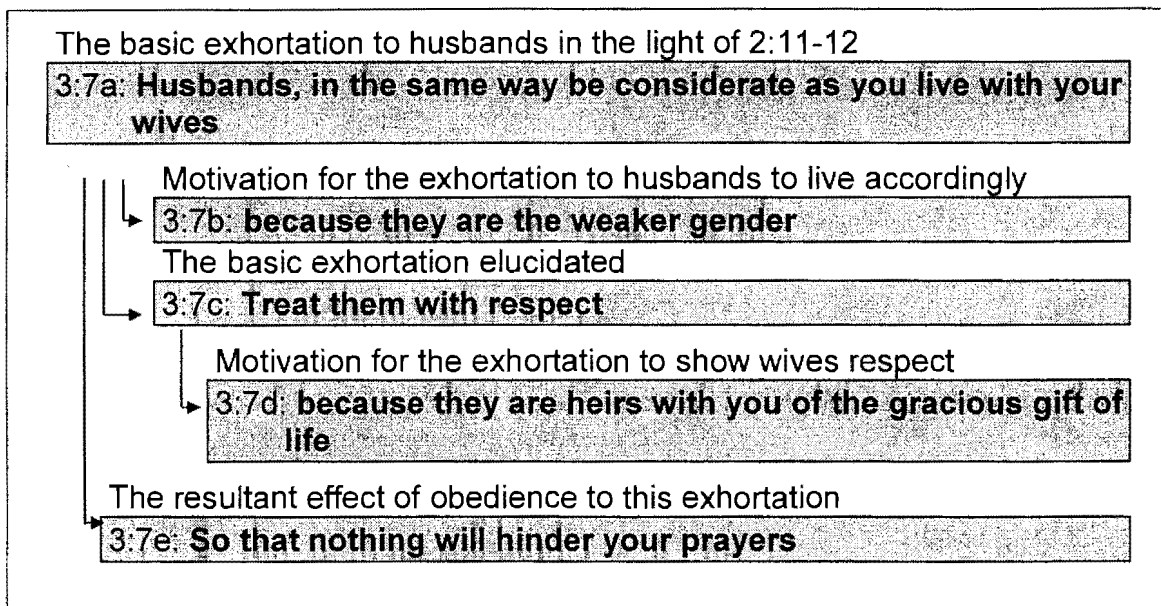
The basic exhortation to husbands in the light of 2:11-12 follows. Husbands in the same way are exhorted to live considerately with their wives (3:7a). The motivation behind the exhortation for husbands to live accordingly is seen in 3:7b where it is observed that women are the weaker gender. The basic exhortation is elucidated in 3:7c where husbands are told to treat their wives with respect, which is motivated by the fact that both husband and wife are joint heirs of the gracious gift of life (3:7d). Finally, the resultant effect of obedience to this exhortation is seen as being that there will be no hindrance to one's prayer life.

Following this structural analysis of 1 Peter 3:1-7 attention will be focussed on the syntactical structure of 1 Peter 3:1-7 which will be explained below. The syntactical structure seeks to take the reader into more detail on this pericope. While the syntactical structure includes in part the nature of argumentation in the passage concerned, it will be set out in the possible interpretation of 1 Peter 3:1-7 according to Toulmin's model (Toulmin *et al*, 1984:6-30) which will be explained in section 4.4.

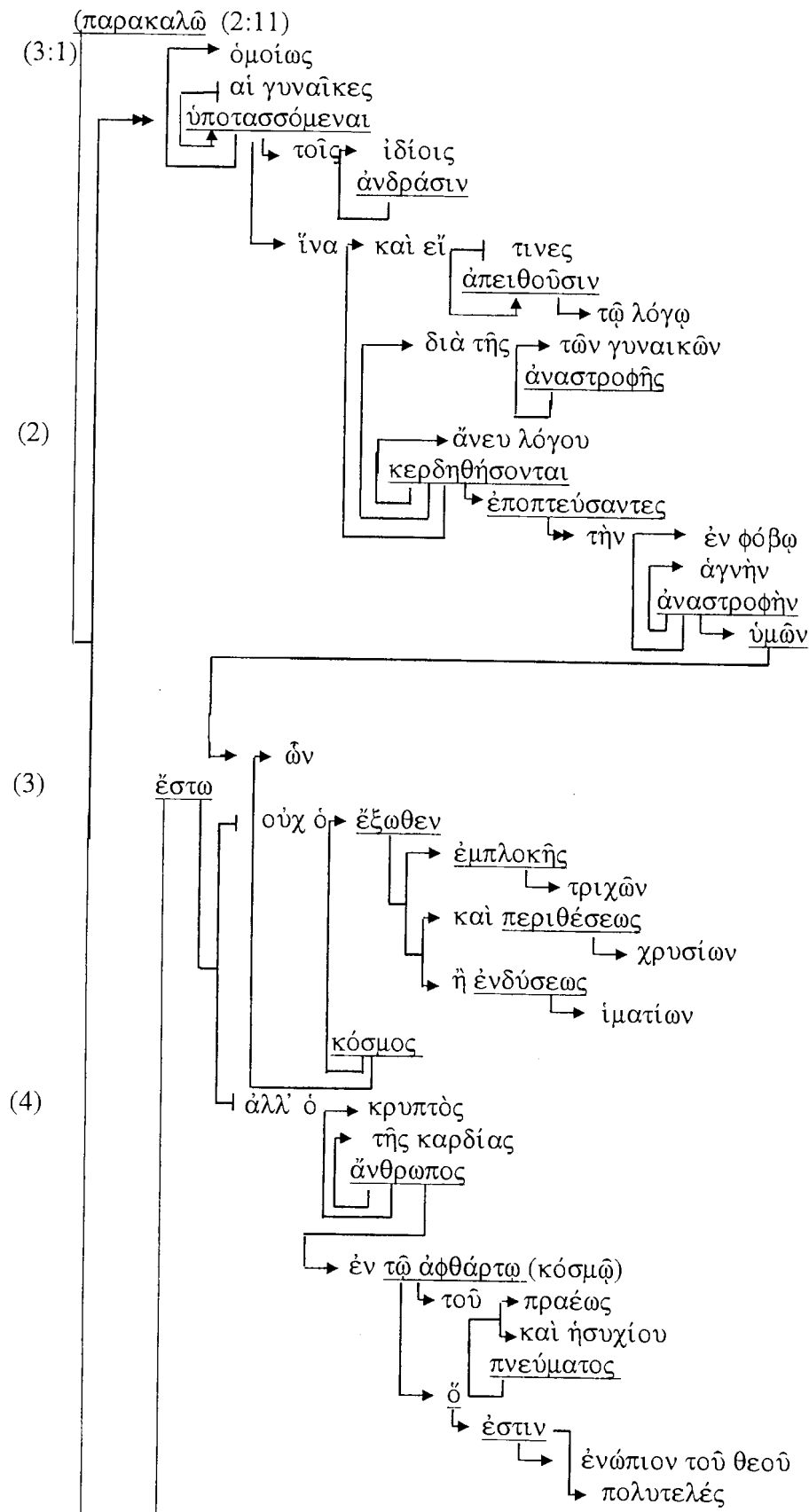
1 Peter 3:1- 7: The third practical application of the general principle in 2:11-12

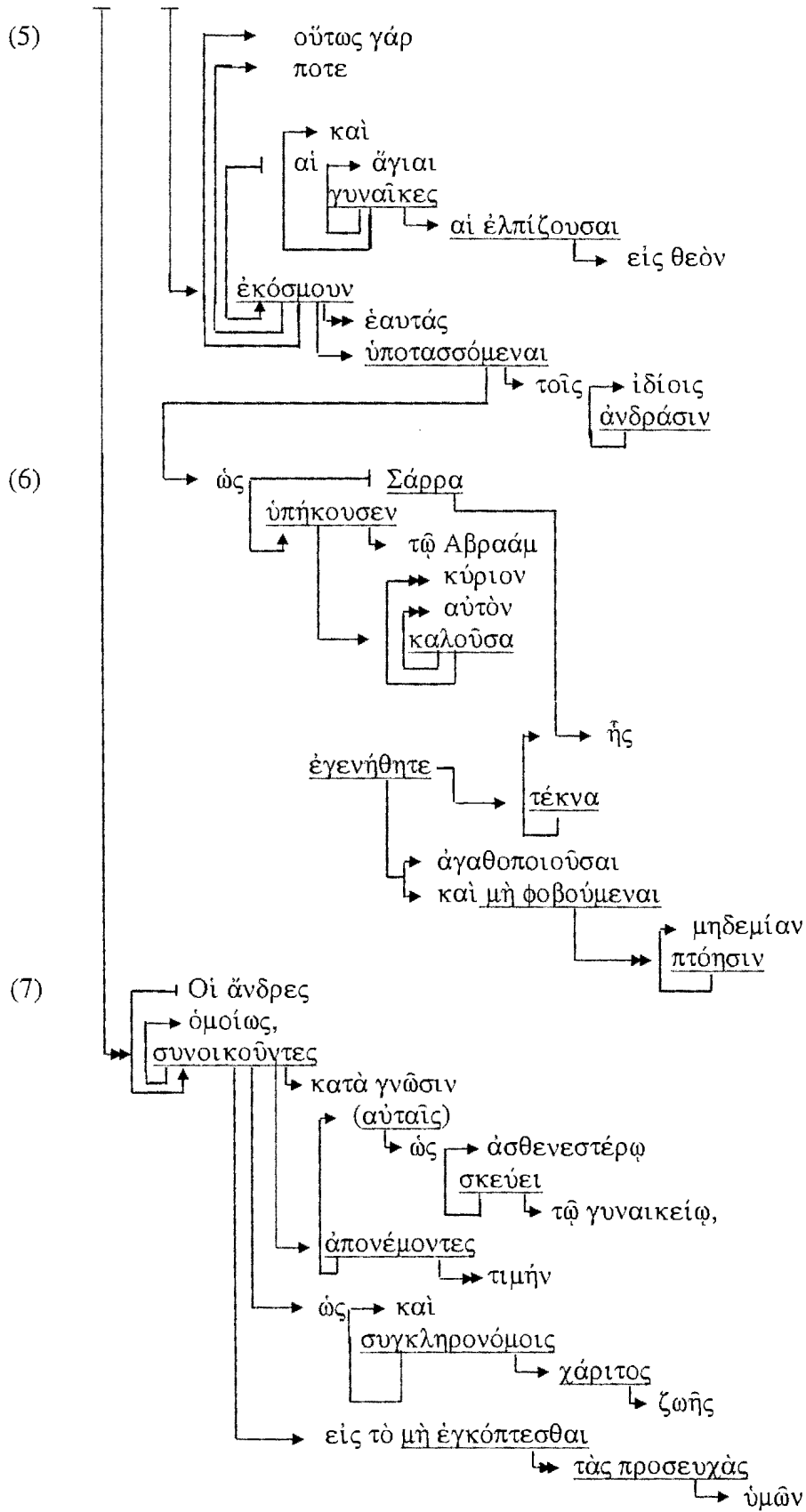
1 Peter 3:1- 7: The third practical application of the general principle in 2:11-12





The syntactical structure of 1 Peter 3:1-7 following van Rensburg (1997:167-169) representing the Greek text will be shown. Additional comments offering an explanation will be furnished so as to facilitate its interpretation following the diagram.





The two main verbs of 3:1-7 namely ὑποτασσόμεναι (3:1) a present middle participle, and συνοικοῦντες (3:7) a present active participle used as imperatives represent the sentiments seen in 2:18-25. These words are interpreted as a continuation of the imperative in 2:13 (ὑποτάγητε). The fact that ὁμοίως is used in conjunction with the verbs in each case, supports this interpretation. Of the word ὁμοίως, Thurén (1995:146) informs his reader that since it is used in the beginning, it signifies that the unit is parallel to the preceding unit. Thus Selwyn (1947:182) is partly off the mark because he does not think that ὁμοίως connects this passage with 2:18ff., but rather he places his emphasis primarily upon the word ὑποτασσόμεναι which he believes is the keyword and that as in 3:7 belongs to the "Code of Subordination". The present author, However, sides with Van Rensburg (1997:167) who maintains that the pericope therefore, is interpreted as representing the third practical application of the basic command concerning exiles and strangers in 2:11-12.

