

From the Pulpit of the Japanese Baptist Church of North Texas  
October 16, 2016

Adorning of the Heart

1 Peter 3:1-6

3:1 Likewise, wives, be subject to your own husbands, so that even if some do not obey the word, they may be won without a word by the conduct of their wives,

3:2 when they see your respectful and pure conduct.

3:3 Do not let your adorning be external--the braiding of hair and the putting on of gold jewelry, or the clothing you wear--

3:4 but let your adorning be the hidden person of the heart with the imperishable beauty of a gentle and quiet spirit, which in God's sight is very precious.

3:5 For this is how the holy women who hoped in God used to adorn themselves, by submitting to their own husbands,

3:6 as Sarah obeyed Abraham, calling him lord. And you are her children, if you do good and do not fear anything that is frightening.

### **1. Why Are Wives Subject to Husbands?**

1 Peter teaches the servants as well as the wives, which is "Serve your husband". This letter was written in the era that the husbands had a huge authority for their households. Even their wives had to call their husbands "master" and serve them like servants. In Japan, we call their husbands "master" because it came from the remain of this era. For these days, the husbands and wives are treated equally. So, what is written here is old fashion is old fashion? No, it is not. We can find the universal truth, which will not change forever. It is that the believers

in Jesus Christ are lead to the life of serving others.

The teaching to the wives starts with “likewise”. Why is it “likewise?” First, it is the same as “servants”. Like the servants serve their master, the wives should serve their husbands. There is a common point between the teaching to servants and the teaching to wives. To servants, “Servants, be subject to your masters with all respect, not only to the good and gentle but also to the unjust” (1 Peter 2:18). To wives, you need to serve “some do not obey the word” sincerely. Wives are not the servants of their husbands; however, the teaching says that the attitude of “being subject” should be like a servant to their master.

Next, the word “likewise” teaches us “like a Jesus Christ”. Jesus Christ is a supreme ruler over everything. He should be served by people; however, he became a servant, and served us who have sins in our hearts. According to Mark 10:45, “For even the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many.” The Scripture tells us that they should serve their husband not because the society demanded them to do so. Christians should serve others in societies and families because it is the universal will of God. Our master has served us by himself so that we should serve others, and this is how we live.

## **2. How Are Wives Subject to Husbands?**

However, people prefer to subject others rather than to be subject. They cannot restrain it when things don’t proceed as they expected. Moreover, they might foist their demands on God after all; they put God aside and make Him a tool for their wishes to be come true. Here

is the sin of man that denies God's sovereignty.

Many people think how satisfying it is if they don't need to concern about others and just could be as they want, and just could do what they like to do; but is it true? Man's soul wouldn't be satisfied with such things, because man is created as the image of God and could only be satisfied by following the image of God.

God created man according His image, but we lost it because of sin. We would stay ruined until the end if we don't have the image of God, and that's why God sent Jesus Christ into this world to save us. Though Jesus Christ was the perfect image of God, he thought by Himself and determined to be on the earth in order that we can get back the image of God. The Bible says, "Though he was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, but made himself nothing, taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men." (Philippians 2:6-7)

Please note that here the Scripture says, "Christ took the form of a servant." Man can take back the image of God by Jesus Christ, and the form of a servant is in the image of God. We can say that we receive the form of a servant when we receive the image of God. The image of God is the form of a servant itself. When we become the servant of God, obey Jesus Christ, and serve others, we can take back ourselves by such life style.

And the form of a servant is the adorning of the heart that the Bible commands us to have. The Bible teaches to wives, "Do not let your adorning be external--the braiding of hair and the putting on of gold jewelry, or the clothing you wear-- but let your adorning be the hidden person of the heart with the imperishable beauty of a gentle and quiet

spirit, which in God's sight is very precious.” (verses 3 and 4) This does not prohibit us from make-up or dress-up. It's important to be careful about our appearance regardless of your gender. When we dress properly, we can brace ourselves. This verse teaches that dress up your soul as you physically dress up, decorate your inside as you decorate your outside.

