

## ADORNING THE DOCTRINE

In Titus 2:1 Paul instructs Titus to "...speak thou the things which become sound doctrine." Later, in this same chapter, he tells Titus to "Exhort servants to be obedient unto their own masters, and to please them well in all things; not answering again; Not purloining, but shewing all good fidelity; that they may adorn the doctrine of God our Saviour in all things" (Titus 2:9,10). These verses clearly indicate that there is speech and behavior that is not only becoming or befitting to sound doctrine, but will "adorn the doctrine of God". This being true, we should each strive for that kind of speech and conduct.

The word "adorn" means: "to add beauty to; to make greater the splendor or honor of." What a challenging thought that I may be able to "add beauty to or make greater the splendor" of the doctrine of God. How is this possible? Surely, I can do nothing to improve upon the doctrine of God. God's word is perfect (See James 1:25; 2 Tim. 3:16). Any change that anyone would make in the doctrine would detract from it and pervert it. However, Paul says it is possible to "adorn the doctrine of God."

I can adorn the doctrine of God by living in such a way that I make the doctrine more appealing to others. How many have been turned away from the truth because they have seen hypocrisy in the lives of those who claimed to follow the truth? On the other hand, there have been many who have eventually obeyed the truth because they observed the influence of that truth in the life of someone around them. This is the point Peter makes in 1 Peter 3:1,2 where he says, "Likewise, ye wives, be in subjection to your own husbands; that, if any obey not the word, they also may without the word be won by the conversation of the wives; While they behold your chaste conversation coupled with fear." I know of men who are faithfully serving the Lord today because their wives "adorned the doctrine of God."

I can also "adorn the doctrine of God" by refusing to compromise truth with error. It may take courage and it may demand sacrifice or suffering on my part, but if I refuse to compromise the truth others will be made to realize how valuable the truth really is. On the other hand, if I compromise the truth every time I encounter some temptation or difficulty, I am telling those who observe my life that here is something that has little or no value since I am willing to compromise it in the face of temptation.

I "adorn the doctrine of God" whenever I show that I believe "not in word only" but "in deed." James says, "But be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves. For if any be a hearer of the word, and not a doer, he is like unto a man beholding his natural face in a glass: But whoso looketh into the perfect law of liberty, and continueth therein, he being not a forgetful hearer, but a doer of the work, this man shall be blessed in his deed" (James 1:22-25).

The person who is "on again, off again" fails to "adorn the doctrine of God." The life of a faithful child of God is marked with stability and steadfastness. In writing to the Corinthians, Paul says, "Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye stedfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord" (I Cor. 15:58).

What about your life? Does the doctrine of God appear more attractive to others as they observe your life?

✍ James Hahn