

1 Peter 3:5

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

For after this manner in the old time the holy women also, who trusted in God, adorned themselves, being in subjection unto their own husbands:

Analysis

Peter appeals to holy women of Old Testament as examples. "For after this manner in the old time the holy women also, who trusted in God, adorned themselves" (houtōs gar pote kai hai hagiai gynaikeis hai elpizousai eis theon ekosmoun heautas). These godly women focused on internal beauty, not external adornment. Their defining characteristic: "trusted in God" (elpizousai eis theon)—hope/trust placed in God, not appearance, wealth, or human approval. The behavior: "being in subjection unto their own husbands" (hypotassomenai tois idiois andrasin)—voluntary submission characterized Old Testament godly women. This wasn't cultural accommodation but biblical pattern.

Historical Context

Peter roots New Testament instruction in Old Testament precedent, showing continuity. The patriarchal narratives present women like Sarah as examples of faith and godly character. This challenged both Jewish readers (who might dismiss wife's role) and Gentile converts (unfamiliar with biblical models). Peter emphasizes these women's trust in God as foundation for their conduct—submission flowed from faith, not fear or cultural expectation. Early church taught that biblical womanhood transcends culture, rooted in creation order and redemptive history.

Related Passages

Romans 10:9 — Confession and belief for salvation

Ephesians 2:8 — Salvation by grace through faith

James 2:17 — Faith and works

Hebrews 11:1 — Definition of faith

Study Questions

1. How does 'trusting in God' (rather than appearance or human approval) shape priorities for women and men?
2. What does it mean that biblical patterns of relationship transcend cultural accommodation?

Interlinear Text

οὕτως	γάρ	πότε	καὶ	τοῖς	ἄγιαι	γυναῖκες
after this manner	For	in the old time	also	who	the holy	women
G3779	G1063	G4218	G2532	G3588	G40	G1135
τοῖς	ἐλπίζουσαι	ἐπὶ	τοῖς	θεὸν	ἐκόσμουν	ἐαυτάς
who	trusted	in	who	God	adorned	themselves
G3588	G1679	G1909	G3588	G2316	G2885	G1438
ὑποτασσόμεναι	τοῖς	ἰδίοις	ἀνδράσιν			
being in subjection	who	unto their own	husbands			
G5293	G3588	G2398	G435			

Additional Cross-References

1 Timothy 5:5 (Faith): Now she that is a widow indeed, and desolate, trusteth in God, and continueth in supplications and prayers night and day.

1 Timothy 5:10 (Holy): Well reported of for good works; if she have brought up children, if she have lodged strangers, if she have washed the saints' feet, if she have relieved the afflicted, if she have diligently followed every good work.

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