

Adorning the Gospel

Titus 2:10

I. INTRODUCTION: I

1. **2** This is the time of the year that most folks try to make their home and yard look nice.
 - A. I love to plant flowers; I planted oodles of flower seeds, bulbs, bedding plants and ferns.
 - B. Most want their place to look attractive; they “*adorn*” it in various ways (e.g., my “new yard”).
2. To “*adorn*” means “to make more pleasing, attractive, impressive; to enhance, beautify; to garnish; to embellish (Dictionary.com).”
3. We all know the value of adornment.
 - A. We adorn a Christmas tree with ornaments to make it look better.
 - B. A young man that’s interested in the attention of a young woman adorns himself (e.g., shaves, haircut, nice clothes) to appeal to her; a young woman will similar things.
4. However, Satan used this principle in leading Eve into sin; he adorned the forbidden fruit by promising it could deliver more than God said it could (Gen. 3:5-6).
5. Satan uses this principle today:
 - A. He makes liquor and beer look attractive (e.g., contrast commercials vs. **Prov. 23:31-32:** “*Do not look on the wine when it is red, when it sparkles in the cup, when it swirls around smoothly; 32 At the last it bites like a serpent, and stings like a viper.*”).
 - B. He makes fornication look attractive (**Prov. 6:25:** “*Do not lust after her beauty in your heart, Nor let her allure you with her eyelids. 26 For by means of a harlot A man is reduced to a crust of bread; And an adulteress will prey upon his precious life. 27 Can a man take fire to his bosom, And his clothes not be burned? 28 Can one walk on hot coals, And his feet not be seared?*”).
6. God expects Christians to “*adorn the doctrine of God our Savior in all things*” (Titus 2:10).
 - A. The NIV says we are to “*make the teaching about God our Savior attractive.*”
 - B. We have the obligation to make living the Christian life attractive to our fellowman.

Matt. 5:14-16: “*You are the light of the world. A city that is set on a hill cannot be hidden. 15 Nor do they light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on a lampstand, and it gives light to all who are in the house. 16 Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven.*”

Phil. 1:27: “*Only let your conduct be worthy of the gospel of Christ...*”

1 Pet. 3:3-4: “*Do not let your adornment be merely outward — arranging the hair, wearing gold, or putting on fine apparel — 4 rather let it be the hidden person of the heart, with the incorruptible beauty of a gentle and quiet spirit, which is very precious in the sight of God.*”
7. As Christians we can very easily cause people to lose their appetite for the truth because of the way we have failed to adorn the doctrine of Christ in our lives:

Rom. 2:24: “*For ‘the name of God is blasphemed among the Gentiles because of you,’ as it is written.*”
8. **3** Let us look at some of the things that we should do to make the gospel attractive. We could call this lesson “Making Christianity Attractive.”

We adorn God's Word and make the gospel attractive by doing...

I. 4 Good works:

A. We need to care about the message we are sending the world by our Christian "way of life":

2 Cor. 3:2-3: "You are our epistle written in our hearts, known and read by all men; 3 clearly you are an epistle of Christ..."

1 Pet. 2:12: "having your conduct honorable among the Gentiles, that when they speak against you as evildoers, they may, by your good works which they observe, glorify God in the day of visitation."

Matt. 5:16: "In the same way, let your light shine before men, that they may see your good deeds and praise your Father in heaven."

1 Cor. 15:58: "Therefore, my beloved brethren, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that your labor is not in vain in the Lord."

Titus 2:14: "who gave Himself for us, that He might redeem us from every lawless deed and purify for Himself His own special people, zealous for good works."

B. What are some "good works" we should "walk in"? **Eph. 2:10:** "For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them."

(1) The most important good work is sharing the gospel with others (Acts 8:4).

(2) But, we need to remember the words of Theodore Roosevelt: **"People don't care how much you know until they know how much you care."**

(a) Show true interest in their soul rather than in winning an argument (**Acts 26:29:** "And Paul said, 'I would to God that not only you, but also all who hear me today, might become both almost and altogether such as I am, except for these chains.'").

(b) Taking care of the needs of others (Matt. 25:31-46; Jas. 1:27).

(3) Our life in general: if you were arrested for being a Christian would there be enough evidence to convict you?

1 Pet. 2:12: "having your conduct honorable among the Gentiles, that when they speak against you as evildoers, they may, by your good works which they observe, glorify God in the day of visitation."