In dealing with the first four verses it can be noted that the structure of argument in the unit consists of two commands: ὑποτασσόμεναι τοῖς ἰδίοις ἀνδράσιν (verse 1) and ὧν ἔστω οὐχ ὁ ἕξωθεν ...ἀλλ' ὁ κρυπτὸς (verse 3-4). The two commands are motivated with a teleological motivation in verses 1b-2, and with a short expression in verse 4c. A longer example of holy women, especially Sarah (verses 5-6), is presented as an additional ground.

In 3:6 the word ὑπήκουσεν denotes the conduct of Sarah which is in accordance with the exhortation expressed in 3:1 by ὑποτασσόμεναι and in 3:5 by the same word ὑποτασσόμεναι a present middle participle.

1 Peter 3:7 represents the second of two basic statements, which are linked to 2:11-12. The verse is introduced by the exhortation for husbands to live in the same way in showing consideration towards their wives. Brox (1979:147) points out that this should be done "according to the knowledge" (κατὰ γνῶσιν) that the woman is the weaker gender. This establishes the first

of the three grounds presented for the motivation for men to live considerately, namely: (1) common sense concerning her physical weakness, (2) theological expressions (as heirs with you of the grace of life, γνῶσις as a Christian concept) referring to the addressees' faith and love (so Goppelt 1978:221), and (3) a teleological motivation: "in order that your prayers may not be hindered".

Let the focus now turn to a possible interpretation of 1 Peter 3:1-7.

4.4 An Interpretation of 1 Peter 3:1-7

4.4.1 Introduction

Whilst it has been argued by Thurén (1995:148) that to search for support for or against a patriarchal view of the society behind the unit of 1 Peter 3:1-7 is off the mark, it still must be borne in mind. In dealing with this pericope the exegete has to remain as faithful to the text as possible. Matthews & Benjamin (1993:22-23) in commenting on the world of Ancient Israel (1250-587 B.C.) conclude that the world of the Bible was a "patriarchy". Whilst the word "patriarchy" can be described as a particular social system, it does not imply sexism which is a form of prejudice and oppression founded on the assumption that women are biologically inferior to men.

Michaels (1988:171) explains that the advice in 1 Peter 3:1-7, which addresses wives and husbands stays within the framework of the social structures and behavioural standards of Peter's time. The first section, namely that of 1 Peter 3:1-6 exhorts only women according to Thurén (1995:146), which says a great deal to illuminate the situation of the addressees in the society. On this same unit Brox (1979:142) suggests that the author has made use of ethical tradition for his own purposes.

Prior to commencing with an interpretation of 1 Peter 3:1-7 it will be required that the model of Toulmin *et al*, (1984:6-30) be elucidated, in order for the reader to be introduced to the *modus operandi* of the model concerned, which seeks to give an analysis of the argumentation used by the author of 1 Peter. Toulmin *et al*, (1984:6-30) argue that each argumentation consists of certain

elements, which are identified on the basis of their function. They help us to describe the structure of any argumentation. The model employed here will follow Toulmin's elements using the following symbols: **(C) Claim**, is the opinion put forward; it tells us the conclusion, which is based on the argumentation. **(D) Data**, show the facts on which the claim is based, from which the conclusion is drawn. The D includes specific information, which supports the claim in a certain situation. Usually many D's are needed to support a claim. It is also typical that a claim functions as a D for the next chain of argumentation. The claim can never be stronger than the data upon which it is based. Finally, in order to show that the D's are appropriate for supporting the claim, a **Warrant (W)** is needed. Contrary to the specific D, the warrant is a general rule, which indicates the relevance of the claim in the argumentation, it guarantees that it is correct to draw a conclusion from D to C. These three factors are always necessary in order to make an argumentation reliable.

4.4.2 Wives, defer to husbands (3:1-4)

1Peter 3:1-4

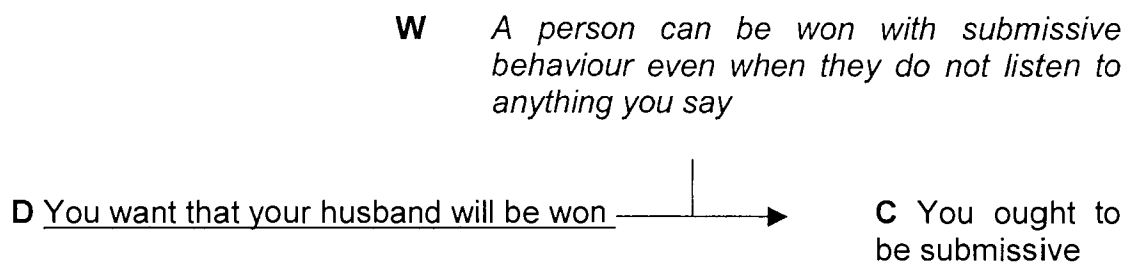
1 Ὅμοιως [αί] γυναῖκες ὑποτασσόμεναι τοῖς ἰδίοις ἀνδράσιν, ἵνα καὶ εἴτινες ἀπειθοῦσιν τῷ λόγῳ διὰ τῆς τῶν γυναικῶν ἀναστροφῆς ἄνευ λόγου κερδηθήσονται 2 ἐποπτεύσαντες τὴν ἐν φόβῳ ἀγνὴν ἀναστροφήν ὑμῶν. 3 ὧν ἔστω οὐχ ὁ ἕξωθεν ἐμπλοκῆς τριχῶν καὶ περιθέσεως χρυσίων ἢ ἐνδύσεως ἱματίων κόσμος, 4 ἀλλ' ὁ κρυπτὸς τῆς καρδίας ἄνθρωπος ἐν τῷ ἀφθάρτῳ τοῦ πραέως καὶ ἡσυχίου πνεύματος, ὅ ἐστιν ἐνώπιον τοῦ θεοῦ πολυτελής.

Prior to detailed comments on each section the structure of argument will be given so as to gain a differing perspective other than that offered already above. The structure of argument relying much upon the work of Thurén (1995:146-150) has been used while employing at the same time "Toulmin's Model" (Toulmin *et al* 1984:6-7, 25-32), which is concerned with the analysis of the internal functions of argumentation.

Dealing with verses 1 and 2 Thurén (1995:147) informs his reader that the use of the teleological argument in persuasion (3:1b-2) presupposes assent to the goal presented. Thus, he maintains that the verses can be traced back to the following, possibly non-theological structure (see **Fig. 3.1-2**).

The meaning of τῶ λόγῳ is regarded by Thurén (1995:147) as ambiguous. As such, it indicates the gospel or God's will, but the counterpart ἄνευ λόγου refers to normal speech, so that the structure of thought functions also as a general example. In that sense it resembles 1 Peter 2:20 ("For what credit is it, if when you do wrong and are beaten for it you take it patiently? But if when you do right and suffer for it you take it patiently, you have God's approval."), which also indicates that the argument is not only religious but contains a more general core. Woman can win their husbands by submissive behaviour when the latter do not listen to them (**W**).

Fig. 3:1-2⁷

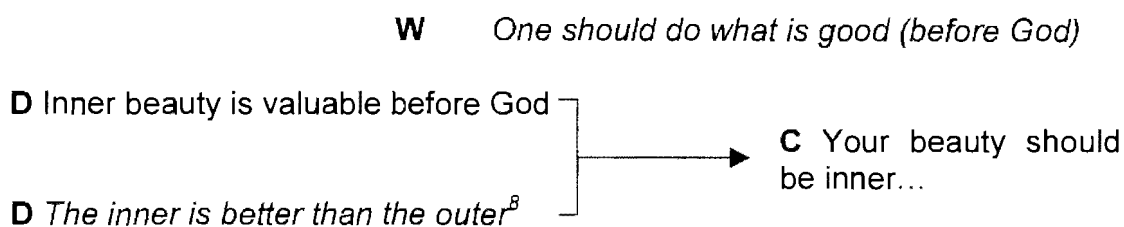


A new factor here is the contrast between words, which have proven to be ineffective means of persuasion (ἀπειθοῦσιν), and behaviour.

⁷ Thurén identifies the unit structure as resembling the argumentation in 2:11-25: The command (Claim) to be submissive is connected to a teleological argument, which also enlarges on the content of the command. This time submissiveness is not identified with suffering but with a life in purity and reverence (2) and ἀγαθοποιία (6), which are further exemplified in verses 3-4. To obey the rule is similarly said to be commendable (this time not χάρις but πολυτελής) before God. The **W** resembles the implied W in 2:12 'When you do good and others see it, they begin to praise (you/God)'.

In verses 3 and 4 it can be seen that the command in 3:3 is explicated by the preceding one:

Fig 3:3-4



Following the verse breakdown held to by Perkins (1995:55-60) and Van Rensburg⁹ (1997:177) of 1 Peter 3:1-7 the first four verses are clearly shown to be dealing with a wife and her deferral to her husband. Slaughter (1996a:199) summarises the verses with the heading: “Winning unbelieving husbands to Christ”. There can be no debate as to the fact that when a wife defers to her husband as seen in 1 Peter 3:1-4 that the potential reward could be that her unbelieving husband may be won over to Christ. In the context of the first Graeco–Roman hearers/readers it was commonplace for a wife to be submissive to her husband. The text goes a step further to indicate that the purpose was not merely because the husband was head of the home but its purpose was also in order that he could be won over to Christ.

The present author does not agree entirely with the views of Goppelt (1993:218) and Michaels (1988:157). They point out that subjection is

⁸ Thurén is wont to use theological grounds only as parallels to reasons, which have a more general nature. This is the case here too; the idea, according to which the inner is more valuable than the outer, is familiar Hellenistic maxim. Selwyn (1947:434) comments: “Both Hebrew and heathen moralists were alive to the issues involved in woman’s dress; and the contrast between the outer and the inner ornament, which is observed by Philo, is not uncommon in Greek and Latin authors”.

⁹ van Rensburg (1997:177) whilst making the same distinctions as Perkins, separates 3:1-2 from 3:3-4, see discussion.

appropriate neither because of the fundamental quality of marriage¹⁰ nor a fundamental quality of womanhood, as marriage and womanhood emerged from God's creation, but quite clearly because of custom. Subjection was to be seen as corresponding to the structure of society of that time; Christians were to place themselves into their historical situation even in this respect. Both the above authors are however correct in their pointing out that marriage and womanhood emerged from God's creation, but to argue that subjection (i.e. owing obedience or allegiance to another) is culture specific seems to be off the mark. The only way in which it can be accommodated as such, would be to argue that subjection in the male dominant Graeco-Roman sense is implied, which was indeed correspondent to the structure of the society at the time.

Michaels (1988:157) argues from 1 Peter 3:1 (Ὁμοίως [αἱ] γυναῖκες ὑποτασσόμεναι τοῖς ἰδίοις ἀνδράσιν, "You wives too must defer to your husbands.") that the wives likewise (Ὁμοίως in the sense of 'also' or 'too') must defer to their husbands. There is no implication that the manner in which the wife is to defer to her husband is the same as slaves to their masters. Davids (1990:115) makes the observation that it was probably surprising to the original readers that here in a seemingly traditional ethical section wives are addressed at all. Davids' observation does have some grounds but in the light of the authors alluded to in chapter two it may be exaggerated since there are examples of wives being addressed with regard to their conduct in other writings. The norm and dominating view of that society was that women were expected to follow the religion of their husbands. In some cases the women may have practised or been involved in their own cult on the side, but the family religion, namely that of the husband received precedent over any other religion.

¹⁰ Goppelt (1993:218) argues against the views of Schelkle (1964:88) and Kelly (1969:127) saying that marriage is not an "order of creation" but rather that the gospel tradition calls indissoluble monogamy an institution of the creator (Matthew 19:4-6), but not subjection.

3:1b: ἵνα καὶ εἴ τινες ἀπειθοῦσιν τῷ λόγῳ διὰ τῆς τῶν γυναικῶν ἀναστροφῆς ἄνευ λόγου κερδηθήσονται, “so that some, though they do not obey the word, may be won without a word by the behaviour of their wives,” gives the reader a clear indication that in a case where an unbelieving husband¹¹ was guilty of disobedience to the word (λόγῳ: used here in the sense of “Gospel”) they could be won over to Christ without a word (λόγου: used here in the sense of “speech”). Best (1977:125) insightfully adds that the word (λόγῳ) does not need to be presented only in words and goes on to say that where words have failed a new approach may be taken. It must be acknowledged that this passage, with specific reference to 1 Peter 3:1-4, gives insight into one of the rare examples found in the corpus of New Testament writings exhorting this type of mission.

