

# THE BELLEVILLE MESSENGER

September 12

2021

## 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*

# DISTINCTIVE PREACHING

For some time I, and others, have expressed concern about the kind of preaching that is being done in many places today. In expressing this concern I have frequently said that much of the preaching that is being done today could be done in any denominational church without any change and it would be accepted.

Some have interpreted this concern as saying that our "difference from denominations" is the measuring stick for our preaching. No one that I know who has expressed this concern over the lack of distinctive preaching has suggested that this is the measuring stick for our preaching nor have they lamented over the lack of "church of Christ" doctrine in the preaching being done. In fact, the men I have heard expressing concern over the kind of preaching being done have been the ones who have spoken out against the denominational concept of the church and are the ones who emphasize the distinctive message of God's word. They are the ones insisting that the word of God is the only standard of authority and that we must respect that authority. When this kind of preaching is done on a regular basis you will be teaching men and women what they must do to be saved; that Christ is THE way and that He is the Saviour of THE church (Acts 2:38; John 14:6; Eph. 5:25). We are not talking about lessons from time to time that may deal with some Bible character or lessons from his life. We are talking about a compromising spirit on the part of far too many who will not preach what the word of God teaches on the plan of salvation, the church, the work of the church, the worship of the church, the organization of the church or the truth on many other moral and doctrinal issues.

I am ready to affirm that when we preach the gospel in its purity and completeness that teaching will not be accepted by denominationalists, not because we have sought to "offend the denominations", but because it is the truth. Brethren, don't be

deceived into thinking that the willingness of denominations to accept certain lessons you may preach is an indication of their "closeness to the truth." That acceptance is based on the fact that the particular lesson may be something with which they agree. For example, I could go to a Baptist Church and preach a lesson showing from the scriptures that baptism is an immersion and every word I say be true and be accepted by them but that would not mean they were "close to the truth" on what the Bible teaches concerning baptism. They still deny the truth on baptism and its purpose.

We need to realize that when we seem to be closer to the denominations than we used to be it is not due to the denominations coming closer to the truth; it is due to our leaving the truth. It is a shame when men are criticized and misrepresented when they make an appeal to get back to preaching that will convict men and women of their sins and teach them what they must do to be saved. This kind of preaching will not be accepted by the denominations but it will be pleasing to God and that's what is of real importance.

*✍ James Hahn*

## Belleville church of Christ

5635 S County Rd 200E - Belleville, IN - (317) 539-5258

[www.bellevillechurch.net](http://www.bellevillechurch.net)

### Schedule of Services

Sunday Bible Study .....	9:30 a.m.
Sunday Morning Worship .....	10:30 a.m.
Sunday Evening Worship .....	5:00 p.m.
Wednesday Bible Study .....	7:00 p.m.

### Evangelist

Brad Phillips..... (765) 720-2816