Psalm 96:9 says, “Worship the LORD in the splendor of holiness.” In English the holy garment is translated into “the beauty of holiness”. It points not only the apparel but also holiness and beauty of the souls of worshipers. And, the most beautiful garment we can wear is the form of a servant. It is the adorning of our inside and God seeks it in our souls.

Isaiah 53:2 says about Jesus Christ, “He had no form or majesty that we should look at him, and no beauty that we should desire him.” Jesus crucified on the cross may be ugly and horrible for those who don't know the meaning of the cross of Jesus Christ. Contrary to this, for those who were saved, Jesus in the Passion and the cross are the most beautiful ones. It was the crown of thorns and not the adornment of gold, which Jesus had on His head; and this shines God's love more than any adorning. The Bible teaches wives and husbands, women and men, all who believe in Jesus Christ, not to put golden adornment that implies the attitude of selfishness, but to take the form of a servant as the adorning of the heart. This is the attitude of being subject that Jesus put on.

### **3. What Is the Power of Being Subject?**

Many people think that being subject and serve others never change

the situation. Jesus said, “Do not resist the one who is evil. But if anyone slaps you on the right cheek, turn to him the other also.” (Matthew 5:39) But someone may argue that DV becomes worse if wives follow this teaching. Jesus presented the principle not the solution for each case in his teaching. He taught us to end the chain of revenge while people are trying to “give somebody a dose of one's own medicine.” When we apply his teaching to issues of our society, we have to examine each case based on the principle that Jesus taught.

However, we need the attitude of being subject in any situations. “Being subject” is not the weak attitude. It is the power to change the situation. Though Gandhi was a Hindu, he learned non-violent resistance from the teaching of Jesus and won the independence of India. Rev. Martin-Luther King heard about Gandhi and thought if Hindu followed the teaching of Jesus, Christian should follow it. Rev. King remained in the non-violent resistance when the civil rights movement went to violence.

In Japan, before World War II, Christians of the Salvation Army worked for saving prostitutes sold for money. They always encountered disturbance by *yakuza*. *Yakuza* attacked Christians punching and kicking knowing Christians never return them by violence. Christians just waited for police. Christians in Japan also witnessed Jesus Christ and saved many by being subject to the people. These Christians were not weak persons. They were brave people. Therefore they could being subject in such violence. They fought against evil and defeated it. The person who can be subject to others is the person who has a power in the heart.

Today’s reading teaches to wives saying, “even if some do not obey

the word, they may be won without a word by the conduct of their wives, when they see your respectful and pure conduct.” “Some do not obey the word” means husbands who are not yet Christians. Christian wives hear criticism about faith from their husbands. If wives do not argue against such criticism by word but serve them by conduct, husbands will know that the faith is true and obey the Word of God.

This is true in the case between Christian husband and non-Christian wife, or Christian child and non-Christian parent. We can hear a lot of testimonies from around us that husbands were won without a word by the conduct of their wives, or wives were won without a word by the conduct of their husbands. If husband and wife, or parent and child, are self-assertive each other, the home became dark and miserable place without ceasing fights. If our families became miserable, we cannot be happy even we are successful in our society. If family members are subject each other, our home becomes happy place. Our home never be happy place without efforts. When we nature our “being subject” heart and make efforts to put into practice, we have a happy home.

However, we cannot be willingly subject to family and others by our own power. We cannot do without receiving the heart and power to be subject through faith in Jesus Christ. The power of being subject came from Christ. Because it’s the power of Christ, “being subject” has a big power and can lead people to salvation and change family and society. Let us seek for experiencing the power of “being subject” and witness Jesus Christ.

## **(Prayer)**

Dear heavenly Father, we are saved and changed since Lord Jesus were subject to you and served even sinners. We believe our family also be saved when we follow the example of Lord Jesus and learn “being subject” and do it. Make the image of servant our adorning of the heart. In the name of Lord Jesus, Amen.