The exhortation to wives to win unbelieving husbands over to Christ by their conduct might have seemed radical to some. Van Rensburg (1997:177) points out that wives were inclined to “preach” to their unreasonable husbands in order to convince them of new religious insights. Wives would also have had difficulty accepting the status bestowed upon them in that socio-historical milieu. Clearly, as has been observed, women were discriminated against and were regarded as inferior to men, which is why with their understanding of self worth in the light of Christian teaching they would no longer have been prepared to carry the yolk of discrimination by their partners. Against the new found perception wives had of themselves husbands would have balked since they would have been diametrically opposed to giving up their privileged

¹¹ Balch (1981:99) comments that the nature of the disobedient husbands was: “... more than passive disbelief. Some husbands were almost certainly among those actively ... slandering the Christians”. Both Slaughter (1996a:200) and Meeks (1986:30) agree that subordinate members of the household were expected to partake in the religion(s) of the master. In the case of the wife, not to do so constituted highly insubordinate behaviour, which was frowned upon. Thus, Christian wives of pagan husbands were seen in this light.

positions which societal norms afforded to them¹². The tendency would have been for husbands to want to continue to exploit and humiliate their wives on the basis of their physical inferiority as they had thrived upon in the past. The obstacle, which caused the husbands to miscue, was their lack of understanding concerning the implication of the fact that their wives were to share in their lives as gifts of grace offered by God.

The crux of the matter then, is that the wife is exhorted to win her unbelieving husband over to Christ, not by giving in to her natural desire to "preach" but rather to do so by exemplary Godly conduct. This is not only for her own benefit, but also for the sake of Christ. Steele & Ryrie (1983:32-33) make a key observation stating that the wife's submission and obedience display a confident trust in God to work through constituted authority, even when the person holding that authority is out of step with God's Word. It should also be noted that the conduct required in 3:1 is not only for those wives whose husbands were not Christians but also for those whose husbands were. This idea is further enlarged upon in Chapter 3:6 where Sarah is portrayed as a model for the conduct, which exemplifies that of a Christian wife.

The nature of the winning conduct is expressed in 1 Peter 3:2 as follows: ...ἐποπτεύσαντες τὴν ἐν φόβῳ ἀγνὴν ἀναστροφὴν ὑμῶν, "once they have observed your reverent and pure conduct."

The author of 1 Peter according to Michaels (1988:158) now almost as an afterthought, explains the phrase "by their wives' conduct" from the preceding verse. Verse 2 answers the question as to what it is that the unbelieving husband will notice about their wives' conduct. The husband will notice that his wife's conduct is "reverent" and "pure". This winning formula is founded upon the fact that such men will ultimately be won over for faith because they

¹² Stambaugh & Balch (1986:124) indicate that the Romans feared sedition as a result of wives who were worshipping the barbarian Dionysius, Queen Isis, the lawgiver Moses, or Jesus. In the case of Christian teachings a restructuring of their patriarchal households would be imminent, which is why many foreign religions including Christianity experienced persecution and later impeachment by the Roman state. Christians in the second century bore the brunt of impeachment by the Roman authorities as they were regarded as subversive (Frend, 1984:180-181).

constantly have before their eyes¹³ that which is shaped by the “word,” and out of which, therefore, the “word” speaks. Goppelt (1978:214) succinctly and correctly points out:

“Das Gewonnenwerden beruht daher nicht auf ihrer sittlichen Urteilsfähigkeit, sondern auf der überführenden Kraft des Evangeliums: ἐποπτεύσαντες τὴν ἐν φόβῳ ἁγνῆν ἀναστροφὴν ὑμῶν, „ wenn sie euren reinen, in Furcht (vor Gott geführten) Wandel sehen“.,, Rein” ist das Verhalten, weil es von der Furcht Gottes, die das Böse, aber nicht den Menschen scheut (3,6), vor allem aber von der Gnade (1, 17f.) getragen wird.”

Echoing the above sentiments of Goppelt it should be noted that contrary to the feminist Corley (1994:352-354), who refers to “terrified wives”, the idea was not that the wives should live in dread of their husbands but rather as Kelly (1969:128) suggests, they should adopt ‘Godly fear’ as the mainspring of their lives. The idea of ‘Godly fear’, following Beare (1970:128) stems from ἁγνῆν a derivative from ἁγνός, which in turn is closely related to ἅγιος. The word ἁγνός is a distinctively religious concept and accordingly suggests a purity charged with piety and commanding reverence; and this purity is the expression of a life led in fear of God.

In turning to 1 Peter 3:3 having already noted the importance of lives which are pure and reverent, the reader is taken a step further and informed as to the nature of the required beauty which should be evidenced in the life of the wife whose desire it should be to win her husband to Christ.

1 Peter 3:3

ὧν ἔστω οὐχ ὁ ἕξωθεν ἐμπλοκῆς τριχῶν καὶ περιθέσεως χρυσίων ἢ ἐνδύσεως ἱματίων κόσμος, “Your beauty should not come from outward adornment, such as braided hair and the wearing of gold jewellery and fine clothes.”

¹³ ἐποπτεύω, as in 1 Peter 2:12.

The exemplary behaviour practised in the light of one issue, namely beauty is now addressed. Concerning this, Beare (1970:128) points out that it was not uncommon for protests against luxury and ostentation to be heard from the lips of pagan moralists, and Jewish and Christian teachers. Simplicity and frugality in dress, as in food and drink, were regarded especially by the Cynics, and after them by the Stoics, and indeed by most of the later philosophical schools, as a necessary part of that asceticism which was essential to the cultivation of the higher life. In 1 Peter 3:3, however, it appears as Goppelt (1993:221) comments, that the statement develops a vivid picture of the contrast that Christian paraenesis took over from Hellenistic ethics in order to impress upon the reader the positive statement. This appears in verse 3: ὧν ἔστω οὐχ ὁ ἕξωθεν ... κόσμος.

The present author in summarising Goppelt's (1993:221) position, makes the conclusion that he is suggesting it should not be assumed that wealthy women who could afford such affluent accoutrements, were in fact being addressed in the churches Peter is addressing.¹⁴ Even where there is incongruity between the views of Goppelt and Kelly, it should be said negatively that 1 Peter 3:3 still communicates to the first hearer/reader just what sort of adornment is not desirable in order for a wife to win her husband to Christ. In order to investigate the positive and desirable form of adornment, the author continues in 1 Peter 3:4 to give the alternative which is of great worth in God's sight.

v4: ἀλλ' ὁ κρυπτός τῆς καρδίας ἄνθρωπος ἐν τῷ ἀφθάρτῳ τοῦ πραέως καὶ ἡσυχίου πνεύματος, ὃ ἐστὶν ἐνώπιον τοῦ θεοῦ πολυτελής. "...but let it be the hidden person of the heart with the imperishable (jewel) of a gentle and quiet spirit, which in God's sight is very precious."

¹⁴ The view put forward by Goppelt (1993:220-221) is contrary to the views of both Beare (1958:128-129) and Kelly (1969:129-131) who argue that the Christian community being addressed included women of both wealth and position who may very well have had the means to dress themselves in the way mentioned in 1 Peter 3:3. The above views are valid as is that of Goppelt. Assuming that the first readers are seen to be both converted Jew and Gentile, it would not be impossible for there to be a number of women who had the means to attire themselves in the way indicated.

From the positive antithesis seen in verse 4a it can be noted that author's intent is not to heighten the impression that spiritual inwardness is more valuable than physical appearance. Rather, the verse in question contrasts what a person can make of herself with what she becomes through Christ. The authors' focus is positive: Virtue is one garment that any Christian woman can wear with pride. Davids (1990:118) describes this virtue as the "hidden inner self" that bears the Christian character and expresses through the body. The statement: ὁ κρυπτός τῆς καρδίας ἄνθρωπος, "the hidden person of the heart," while only being found elsewhere in the New Testament in Matthew 6:3f. and Romans 2:29 (following Goppelt, 1993:221) is identified by Davids (1990:118) as an awkward expression since it has been translated in a number of ways¹⁵. The meaning however, cannot be debated as its' meaning must be understood to refer to the wife's inward nature, her true personality. Grudem (1988:140) observes that whilst this nature is not visible in itself, it is revealed through words and actions which reflect inner attitudes. The hidden person of the heart to which Peter refers, also alludes to the place where one's allegiances are formed, and for the first Christians as with all Christians it is the place where their allegiance to Jesus Christ as Lord is firmly rooted (3:15). Michaels (1988:161) says of the person's "heart" that it is who that person is, at the deepest and most private level, and for the Christian wives, according to Peter it is the wellspring of their beauty.

ἐν τῷ ἀφθάρτῳ τοῦ πραέως καὶ ἡσυχίου πνεύματος, "with the lasting beauty of a gentle and quiet spirit." The neuter τὸ ἀφθαρτον here denotes the quality of imperishability (Zerwick & Grosvenor, 1988:709) or incorruptibility (Rienecker & Rodgers, 1980:756) more precisely defined by the words that follow. The real form of required adornment is seen here to be typified as consisting of a lasting beauty characterised by a gentle (πραέως) and quiet

¹⁵ For further comments on this expression consult Goppelt (1993:221) or Michaels (1988:160-161).

(ἡσυχίου) spirit¹⁶ which evidences the influence of God's grace. It would surely be observed that these virtues would function in a twofold sense. Firstly, such qualities exhibited in Christian wives would be well pleasing to their unbelieving husbands who would far rather have wives who were less hostile in their attacks on their paganism or morals. Secondly, the conduct of a wife who had sought inner beauty which is valuable to God, would be pleasing God and in so doing would be investing in a form of adornment which would be imperishable.

Having assessed the nature of inner beauty the focus now moves to the motivation for the exhortation to seek inner beauty.

4.4.3 The Example of Sarah (3:5-6)

v5 οὕτως γάρ ποτε καὶ αἱ ἅγιοι γυναῖκες αἱ ἐλπίζουσαι εἰς θεὸν ἐκόσμου ἑαυτάς, ὑποτασσόμεναι τοῖς ἰδίοις ἀνδράσιν, "So once the holy women who hoped in God used to adorn themselves and were submissive to their husbands,"

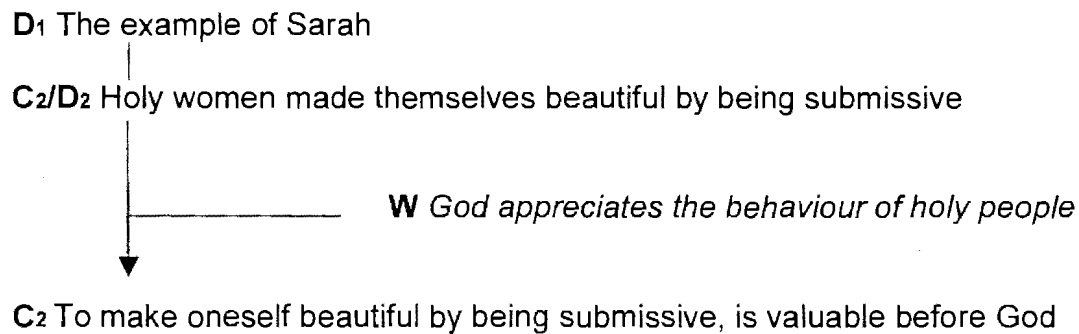
v6 ὡς Σάρρα ὑπήκουσεν τῷ Ἀβραάμ, κύριον αὐτὸν καλοῦσα· ἧς ἐγενήθη τέκνα ἀγαθοποιῶσαι καὶ μὴ φοβούμεναι μηδεμίαν πτόησιν. as Sarah obeyed Abraham, calling him lord. And you are now her children if you do right and let nothing terrify you.

In addressing the structure of argument as observed in 1 Peter 3:5-6 it can be seen that the main D, according to which submissiveness is of great value

¹⁶ Goppelt (1993: 22) offers a key insight into the understanding the first hearers/readers would have had concerning a gentle and quiet spirit. He suggests that *πραῦς* as used in Classical and Hellenistic thought denotes gentle friendliness, which has worth as a social virtue, above all on the part of a woman. With friendliness of this kind in the face of offences and aggression early Christian paraenesis combines here and elsewhere the "calm and quiet state of being" that does not answer "invective with invective" (cf. 1 Peter 2:22f.; 3:9). It is an expression of "non-resistance" that overcomes evil with good. Outward expressions of a "gentle and quiet spirit" have a lasting quality before God and human beings.

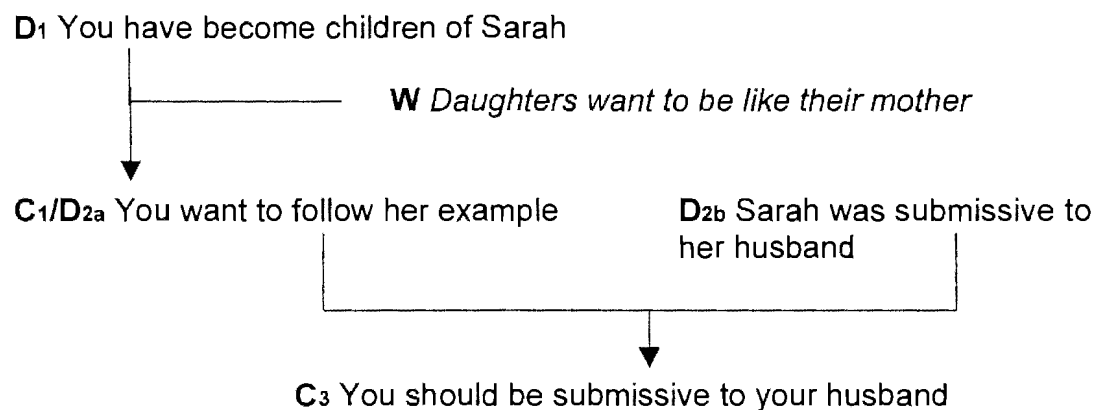
before God, is also supported with an example (3:5-6), the content of which according to Thurén is strikingly feminist¹⁷.

Fig. 3.5-6/1



The example of Sarah can also be seen as an independent persuading unit.

Fig. 3.5-6/2



In 1 Peter 3:5-6 the reader comes to grips with the motivation for the exhortation to seek inner beauty. It is in these two verses that Sarah is presented as a model for Christian wives. While 1 Peter 3:1-4 offered Christian wives instruction on how to relate to their husbands in a Christlike way, based upon voluntarily submitting to them, the verses that follow offer Sarah as a model for Christian wives. Sarah is set up as a model of a wife who fulfils the qualitative requirements of the previous four verses.

¹⁷ For an in depth discussion relating to the basis of this statement, namely that instead of having Christ and His behaviour as the example, women should follow the example of Sarah, consult Brox (1979:144) and Thurén (1995:148).

At first glance 1 Peter 3:5 echoes the sentiments of the first four verses. It can be seen that v.5b alludes to the first part of the verse qualifying αἱ ἅγιοι γυναῖκες αἱ ἐλπίζουσαι εἰς θεόν. These women of old were also adorning themselves correctly and submitting to the authority of their husbands. The lives of the women concerned were also holy and their hope was in God. Slaughter (1996b:358-359) points out that there is a profound similarity between the women addressed in 1 Peter and the women of the Old Testament. This he supports by arguing that the women addressed in 1 Peter placed their hope in God much like the women of the Old Testament. Such a perspective he maintains, was crucial in the light of the persecution experienced by Peter's first readers and here by Christian wives who were being treated unfairly.

It is significant that v.6 makes the statement: ὡς Σάρρα ὑπήκουσεν τῷ Ἀβραάμ, κύριον αὐτὸν καλοῦσα ... "Thus Sarah obeyed Abraham and called him Lord." The statement indicates that Sarah was obedient to her husband as seen in the exhortation of verse 1. It has been argued by Best (1977:126-127) that the obedience itself probably referred to a specific occasion which seems unlikely, since if that were the case, Sarah would not have been used as the example here. Slaughter (1996b:367-368) makes the statement that the author substituted the word "obey" for the term "submit" as a stylistic variation. While the text informs the reader that having obeyed Abraham, Sarah called him Lord, the term "Lord" illicit conflicting opinions with Michaels (1988:164), arguing for its high significance. Others such as Grudem (1991:204) argue that the implication of the verse is that it refers to a general pattern of behaviour which rather than a carbon copy imitation of every word Sarah said (such as calling Abraham Κύριον, *Ixx* Genesis 18:12). The point being made is that Sarah gave respectful obedience to Abraham even in the words she used to refer to him. It must be stated that the text is not referring to Sarah's words but her general obedience. This is what Peter refers to when he says that the Old Testament women who hoped in God were submissive to their husbands, "as Sarah obeyed Abraham" (verses 5-6).

v.6b ἥς ἐγενήθητε τέκνα ἀγαθοποιοῦσαι καὶ μὴ φοβούμεναι μηδεμίαν πτόησιν, “You have become her children as long as you do what is good and never let fears alarm you.” Underlying the latter part of v.6 is the idea that as believers in general are regarded as the children of Abraham (see Romans 4:11f; Galatians 3:7,16,29) so believing women are taken to be the daughters of Sarah. Sarah and Abraham appear together as the progenitors of the people of God in Isaiah 51:1ff. and it is this thought which underlies according to Best (1977:127) the present reference to Sarah. In short, not only is Sarah presented as an example to the women readers but she is also presented as the “mother” of God’s people. The idea itself does not necessarily only apply to women. The apostle Paul, Michaels (1988:166) insists, viewed all Christians as Sarah’s offspring, no less than Abraham’s. Goppelt (1993:219) expresses the same idea by suggesting that the notion of “Sarah’s children” is introduced on the analogy of “Abraham’s children”. Peter makes the use of the word τέκνα, not so much as to communicate a distinctive theological stance but rather to indicate the desire he has to foster in his readers the ethical attitudes and conduct traditionally associated with Sarah.

Ἀγαθοποιοῦσαι καὶ μὴ φοβούμεναι μηδεμίαν πτόησιν, “do good, then, and let nothing frighten you.” The last part of this verse has been interpreted by commentators as either conditional¹⁸ or explanatory¹⁹. More recently Michaels (1988:166) has proposed what he considers to be a better alternative. The suggestion Michaels puts forward is to take ἀγαθοποιοῦσαι, like most of the present participles in the household duty code, as imperatival in meaning²⁰ (see 1 Peter 3:1,7). Peter’s characteristic ἀγαθοποιεῖν, “do good” (2:14,15,20;

¹⁸ Kelly (1969:131) holds the view that Christian wives have become Sarah’s children *if* they do good and let nothing frighten them. At this point it is pertinent to record the fact that nowhere else in 1 Peter is Christian conversion or redemption identified with, or made dependent on anything but the initiative of God in Jesus Christ.

¹⁹ Beare (1970:157) contends that: Christian wives have become Sarah’s children *in that* they do good and let nothing frighten them.

²⁰ Best (1977:127) is in agreement with the imperatival meaning of ἀγαθοποιοῦσαι.

3:17; 4:19; cf. 2:12; 3:11-12) thus interprets, even defines, the ὑποτάσσεσθαι, “defer” of the traditional household duty code, not the other way around.

Michaels (1988:167) argues that the point Peter makes is that the wife shows true “deference” to her husband by “doing good” (i.e., doing the will of God; cf. 2:15), not that her obligation to “do good” is identified solely and exclusively with wifely submission. A subtle difference is only hinted at here, but it remains crucial to the argument of the epistle as a whole. A Christian wife’s deference to her pagan husband cannot extend to adopting his religion, for this would be a failure to “do good.” If she does good by maintaining her allegiance to God even while showing deference to her husband, there is always the possibility, however remote, that her husband may not understand or tolerate her alien religion and that consequently her freedom or safety may be jeopardised. Hence the ominous word of “comfort” with which Peter’s advice to wives concludes: “and let nothing frighten you” (literally, “not fearing any terror”).

4.4.4 Husbands’ honouring of wives (3:7)

ν7 Ὅτι ἄνδρες ὁμοίως συνοικοῦντες κατὰ γνώσιν, ὡς ἀσθενεστέρω σκεύει τῷ γυναικείῳ ἀπονέμοντες τιμὴν, ὡς καὶ συγκληρονόμοις χάριτος ζωῆς, εἰς τὸ μὴ ἐγκόπτεσθαι τὰς προσευχὰς ὑμῶν. “Likewise you husbands, live considerately with your wives, bestowing honour on the woman as the weaker sex, since you are joint heirs of the grace of life, in order that your prayers may not be hindered.”

In addressing 1 Peter 3:7 from the perspective of the argumentation and its structure, it can be seen (following Thurén 1995:149) that the unit consists of a Claim, according to which the husbands ought to be considerate to their wives²¹. Beside exhorting actual husbands, the command may illustrate the

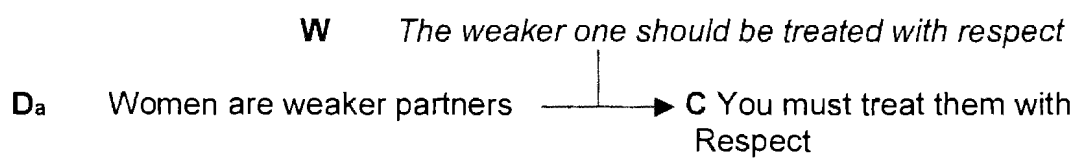
²¹ Or: in the similar way, viz. Like every Christian in the society, the husbands should be considerate (so Goppelt 1978:221).

other aspects of the main exhortation:²² the addressees should not act aggressively even if this is possible; they shall not seek vengeance.

Three types of ground are presented: (a) common sense (*κατὰ γυνῶσιν*, the female weakness), (b) theological expressions (as heirs with you of the grace of life, *γυνῶσις* as a Christian concept)²³, and (c) a teleological motivation: 'in order that your prayers may not be hindered'.

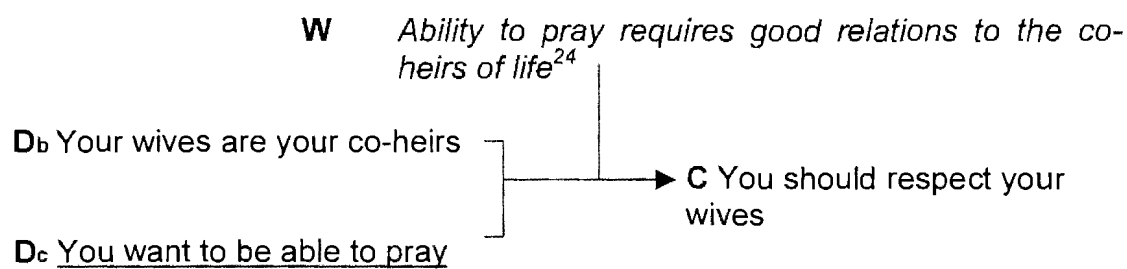
Ground (a) is simple:

Fig. 3.7a



Grounds (b) and (c) form together a teleological motivation:

Fig. 3.7b



While 1 Peter 3:7 addresses husbands on the behaviour required of them, it remains problematic to ascertain the very nature of their wives. This is highlighted and argued in the article written by Gross (1989:89) whose contention is that the wives referred to, are in fact not Christians although he

²² It is indicative that Brox (1986:147) does not recognise the admonition to men as an example, but assesses it as a deviation from the theme 'submissiveness'. This according to Thuren is due to negligence of the bipolar rhetorical situation in the letter with "active" and "passive" types of implied addressees. It is not possible to reconstruct here the author's attitude to sexuality, as Kelly (1969:133-134) does.

²³ Goppelt (1978:221) argues that if *γυνῶσις* is intended as a Christian concept, it refers to the faith and love of the addressees.

²⁴ According to Brox (1979:149), behaviour that violates the presented obligations, is a sin and therefore makes the prayers ineffective. Thus the expression becomes a warning.

concedes that the possibility exists. There can be no doubt that the husbands addressed are Christians even though Kelly (1969:132) points out that most of the wives addressed are married to pagans. Due to the fact that the husbands addressed are seen to be Christians, it follows accordingly that the circumstances of ancient society would have dictated that both wives and families would have conformed too. This is an issue which Gross (1989) has not considered.

Goppelt (1993:226) argues that like all Christians living within the earthly stations (ὁμοίως), husbands are directed (v.7a) to the responsibilities that fall to them by virtue of their station. Clowney (1988:133) describes these responsibilities by the way in which both are called to follow Christ in humble and compassionate love, accepting rebuffs with forgiving grace (3:8-9). Since the husband's role is different, the form of his service is different. The wife is called to be submissive to her husband, the husband is called to honour his wife. That honour includes considerate understanding. The husband is to live with his wife considerately, literally "according to knowledge" (κατὰ γνῶσιν).²⁵ Living in accordance with the knowledge is best explained by Davids (1990:122). Davids first states that while being contrary to Beare (1970:131), in that it does not refer to a religious knowledge or religious insight, it does refer to a personal insight that leads to loving and considerate care, whether in the bedroom or in other activities of marriage.²⁶ This expression manifests itself by "showing honour to your wives as to the more vulnerable sex (or weaker²⁷ vessel²⁸)." It appears that Peter means that of the two creatures of

²⁵ Beare (1970:131) thinks that this most certainly refers to the knowledge of God based upon the idea in contemporary philosophy of religion that γνῶσις usually refers to knowledge of God. Even if Beare can establish this understanding, it seems an unlikely solution to the interpretation of the verse concerned.

²⁶ Davids (1990:122) notes that the apostle Paul used the expression similarly in 1 Corinthians 8:1-13, Colossians 1:9-10 and Colossians 3:10.

²⁷ Goppelt (1993:227) points out that the term "weaker" is in accordance with traditional formulas of paternal society where the wife was considered as such.

²⁸ See Goppelt (1978:221) for a discussion of the four possible meanings of σκεύει.

God, male and female, the woman is weaker in body and generally more vulnerable. This idea would have been contrary to the popular idea held in the ancient world that women were "weaker" in mind or morally inferior, or weaker in conscience.

Peter is clearly concerned about the popular misconception of women by the first readers/hearers. It is of significance that the exhortation preceding verse 7 calls women to feats of moral and spiritual strength as independent moral agents, but weaker physically than men. To the first readers/hearers this concept would have been contrary to common practice in the Graeco-Roman world which would have been instrumental in distinguishing the unique nature of Christianity from mere pagan religion. In the light of the normal pagan practice of male dominance in antiquity, Davids (1990:123) argues that it was easy for a husband to abuse his wife physically, emotionally and sexually because of his social power. Peter rules these practices out: especially because of the vulnerability of a wife, which is why husbands are admonished to honour their wives in word and deed; rather than exploiting his power or denying that he has it, he lends it to her.

Peter gives two reasons for this command. First, such action recognises what society did not, that before God husband and wife are equal, joint heirs of God's gracious gift, which is eternal life. Second a failure to keep this relationship loving, a giving in to the societal tendency to dominate and exploit one's wife, would injure one's relationship with God, including prayer²⁹. As the closest human relationship, the relationship to one's spouse must be most carefully cherished if one wishes a close relationship with God.

4.5 Conclusive Summary

Having followed the exegetical method put forward by Osborne (1991:19-62, 127-144) and aided by Toulmin's (1969:29-73) model of analysis of argumentation, a construction of the probable reception by the first

²⁹ Davids (1990:123) indicates that Matthew 5:23; 6:12,14-15; 1 Corinthians 11:33-34; and James. 4:3 as well as other passages indicate that relational disturbances with others will hinder one's relationship with God, including prayer.

reader/hearer of 1 Peter 3:1-7 has been established. Elliott (1993:9) is correct in his observation that each text as well as the context always has a further *social dimension* which becomes evident within the larger constellation of social, economic, political, and cultural current. These factors have come to the fore in this investigation and have helped formulate the findings that have been made.

In 1 Peter 3:1-7 Christian wives of non-Christian husbands (see 1 Peter 3:1-4) are seen to be discriminated against. The passage offers a solution to this obstacle and goes on in 3:5-6 to give parameters to Christian wives of Christian Husbands. Finally, Christian husbands are addressed in 3:7.

A concept which has manifest itself in identifying the probable reception of this exhortatory passage, are the terms used by Peter. It is certainly noteworthy that while the first readers would have understood the idea of submission, Peter using the same term, refutes the popular understanding of submission already in place. Much of what Peter communicates is juxtaposed to the Graeco-Roman way of life. This is seen then as a blueprint for Christian living. The Christian life is also one of "submission", but not in the Graeco-Roman sense of "submission" which allowed husbands to abuse their wives. Instead, Peter shows his audience what true submission really is and in so doing shows Christian wives of non-Christian husbands how to live lives pleasing to God. Unlike the pagans who were concerned with external beauty Christian wives were rather to nurture inner beauty. 1 Peter serves as an apology in the sense that it contrasts the Christian life with that of the pagan.

Also of importance is the nature of Christian life amidst discrimination. It would have been very easy for the "aliens" to be assimilated into the mainstream of unbelievers and their way of life, but they are exhorted to keep their precious identity by continuing to do good even in the face of difficulties. In turning to the next chapter, the message of 1 Peter 3:1-7 will be applied to women in South African churches to establish the role women should play.

CHAPTER 5

1 Peter 3:1-7 and the role of women in South African churches

Overview:

5.1 Introduction

5.2 Christian women in practice: A look at marriage and conduct

5.2.1 Marriage to the modern unbeliever

5.2.2 Marriage to the man of God

5.3 1 Peter 3:1-7 and possible questions for the 21st century

5.4 Conclusive summary

5.1 Introduction

In the previous chapter it was seen how the first readers/hearers most probably received and understood the paraenetic message of 1 Peter 3:1-7 within their socio-historical context. In this chapter however, the aim is to understand how the message and principles of 1 Peter 3:1-7 can be applied to the modern reader/hearer with specific reference to women in South African churches.

The understanding of the message of this text for today is based on the basic hermeneutical premises put forward by Coetzee *et al*, (1980:15-17) which clearly indicate that God continues to speak through his inspired Word today. While Scripture is limited by time, it is not time bound.

The need to formulate a valid interpretation of 1 Peter 3:1-7 is essential, not only for husbands to better understand their wives, but also so that wives could have a better comprehension of their own positions in relation to their husbands whether regenerate or not. In one sense the present author does not want to dichotomise between women's roles in the Christian home as wives and their roles in the church, even though in a real sense the two scenarios are seen to differ. 1 Peter 3:1-7 does not explicitly refer to the role of women in the church, but rather it may be seen as an implicit implication in the way wives are to relate to their husbands who are also members of the body of Christ.

Chung (1996:95) maintains that the position of women in today's church is crucial to the extent that debate has been serious enough to alienate and divide Christians and even whole denominations. This idea has unfortunately been true, which is why it is essential for exegetes to responsibly deal with texts such as 1 Peter 3:1-7, so as not to confuse the issues but to facilitate the process of valid interpretation.

5.2 Christian Women in Practice: A look at marriage and conduct

The situation of the first readers/hearers while being historically separate from that of the present day reader, is not unlike or dissimilar to the situation today. While it is true that there have been many technological and even medical advances in various fields from aborticide to zymosis, the nature of humanity has essentially remained the same. The human being is still fraught with the effects of sin as result of which he/she experiences broken relationships. This brokenness seen in relationships is clearly manifest in one of the most primary of bonds between two people, namely the bond of marriage. It has been seen that in the ancient societies of the Graeco-Roman world women were not regarded with the same respect as men were. There is evidence that women generally were viewed as lesser beings. Strong arguments expressing this injustice have been put forward by Cornelius (2000) who argues that even the use of language in 1 Thessalonians is exclusively androcentric. Perhaps the tendency is there to argue that due to the fact that society at that juncture was both primitive and patriarchal, such conduct could even be justified or excused. Even if one accepts that idea on the basis of obtuse ancient cultural norms, how does one reconcile similar practices taking place today?

The question at hand is best answered by the exhortation in 1 Peter 3:1-7. The exhortation as it has addressed problems faced by Christian wives in antiquity, carries with it the same weight in its application to Christian wives in the 21st century.

5.2.1 Marriage to the modern unbeliever

The exhortation in 1 Peter 3:1-4 was directed at wives who were being discriminated against by their husbands who were unregenerate or who were still in doubt about the Christian faith. The discrimination implied, does not refer to an isolated incident here and there, but rather refers to discrimination against Christian wives on a larger scale. The reason this was so was because the society itself fuelled the mandate that helped men discriminate against their wives and women in general. This form of discrimination is

arguably alive and well in South Africa on a broad scale as well as in its churches. While this statement may be somewhat controversial and may even be seen as an exaggeration of the truth it has supportive grounds. Van Rensburg (1997:177) offers both views when he states that due to abusive behaviour by husbands, the cry has gone up that the idea that a wife must submit to her husband, is old fashioned. Conversely, others have responded negatively, saying that a husband must keep his wife under his thumb. Not to do so, will result in a wife taking advantage of her husband or manipulating him.

The most viable view remains a moot point between opposing schools of thought, which will continue to bring about heated disputes. Van Rensburg (1997:176) while commenting on the Afrikaans culture concedes that over the past few decades many changes have taken place in the areas of society and church as well as with regard to marriage. In society, developments have been experienced in the way in which women now have the right to vote, where previously they were not permitted to do so. In commerce, women are receiving better salaries and opportunities. With regard to the church there have also been developments. Women are no longer required to sit separately from the men, many churches give women the right to be heard and vote, while some churches even allow women to hold office and preach.

Finally, with regard to marriage, a shift has been seen away from strict patriarchy to a more balanced scriptural model.¹

There may be a number of reasons for the fact that there is a tendency toward a more scriptural model of marriage in recent times but two possibilities stand out. Firstly, modern society has largely been emancipated from ideas that men should dominate women and rule over them. Secondly, in some countries including South Africa, the Christian faith has been relatively

¹ The present author is well aware of the fact that Van Rensburg (1997:176) is referring to the Afrikaans culture in his observations. It should be borne in mind that while these observations are culture specific to the Afrikaans culture, they are to be seen in other South African cultures as well. This should be qualified in the sense that the extent of the observations may vary to a greater or lesser degree. A possible example of this can be seen in English families where strict patriarchalism is not as evident.

unopposed by its adversaries. The first of the two possible reasons has been facilitated by movements, which fight for the equality of human rights. The Constitution of the South African Government (Chapter 2, article 9, paragraph 1-2) states:

(1) Each one is equal before the law and has the right of equal protection and advantage of the law.

(2) "Equality includes the full and equal enjoyment of all laws and freedoms. In order to propagate equality, further legislation and regulations may be drawn up that are designed for the protection and development of persons, or categories of persons, who are unreasonably discriminated against.

The content of the above document is contrary to the idea of rights experienced by the recipients of 1 Peter. Underlying this legal statement is a mandate which has as its' objective, the equal treatment of all peoples irrespective of race, creed and gender.

This statement concerning equality forms the linchpin upon which women will now stand in order to be recognised in society, commerce and church. The question may well be asked as to how such a statement could affect the interpretation of Scripture? More specific to the question is how can a legislative statement supercede the authority of Scripture? Both of these questions can be answered with equal ease.

As was seen in ancient society the text of 1 Peter 3:1-7 was an apology against an unacceptable form of treatment. The idea of submission was imposed upon women and wives to the extent that they were being discriminated against. Into this context 1 Peter is injected. 1 Peter 3:7 and as a yardstick Ephesians 5:21² should not be overlooked and should really be seen as correctives against the idea that men are superior to women. If anything, the idea that has been set out in the Constitution is in accordance with the Biblical teaching on equality before God. This idea must be put into

² Be subject to one another out of reverence for Christ.
ὑποτασσόμενοι ἀλλήλοις ἐν φόβῳ Χριστοῦ.

practice in Christian marriages in such a way so as to ensure that husbands and wives treat each other as equals in God's sight.

Van Rensburg (1997:181) points out that certain questions are born out of the text of 1 Peter 3:1-7 which are applicatory for the present day hearer. The following schema serves as a representation of potential textual application for the modern South African Christian.

Scripture reference	verse	Teaching/s	Possible questions raised for Application	Referent
3v1	Likewise you wives, be submissive to your husbands, so that some, though they do not obey the word, may be won without a word by the behavior of their wives,	A wife must be submissive in her behaviour (cf 3v7) to her husband so that if the husband is not regenerate, he may be won over without any verbal exchange but by example.	*Am I presently exhibiting submissive behaviour to my husband? (3:7, or wife) * Do I "preach" incessantly to my husband?	Wife (a husband may also win his wife over without any verbal exchange by his example)
3v2	when they see your reverent and chaste behavior.	My life must set an example to my spouse in that I am chaste and reverent	*Does my example testify to Christ?	Wife (husband may also exhibit the same example but the text is not explicit in this regard)
3v3	Let not yours be the outward adorning with braiding of hair, decoration of gold, and wearing of fine clothing,	(Negatively) My outward adornment must not be the way in which I strive for beauty and acceptance by my marriage partner.	*What role does my outward adornment play in my relationship with my spouse?	Wife (husband may also exhibit the same example but the text is not explicit in this regard)
3v4	but let it be the hidden person of the heart with the imperishable jewel of a gentle and quiet spirit, which in God's sight is very precious.	(positively) My inward person must be gentle and quiet, which is precious to God.	*Does my inward person show itself to be gentle and quiet in my activities with my spouse?	Wife (husband may also exhibit the same example but the text is not explicit in this regard)

<p>3v5</p>	<p>So once the holy women who hoped in God used to adorn themselves and were submissive to their husbands,</p>	<p>Holy women of old who hoped in God were concerned with the inner person and they also submitted to their partners.</p>	<p>*Is my hope in God? *Do I follow the example of Sarah?</p>	<p>Wife</p>
<p>3v6</p>	<p>as Sarah obeyed Abraham, calling him lord. And you are now her children if you do right and let nothing terrify you.</p>	<p>Sarah obeyed Abraham and showed her respect for him and honored him in the way she addressed him. (Sarah is the example of a submissive wife from the time of the Old Testament)</p>	<p>*Is it evident that I respect and honor my spouse in the way that I address them? *Do I consider myself as child of Sarah and Abraham?</p>	<p>Wife (husband may also exhibit the same example but the text is not explicit in this regard)</p>
<p>3v7</p>	<p>Likewise you husbands, live considerately with your wives, bestowing honor on the woman as the weaker sex, since you are joint heirs of the grace of life, in order that your prayers may not be hindered.</p>	<p>In the same way that a wife lives her life for her husband, so he must live for her, recognising that she is the more vulnerable and physically weaker of the two. The motivation for this is because together husband and wife are co-heirs of the grace of life</p>	<p>*Am I considerate and understanding in my conduct to my wife? *Do I honor my wife as the weaker sex? *What is the present status of my prayer life? * If I am presently experiencing hindrances in my prayer life, what has been the cause?</p>	<p>Husband (The wife is implicitly implied in terms of the application of the verse even though she is not specifically addressed)</p>

5.2.2 Marriage to the man of God

The role given to the women in this second scenario is not unlike that described by the first four verses, but is further qualified by the example of Sarah. The intention of 3:5-6 is to offer an example of how a wife in the past, following the example of Sarah, lived with her Godly husband. As was mentioned earlier with reference to the modern tendency to move away from

strict patriarchy, the idea of mutual submission (cf. Ephesians 5:21) has become popular (Hurley, 1981:138-155).

1 Peter 3:5 shows Sarah as being the example that both the first reader/hearer and the contemporary reader/hearer should follow. Sarah had placed her hope in God, and adorned herself in the appropriate manner with emphasis upon the 'hidden person of the heart'. Sarah's life was also seen to be one, which exemplified submission to her husband. Peter shows his audience that the life and example of Sarah makes up the behavioural blueprint for both the wives of the non-believer and the believer alike. Sarah as an act of her submission to, and honoring of Abraham called him lord. The idea was, as already noted in chapter 4, not that the word 'lord' carried significance as such, but rather that Sarah even in the language she used, showed her respect and honor to Abraham.

In a very consistent and humble way Sarah is seen to be one whose lifestyle and conduct echo the effects of salvation. The conduct of Sarah is seen to substantiate and perpetuate her faith in God not only in theory, but also in practice.

The faithful conduct of Sarah toward Abraham and to God, serve as an example to women in South African churches insofar as they too, must qualify their holiness before God in the way in which they relate to their husbands. For the modern South African Christian woman to honor her husband not only requires her actions toward her husband to be honorable, but her words must evidence the same. It should be seen that incorporated into the example of Sarah are the tenets seen in the first four verses of this passage. Sarah is offered as an example of the godly woman who abides by the conduct required by 1 Peter 3:1-4. The latter part of verse 6 goes on to inform the reader/hearer that should they do that which is right and let nothing terrify them, they too will gain the status of being Sarah's children. Van Houwelingen (1991:112) attests to this idea with the observation that when a Christian wife demonstrates that her conduct is consequent to that of Sarah, in the way that she continually does good without "*angst*" she confirms that she has become

one of Sarah's daughters. Furthermore, she also confirms that she is conducting herself in the same spirit as typified by Sarah through her own conduct.

The last verse of this pericope (v.7) focuses on the conduct befitting the man of God. Of note is that the verse is introduced with the phrase: 'Οι ἄνδρες ὁμοίως... ("Likewise you husbands...") which qualifies the exhortation expressed to husbands in chapter 3 verse 7. In the same way that the wife lives her life for her husband, so he must live for her, recognizing that she is the more vulnerable and physically weaker of the two. Intrinsic to this verse is the idea that the husband although being physically stronger and less vulnerable than the wife is required to live considerately with his wife while honoring her as the weaker sex. The practical implication of 3:7 is that any idea, which allows for male dominance should be avoided. If the man of God lives in the light of 3:7 in treating his wife with consideration and honoring her as the weaker sex it will follow that he will not be able to dominate and take advantage of her. The theory behind the first part of this verse serves as a preventative measure against the practice of discrimination imposed upon women and wives in general by men.

The motivational premise behind this verse (3:7) is qualified by the observation that expresses the inheritance of husbands and wives (3:7b), namely that they are joint heirs of the grace of life. A warning is seen in the last part of verse 7 (i.e. 3:7c). It informs the reader/hearer that in the event that his conduct is in accordance with the whole of 3:7 his prayers will not be hindered. Conversely, if he fails to live as exhorted, his prayers will be hindered. In an implicit sense his spiritual well being may be put in jeopardy by any reluctance to put this advice into practice.

5.3 1 Peter 3:1-7 and possible questions for the 21st century

In the previous section it was seen that 1 Peter 3:1-7 is without doubt pertinent to women in South African churches. The text gives immediate

attention to the role of women within the specified context of marriage. This is further expressed and enlarged upon with reference to:

- 1) wives married to unbelieving partners and/or those partners still doubting about the Christian faith (3:1-4),
- 2) wives married to Christian husbands (3:5-6),
- 3) and lastly, Christian husbands (3:7).

While 1 Peter 3:1-7 explicitly deals with the question of conduct in marriage, it implicitly raises questions that need to be addressed by male and female alike. The present author is not suggesting for a moment that the concerned pericope has as its objective the need to answer any questions that do not arise within the context of marriage. Rather, the present author is of the opinion that the issues implied by 1 Peter 3:1-7 do have a larger field of impact. It does, however, remain something of a conundrum to delineate the extent of the possible application these verses have with respect to gender roles in church and society in general. The ensuing remarks will merely seek to raise further questions in the light of 1 Peter 3:1-7, which have potential implications on a broader scale for women in South African churches.

There can be no contention surrounding the fact that like Ephesians 5:21 Peter has marriage and the implied relationships between husbands and wives in mind, and yet, on another level the Graeco-Roman male dominant shibboleth is being challenged. In many ways the outdated mode of male dominant custom has survived the legacy of history only to find a foothold in modernity. It is here where 1 Peter 3:1-7 is of further significance and seems to raise some demands of the 21st century reader/hearer in South African churches. Surely, based on the assumption that wives and husbands are called to honor one another there must be some resulting mandate, which applies to men and women in general? Furthermore, where disparity between men and women exists, 1 Peter 3:1-7 must surely serve to bring about a more Biblical view on how men and women should relate to one another. In cases where men have incorrectly sought to substantiate their own positions of

power and autocracy by wilfully misinterpreting words like “subject” (Ephesians 5:21); “submissive” (1 Peter 3:1,5) and “obeyed” (1 Peter 3:6) the text of 1 Peter 3:1-7 surely offers a corrective. This serves to bring about an acceptable state of equilibrium between the genders.

These questions remain unanswered and therefore serve only to alert the reader to certain unacceptable patterns of behaviour still practised in South African churches and society. However, it has been seen that while certain epochs in history have been marked by male dominance over women, the time has come for a re-evaluation of these archaic practices. This is not opposed to the idea of male spiritual headship but rather seeks to bring about equality in the area of leadership, so that a balanced Biblical view of gender and equal rights may be pursued and implemented.

5.4 Conclusive summary

The goal of this chapter was to establish the role of women in South African churches in the light of 1 Peter 3:1-7. In short whilst the application of 1 Peter 3:1-7 refers to the conduct of both partners in a marriage it was also seen to be multi-functional in the sense that it offers a challenge which is not of necessity gender specific in each verse. The referent of each verse was not strictly speaking the only one implicated by that verse. In terms of the possible modern application of the individual and collective verses in 1 Peter 3:1-7 both participants in the marriage could be addressed either implicitly or explicitly. Furthermore, this Petrine pericope successfully gives clear guidelines to both marital partners as to the nature of their respective required forms of conduct.

On an entirely different and implicit level, 1 Peter 3:1-7 also gives birth to some questions which expose the need to rethink ancient sexist ideologies, which have manifest themselves in modern South African churches and society. The pericope while not being prescriptive insofar as solutions are concerned certainly does put one on the right track to solving some of the questions it poses. And even if one is dissatisfied with the possible outcomes *it presents*, there can be no avoidance of the question, which is concerned

with the disparity between the genders. These are just some of the anomalies which demand to be addressed.

CHAPTER 6

Conclusion

Having studied at some length the variants of how husbands and wives could have been understood in the context of Graeco-Roman antiquity, based upon a sample of some of the relevant writings in this regard, to conclude with the following observations have been made. Firstly, within Graeco-Roman society where the Christians addressed in 1 Peter is situated differing moral codes and belief systems are found. The belief spectrum is stretched even further by way of a number of philosophical writers who also contributed toward that ancient societies value systems.

Secondly, it must be noted that while moral and ethical codes existed such as were referring to those relationships of master to slave, child to parent and husband to wife, they were usually in accordance with the belief system from which they originated. This is why so many diverging views can be seen pertaining to the conduct and place of women in society, ranging from the suppressive inequality forced upon women to view which afforded to women many rights not available to others.

Lastly, having gained a better understanding of the social context of Graeco-Roman society with special reference to the husbands/wife code, attention was given to the current status of research on the New Testament husband/wife code. This was seen to draw upon the wealth of material used by many of the authors that have just been dealt with.

It has also been seen that research on the New Testament husband/wife code has as a field of study been well served in recent times. While many scholars have differing opinions of the nature and purpose of the *Haustafeln* genre, there can be no denying the fact that *Haustafeln* in its typical Graeco-Roman form has been embellished or "Christianised". This is seen to function in the same way as it was first used but with its object and basis being Christian.

Christian *Haustafeln* and Graeco-Roman *Haustafeln* are both seen to refer to the three pairs of relationships, namely:

Husbands and wives

Parents and children

Masters and slaves

The main concern of this the third chapter has been the relationship of husbands and wives as indicated in the New Testament.

The *Haustafeln* form, which is both paraenetic and apologetic in nature, has been observed to deal with the husband/wife pair, which is crucial for a Christian understanding of the relationship between husbands and wives.

Having investigated the New Testament *Haustafeln* the study followed the exegetical method put forward by Osborne (1991:19-62, 127-144) and was aided by Toulmin's (1969:29-73) model of analysis of argumentation so as to give a construction of the probable reception by the first reader/hearer of 1 Peter 3:1-7. Elliott (1993:9) was seen to be correct in his observation that each text as well as the context always has a further *social dimension* which becomes evident within the larger constellation of social, economic, political, and cultural current. These factors came to the fore in this investigation and have helped formulate the findings that were made.

A concept, which manifests itself in identifying the probable reception of this exhortatory passage, was that of the terms used by Peter. It certainly was noteworthy that while the first readers would have understood the idea of submission, Peter using the same term refutes the popular understanding of submission already in place. Much of what Peter communicates is seen to be juxtaposed to the Graeco-Roman way of life. What is seen then, is a blueprint for Christian living. The Christian life is also one of "submission", but not in the Graeco-Roman sense of "submission" which allowed husbands to abuse their wives. Instead, Peter is seen to show his audience what true submission really was and in so doing showed Christian wives of non-Christian husbands how to live lives pleasing to God. Unlike the pagans who were concerned with

external beauty Christian wives were rather to nurture inner beauty. I Peter serves as an apology in the sense that it contrasts the Christian life with that of the pagan.

Also of importance is the nature of Christian life amidst discrimination. It would have been very easy for the “aliens” to be assimilated into the mainstream of unbelievers and their way of life, but they are exhorted to keep their precious identity by continuing to do good even in the face of difficulties.

Lastly, in applying 1 Peter 3: 1-7 to women in South African Churches it became evident that while the concerned text still speaks to husbands and wives today, its presence as a blueprint to married couples with regard to conduct is still much needed. Furthermore, whilst the text of 1 Peter 3:1-7 does not explicitly address issues beyond the confines of marriage it must be seen as offering a challenge to society on the whole. The challenge remains implicit in the question addressing modern societal views of the place of women in that society. As has been seen, certain epochs in history have been marked by male dominance over women, the time has come for re-evaluation of archaic practices. This is not opposed to the idea of male spiritual headship but rather seeks to bring about equality in the area of leadership, so that a balanced Biblical view of gender and equal rights may be pursued and implemented.

ABSTRACT

The exhortation to wives in 1 Peter 3:1-7 to be submissive to their husbands: A socio-historic study

The focus of this thesis is centrobaric in that it gravitates toward the theory and application of the *Haustafeln* form, with reference to the relationship between husbands and wives as specified in the exhortation to wives in 1 Peter 3:1-7.

The two-fold approach utilized in this thesis is represented as follows: Firstly, the reader is introduced to the Graeco-Roman *Haustafeln* genre in broad terms, which are then narrowed down to focus on Classical references to, and occurrences of, the husband/wife code. The link is then made to the development of the "embelished" or "Christianised" form of the *Haustafeln*. The research clearly shows the relationship between the two types of *Haustafeln*. Flowing out of this investigation is the contrast between the approach by the Classical Graeco-Roman authors towards women and that of Christian New Testament authors.

Secondly, the findings already seen are applied to 1 Peter 3:1-7 in order to establish how the first readers/hearers of this paraenetic exhortation may have received the message. This idea is then transposed to the twenty-first century where it is then applied to women in South African churches.

The findings of this research demand that the reader, irrespective of gender bear cognisance of the challenge that confronts them. In an active and explicit sense males whether engaged in matrimony or celibate, are given the mandate to treat their wives considerately and with honor. Surely, it follows that in an applicable manner men in general are to conduct themselves toward women in the same way? In a passive sense women too are faced with an exhortation to be submissive to their husbands whether the men concerned are regenerate or unregenerate. In this regard, the submission of the wife is seen as being an act of willing obedience, which is two-fold in its' application. On the first level 1 Peter 3:1-4 requires this behavior of wives married to unbelieving husbands so as to win them over to Christ. The second level represented by 1 Peter 3:5-6 expresses to Christian wives of Christian husbands their need to be submissive as Sarah was to Abraham in order that they may be holy with their hope placed in God. The idea of submission at this juncture is an expression of homage to one's husband which befits the woman of God.

The implied meaning of submission in the context of 1 Peter 3:1-7 is seen to be diametrically opposed to the Graeco-Roman understanding of the word, which lent itself to be enforced in a dominant sexist manner, which allowed husbands and men in general to autocratically lord it over women. As a direct result of the imposed domination of women by men, women were not generally regarded by a male dominant society as being equals. The primary

challenge which is borne by this thesis then, is the challenge to South African society and church to eradicate behavioral practices which thrive upon incorrect, unjust and especially un-Biblical views of the relationships between men and women married or unmarried.

SAMEVATTING

Die vermaning van vroue in 1 Petrus 3:1-7 om onderworpe aan hulle mans te wees: 'n Sosio-historiese studie.

Die fokus van hierdie tesis is sentripitaal in die sin dat dit neig na die teorie en toepassing van die *Haustafeln* vorm, met verwysing na die verhouding tussen man en vrou soos gespesifiseer in die vermaning aan vroue in 1 Petrus 3:1-7.

Die tweeledige benadering wat gebruik word in hierdie tesis is as volg: Ten eerste word die leser vertrou gemaak met die Grieks-Romeins *Haustafeln* genre in breë trekke. Daar is dan 'n redusering totdat gefokus word op Klassieke verwysings tot en verskynsel van die eggenoot/eggenote kode. Die konneksie word dan gemaak met die ontwikkeling van die "verfraaide" of "verchristeliking" vorm van die *Haustafeln*. Die navorsing toon duidelik die verhouding tussen die twee tipes *Haustafeln*. Voortvloeiend uit hierdie ondersoek is die kontras tussen die benadering van die Klassieke Grieks-Romeinse outeurs teenoor vroue en die van Christen Nuwe Testament outeurs.

Tweedens word die bogenoemde bevindinge toegepas op 1 Petrus 3:1-7 om sodoende vas te stel hoe die eerste lesers/luisteraars van hierdie paraenetiese vermaning die ontvangs van die boodskap moontlik kon ervaar het. Hierdie konsep word vervolgens verplaas na die een en twintigste eeu waar dit dan toegepas word op vroue in Suid-Afrikaanse kerke.

Die bevindinge van hierdie navorsing vereis dat die leser, ongeag die geslag, bewus word van die uitdaging wat vir hulle voorlê. In 'n aktiewe en eksplisiewe sin word mans, hetsy binne 'n huwelik of selibaat, die mandaat gegee om hulle vrouens met eer en konsiderase te behandel. Dit moet tog sekerlik volg dat mans in die algemeen op 'n toepasbare wyse dieselfde teenoor vroue moet optree? In 'n passiewe sin word vroue ook gekonfronteer met 'n vermaning om onderdanig aan hulle eggenote te wees of die betrokke mans wedergebore of nie

wedergebore is nie. In hierdie verband word die onderdanigheid van die vrou gesien as 'n gewillige daad van gehoorsaamheid, wat tweeledig is in sy toepassing. Op die eerste vlak vereis 1 Petrus 3:1-4 hierdie gedrag van vroue wat getroud is met ongelowige eggenote om die eggenoot sodoende te wen vir Christus. Die tweede vlak, oorgedra deur 1 Petrus 3:5-6, gee uitdruk aan die vereiste dat Christen vroue van Christen mans onderdanig moet wees soos Sara aan Abraham, sodat hulle heilig mag wees met hulle hoop gevestig in God. Die idee van onderdanigheid by hierdie samevloeiing is 'n uitdrukking van eerbetoon aan 'n mens se eggenoot soos dit die vrou van God betaam.

Die geïmpliseerde betekenis van onderdanigheid in die konteks van 1 Petrus 3:1-7 word gesien as in direkte teenstelling tot die Grieks-Romeinse begrip van die woord. Die woord verleen homself daartoe om gebruik te word in 'n dominante seksistiese wyse, wat eggenote en mans in die algemeen toegelaat het om dit outokratiese oor vroue se koppe te swaai. As 'n direkte resultaat van die afgedwingde oorheersing van vroue deur mans, is vroue nie in die algemeen deur die manlik dominante samelewing gesien as gelyke nie. Die primêre uitdaging wat uit hierdie tesis spruit is die uitdaging aan die Suid-Afrikaanse samelewing en kerk om praktyke wat teer op inkorrekte, onregverdige en veral onbybelse siening van die verhoudings tussen mans en vroue, getroud of ongetroud, reg te stel.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- ARISTOTLE. **Politics**. (The Loeb Classical Library). London: Heinemann. 1932.
- ARISTOTLE. **Nicomachean Ethics**. (The Loeb Classical Library). London: Heinemann. 1947.
- ARISTOTLE. 1966: **Qui Ferebantur Liborum Fragmenta**. (Teubner). Stuttgart: B. G. Teubner.
- PSEUDO-ARISTOTLE. **Oeconomica and Magna Moralia**. (The Loeb Classical Library). London: Heinemann. 1935.
- BAILEY, J. L. & VANDER BROEK, L. D. 1992. *Literary Forms in the New Testament*. London: SPCK.
- BALCH, D. L. 1981. *Let Wives be Submissive: The Domestic Code in 1 Peter*. Chico: Scholars Press. (Society of Biblical Literature Monograph series, 26.)
- BALCH, D. L. 1984. *Early Christian Criticism of Patriarchal Authority: 1 Peter 2:11-3:12*. *Union Seminary Quarterly Review*, 39(3):161-173.
- BALCH, D. L. 1986. *Hellenization/Acculturation in 1 Peter*. (In Talbert, C. H., ed. *Perspectives on First Peter*. Macon, Georgia: Mercer University Press. p.3-4. NABPR Special Studies Series, 9.)
- BALCH, D. L. 1988. *Household Codes* (In Aune, D. E., ed. *Greco-Roman Literature and the New Testament: Selected Forms and Genres*. Atlanta: Scholars Press. p. 25-50.)
- BARTH, M. 1974. *Ephesians 4-6*. Anchor Bible Commentary. Garden City: Doubleday Company.
- BEARE, F. W. 1970. (3rd rev. ed.). *The First Epistle of Peter*. Oxford: Basil Blackwell.

- BEST, E. 1977. 1 Peter. The New Century Bible Commentary. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans.
- BROX, N. 1979. Der Erste Petrusbrief. Zürich: Benziger Verlag.
- BUTLER, H. E. & SMITH, M. S. 1970. Apuleias. (*In* Hammond, N. G. L. & Scullard, H. H. eds. The Oxford Classical Dictionary. Oxford : Oxford University Press. p 88)
- CARSON, D. A. 1993. New Testament Commentary Survey. (4th ed). Leicester: IVP.
- CASURELLA, A. 1996. Bibliography of Literature on First Peter. Leiden: E. J. Brill.
- CHRYSOSTOM. **Discourses**. Vol V. (The Loeb Classical Library). London: Heinemann. 1951.
- CHUNG, C. 1996. Contemporary Evangelical Discussions of Women. *Chongshin Review*, 1(1): 95-133.
- CLOWNEY, E. P. 1988. The Message of 1 Peter. The Bible Speaks Today. Leicester: Inter-Varsity Press.
- COETZEE, J.C. *et al.*. 1980. Hermeneuse van die Skrif met die oog op hedendaagse kerklike-etiese vraagstukke. *In die Skriflig*, (54):12-26,Junie.
- COETZEE, J. C. 1997. Hermeneutics and Exegesis of the New Testament. Potchefstroom.
- COHEN, S. J. D. 1986. The Political and Social History of the Jews in Greco-Roman Antiquity: The State of the Question. (*In* Kraft R. A & Nickelsburg., W.E., eds. Early Judaism and its modern Interpreters. Chico: Scholars Press. p.33-56.)
- CORLEY, K. E. 1994. 1 Peter (*In* Shüssler Fiorenza, E. Brock, A. Matthews, S., eds. Searching the Scriptures. New York: Crossroad Publishing Company. p. 349-360.)

- CORNELIUS, E. M. 2000. Androcentric language in 1 Thessalonians and its implications for South African women today. (Still to be published in *In die Skriflig*). 34(3).
- CROUCH, J. E. 1972. The origin and Intention of the Colossian Haustafel. Göttingen: Vandenhoeck und Ruprecht.
- DAVIDS, P. H. 1990. The First Epistle of Peter. New International Commentary of the New Testament. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans.
- DE BRUYN, P. 1989. Feminisme. Potchefstroom: Sentrale Publikasies.
- DE JONGE, M. 1990. Rachel's Virtuous Behavior in the *Testament of Issachar*. (In Balch, D. L., Ferguson, E., Meeks, W. A., eds. *Greeks, Romans, and Christians*. Minneapolis: Fortress Press. p.340-352.)
- DEISSMANN, A. 1927. Light From The Ancient East. New York: Doran.
- Die Grondwet: van die Republiek van Suid Afrika. 1996. Een Nasie een wet.
- DIOGENES LAERTIUS. **Lives and opinions of eminent philosophers**. Vol. 1. (The Loeb Classical Library). London: Heinemann. 1970.
- DIRLMEIER, F. 1939. Die Zeit der 'Grossen Ethik'. *Rheinisches Museum für Philologie*.(88): 214-243.
- DODDS, E. R. 1970. Middle Platonism. (In Hammond, N. G. L. & Scullard, H. H., eds. *The Oxford Classical Dictionary*. 2nd edition. Oxford: Oxford University Press. p.686.)
- DODDS, E. R. 1970. Albinus (In Hammond, N. G. L. & Scullard, H. H., eds. *The Oxford Classical Dictionary*. 2nd edition. Oxford: Oxford University Press. p 34)
- ELLIOTT, J. H. 1976. The Rehabilitation of an Exegetical Step-Child in Recent Research. *Journal of Biblical Literature*, 95(2): 243-254.
- ELLIOTT, J. H. 1990. A Home for the Homeless. Minneapolis: Fortress Press.
- ELLIOTT, J. H. 1993. What is Social Scientific Criticism? Philadelphia: Fortress Press.

EPICTETUS. *The discourses as reported by Arrian, The manual, and fragments*. Vol. 1 (The Loeb Classical Library). London: Heinemann. 1959.

FIORENZA, E. S. 1983. In Memory of Her. A Feminist Theological Reconstruction of Christian Origins. New York: Crossroad.

FIORENZA, E. S. 1990. Bread not Stone: The Challenge of Feminist Biblical Interpretation. Edinburgh: T&T Clark.

FITZGERALD, J. 1992. Haustafeln (*In: Freedman, D. N. ed. Anchor Bible Dictionary*. New York: Doubleday. Vol 3:80.)

FREND, W. H. C. 1984. The Rise of Christianity. Philadelphia: Fortress Press.

GARRETT, S. R. 1992. Sociology of early Christianity. (*In The Anchor Bible Dictionary*. New York: Doubleday. Vol 6:89-99.)

GIUSTA, M. 1964. *I dossografi di etica 1* (Università di Torino, Pubblicazioni della Facoltà di lettere e filosofia 15/3; Torino: G. Giappichelli.)

GOPPELT, L. 1978. Der erste Petrusbrief. Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht.

GOPPELT, L. 1993. A Commentary on 1 Peter. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans.

GROSS, C. D. 1989. Are The Wives Of 1 Peter 3:7 Christians? *Journal for the Study of the New Testament*, 35: 89-96.

GRUDEM, W. 1988. 1 Peter. Tyndale New Testament Commentaries. Leicester: Inter-Varsity Press.

GRUDEM, W. 1991. Wives like Sarah, and Husbands Who Honor Them. (*In. Piper, J. & Grudem, W., eds. Rediscovering Biblical Manhood and Womanhood*. Wheaton: Crossway Books. p.194-208.)

LOUW, J. P. & NIDA, E. A. 1988. Greek- English Lexicon of the New Testament Based on Semantic Domains. Vols 2. New York: United Bible Societies.

LÜHRMANN, 1980/81. Neutestamentliche Haustafeln und antike Ökonomie. *New Testament Studies*, 27: 83-97.

- HARTMAN, L. 1987. Code and context: A few reflections on the parenthesis of Col 3:6-4:1 (*In* Hawthorne, G .F. & Betz, O., eds. *Tradition and interpretation in the New Testament. Essays in Honor of Earle Ellis on the Occasion of his 60th Birthday*. Grand Rapids: Michigan. p 237-248.)
- HURLEY, J .B. 1981. *Man & Woman in Biblical Perspective*. Leicester: Inter-Varsity Press.
- JEFFERS, J .S. 1991. *Conflict at Rome*. Minneapolis: Fortress Press.
- JOSEPHUS. **The Life Against Apion**. Vol I. (The Loeb Classical Library). London: Heinemann. 1956.
- KARRIS, R.J. 1973. The Background and Significance of the Polemic of the Pastoral Epistles. *Journal of Biblical Literature*, 92: 549-564.
- KEANEY, J. J. 1970. Theophrastus (*In* Hammond, N. G. L. & Scullard, H. H., eds. *The Oxford Classical Dictionary*. Oxford: Oxford University Press. p.1058-1058.)
- KELLY, J. N. D. 1969. *A Commentary on The Epistles of Peter and of Jude*. Black's New Testament Commentaries. London: A&C Black.
- KOESTER, H. 1987. *Introduction to the New Testament*. Berlin: Walter de Gruyter & Co.
- KNIGHT, G. W. 1992. *The Pastoral Epistles. A Commentary on the Greek Text*. The New International Greek Testament Commentary. Exeter: Paternoster.
- LACEY, W. K. 1970. Woman. (*In* Hammond, N. G. L. & Scullard, H. H., eds. *The Oxford Classical Dictionary*. 2nd edition. Oxford: Oxford University Press. p.1175.)
- LINCOLN, A .T. 1990. *Ephesians*. Word Biblical Commentary. Waco: Word.
- LOHMEYER, E. 1973. *Soziale Fragen im Urchristentum*. Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft.
- LOHSE, E. 1968. *Die Briefe an die Kolosser und an Philemon*. Göttingen: Vandenhoeck und Ruprecht.

- LOUW, J. P. & NIDA, E. A. 1988. Greek- English Lexicon of the New Testament Based on Semantic Domains. Vols 2. New York: United Bible Societies.
- LÜHRMANN, 1980/81. Neutestamentliche Haustafeln und antike Ökonomie. *New Testament Studies*, 27: 83-97.
- MAGUIRE, D. 1982. The Feminization of God and Ethics. *Christianity and Crisis*, 42(4):63-64, March.
- MALHERBE, A.J. 1983. Social Aspects of Early Christianity. Philadelphia: Fortress Press.
- MALHERBE, A .J. 1986. Moral Exhortation, A Greco-Roman Sourcebook. Philadelphia: Westminster.
- MARTIN, T. W. 1992. Metaphor and Composition in 1 Peter. Atlanta: Scholars Press.
- MATTHEWS, V. H., BENJAMIN, D. C. 1993. Social world of Ancient Israel: 1250-587 BCE. Peabody: Hendrickson.
- MEEKS, W .A. 1983. The First Urban Christians. New Haven: Yale University Press.
- MEEKS, W. A. 1986. The Moral world of the First Christians. Philadelphia: Westminster Press.
- MICHAELS, J. R. 1988. I Peter. Word Biblical Commentary Waco: Word.
- O'BRIEN, P .T. 1982. Colossians, Philemon. Word Biblical Commentary Waco: Word.
- OSBORNE, G.R. 1977. Hermeneutics and Women in the Church. *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society*, 20(1): 337-352.
- OSBORNE, G.R. 1991. The hermeneutical Spiral. Downers Grove; Inter-Varsity Press.
- OWEN, G. E. L. 1970. Aristotle. (*In* Hammond, N. G. L. & Scullard, H. H., eds. The Oxford Classical Dictionary. Oxford: Oxford University Press. p.114-115.)

Bibliography

- PERKINS, P. 1995. *First and Second Peter, James, and Jude*. Louisville: John Knox Press.
- PHILO. **Special Laws**. Vol II, Vol III, Vol VIII. (The Loeb Classical Library). London: Heinemann. 1929-1962.
- PHILO. **Hypothetica**. Vol IX. (The Loeb Classical Library). London: Heinemann. 1954.
- PHILODEMI. περὶ οἰκονομίας **qui dicitur Libellus**. Jepsen, C., ed. Leipsig : B. G. Teubner, 1906.
- PLATO. **Laws**. Vol I. (The Loeb Classical Library). London: Heinemann. 1952.
- PLATO. **Republic**. Vol I. (The Loeb Classical Library). London: Heinemann. 1953.
- PLATO. **Republic**. Vol II. (The Loeb Classical Library). London: Heinemann. 1956.
- PORTER, S. E. & MCDONALD, L. M. 1995. *New Testament Introduction*. Grand Rapids: Baker Book House.
- POYTHRESS, V. S. 1991. The Church as Family: Why Male Leadership in the Family requires Male leadership in the Church. (*In* Piper, J. & Grudem, W., eds. *Recovering Biblical Manhood and Womanhood*. Wheaton: Crossway Books. p.233-247.)
- REICKE, B. 1964. *The Epistles of James, Peter and Jude*. Anchor Bible Commentary 37. Garden City: Doubleday.
- RIENECKER, F. & ROGERS, C. 1980. *Linguistic Key To The Greek New Testament*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House.
- RUETHER, R .R. 1983. *Sexism and God-talk*. London: SCM.
- ROBINSON, R. 1970. Plato. (*In* Hammond, N. G. L. & Scullard, H. H. eds. *The Oxford Classical Dictionary*. 2nd edition. Oxford: Oxford University Press. p.839-842.)
- SAMPLEY, J .P. 1971. *And the Two shall become one flesh*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

- SCHELKLE, K.H. 1964. Die Petrusbrief Der Judasbrief. Zweite, durchgesehene Auflage. Freiburg: Herder. p.86-93.
- SCHNACKENBERG, R. 1982. Der Brief an die Epheser. Zürich: Benziger/Neukirchener Verlag.
- SCHRAGE, W. 1975. Zur Ethik der neutestamentlichen Haustafeln. *New Testament Studies* 21:1-22.
- SCHRAGE, W. 1988. The Ethics of the New Testament: Edinburgh.T&T Clark.
- SCHRENK, L. P. 1990. Aristotle, Aristotelianism. (In Ferguson, E., ed. Encyclopedia of Early Christianity. New York: Garland. p.90.)
- SELWYN, E. G. 1947. (2nd edition) The First Epistle of St. Peter: The Greek Text with Introduction, Notes and Essays. London: Macmillan.
- SENECA. **Ad Lucilium Epistulae Morales**. Vol II. (The Loeb Classical Library). London: Heinemann. 1953.
- SLAUGHTER, J. R. 1996a. Winning Unbelieving Husbands To Christ (1 Peter 3:1b-4), *Bibliotheca Sacra*, 153(610): 199-211.
- SLAUGHTER, J. R. 1996b. Sarah As A Model For Christian Wives (1 Peter 3:5-6), *Bibliotheca Sacra*, 153(611): 357-365.
- STAMBAUGH, J .E. & BALCH, D .L.1986. The New Testament in Its Social Environment. Philadelphia: Westminster Press.
- STEELE, P. E. & RYRIE, C. C. 1983. Meant to Last. Wheaton: Victor.
- STOBAEUS. **Anthologium**. Vol I-V. Berlin: Weidmann. 1958.
- SYLVA, D. 1980. 1 Peter Studies: The State of the Discipline. *Biblical Theology Bulletin*, 10(4):155-163.
- TALBERT, C. H. 1986. Introduction. (In Talbert, C. H., ed. Perspectives on First Peter. Macon, Georgia: Mercer University Press. p.3-4. NABPR Special Studies Series, 9.)
- THEISSEN. G. 1974. Sozial Schichtung in der korinthischen Gemeinde. *Zeitschrift für die Neutestamentliche Wissenschaft*. 65(3-4) 232-273.

- THRAEDE, K. 1980. Zum historischen Hintergrund der 'Haustafeln' des NT
(In Frank, K. S., Dassmann, E, eds. *Pietas: Festschrift für Bernhard
Kötting*. Munich: Aschendorff. p.359-368. JAC Ergänzungsband 8.)
- THURÉN, L. 1995. *Argument and Theology in I Peter*. Sheffield: Sheffield
University Press.
- TOULMIN, S. E. 1969. *The Uses of Argument*. Cambridge: Cambridge
University Press.
- TOULMIN, S., RIEKE, R. & JANIK, A. 1984. *An Introduction to Reasoning*.
New York: Macmillan.
- VAN HOUWELINGEN, P. H. R. 1991. *1 Petrus: Rondzendbrief uit Babylon*.
Kampen: J. H. Kok B.V.
- VAN RENSBURG, F. 1997. *The Interpretation of 1 Peter for its Preaching and
Implementation*. Potchefstroom: Potchefstroom University for Christian
Higher Education.
- VAN RENSBURG, F. 1998. Christians as 'resident and visiting aliens':
implications of the exhortations to the *παρόικοι* and *παρεπιδήμιοι* in 1
Peter for the church in South Africa. *Neotestamentica*, 32(2):573-583.
- VAN WYK, G. J. & VAN RENSBURG, F. 1997. *Οἰκέται* (huisbediendes) in die
eerste-eeuse Grieks-Romeinse samelewing: 'n Sosio-historiese
konstruksie vir die interpretasie van 1 Petrus 2:18. *In Die Skriflig*,
31(3):229-249, Sep.
- VERNER, D.C. 1983. *The household of God: The Social World of the Pastoral
Epistles*. Chico: Scholars Press.
- WEHRLI, F. 1944-1959. *Die Schule des Aristoteles: Texte und Kommentar*.
10 vols. Basel: B. Schwabe.
- WEIDINGER, K. 1928. *Die Haustafeln, ein Stück urchristlicher Paraneses*.
Untersuchungen zum Neuen Testament 14. Leipzig: J.C. Heinrich.

WILHELM, F. 1915. "Die Oeconomica der Neupythagoreer Bryson, Kallikratidas, Periktione, Phintys." *Rheinisches Museum für Philologie*. 70:163-164.

WILSON, B. 1982. *Religion in a Sociological Perspective*. New York: Oxford University Press.

ZERWICK, S. J. & GROSVENOR, M. 1988. *A Grammatical Analysis of The Greek New Testament*. Rome: Editrice Pontificio Istituto Biblico.