2 Cor. 8:21: "providing honorable things, not only in the sight of the Lord, but also in the sight of men."

Phil. 2:14-15: "Do all things without complaining and disputing, 15 that you may become blameless and harmless, children of God without fault in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation, among whom you shine as lights in the world,"

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2. 5 Love for others:

A. The love Christians have for one another totally differentiates us from the world:

Jn. 13:34-35: "A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another; as I have loved you, that you also love one another. 35 By this all will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another."

B. God uses love to make the gospel attractive to us; therefore, we need to do the same!

Jn. 3:16: “For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.”

Rom. 5: 8: “But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.”; **Rom. 8:31-32:** “What then shall we say to these things? If God is for us, who can be against us? 32 He who did not spare His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not with Him also freely give us all things?”

2 Cor. 5:14: “For the love of Christ compels us, because we judge thus: that if One died for all, then all died; 15 and He died for all, that those who live should live no longer for themselves, but for Him who died for them and rose again.”

- C. Hatred and bitterness among brethren does not make the gospel attractive to the world (**Gal. 5:14-15:** “For all the law is fulfilled in one word, even in this: ‘You shall love your neighbor as yourself.’ 15 But if you bite and devour one another, beware lest you be consumed by one another!”).
- (1) The root of bitterness can destroy families, the church and communities (**Heb. 12:15; Eph. 4:31-32:** “Let all bitterness, wrath, anger, clamor, and evil speaking be put away from you, with all malice. 32 And be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God in Christ forgave you.”).
- (2) My attitude affects other people (**Num. 14:1:** “So all the congregation lifted up their voices and cried, and the people wept that night.”; **Phil. 2:14-15:** “Do all things without complaining and disputing, 15 that you may become blameless and harmless, children of God without fault in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation, among whom you shine as lights in the world.”).

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3. 6 Speech:

- A. Our manner of speech is a very important part of the Christian life. Our speech is powerful! **Prov. 18:21:** “Death and life are in the power of the tongue...”; cf. Jas. 3:1-12
- ✓ Must be seasoned: **Col. 4:8:** “Let your speech always be with grace, seasoned with salt, that you may know how you ought to answer each one.”; Jas. 1:19
 - ✓ Wise: **Psa. 37:30:** “The mouth of the righteous speaks wisdom, and his tongue talks of justice.”
 - ✓ Wholesome: **Prov. 15:4:** “A wholesome tongue is a tree of life, but perverseness in it breaks the spirit.”
 - ✓ Knowledgeable: **Prov. 15:7:** “The lips of the wise disperse knowledge, but the heart of the fool does not do so.”
 - ✓ Fit for the occasion: **Prov. 25:11:** “A word fitly spoken is like apples of gold in settings of silver.”
 - ✓ Gracious: **Eccl. 10:12-14:** “The words of a wise man’s mouth are gracious, but the lips of a fool shall swallow him up; 13 The words of his mouth begin with foolishness, And the end of his talk is raving madness. 14 A fool also multiplies words.”
- B. Very importantly, our speech reveals the condition of our heart:
- Matt. 12: 34-37:** “Brood of vipers! How can you, being evil, speak good things? For out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks. 35 A good man out of the good treasure of his heart brings forth good things, and an evil man out of the evil treasure brings forth evil things. 36 But I say to you that for every idle word men may speak, they will give account of it in the day of judgment. 37 For by your words you will be justified, and by your words you will be condemned.”

- C. We should strive to build up others with our speech:

Eph. 4: 29, 32: *“Let no corrupt word proceed out of your mouth, but what is good for necessary edification, that it may impart grace to the hearers. 32 And be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God in Christ forgave you.”*

We adorn God’s Word and make the gospel attractive through our...

4. 7 Unity:

- A. Jesus prayed that all would be united (**Jn. 17: 20-21:** *“I do not pray for these alone, but also for those who will believe in Me through their word; 21 that they all may be one, as You, Father, are in Me, and I in You; that they also may be one in Us, that the world may believe that You sent Me.”*; disunity causes unbelief).
- B. Paul pleaded for unity (**1 Cor. 1:10:** *“Now I plead with you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that you all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you, but that you be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment.”*).
- C. God gave a plan for unity (**Eph. 4:4-6:** *“one body...one Spirit...one hope...one Lord...one faith...one baptism...one God...”*).
- D. The Jerusalem church had perfect unity (**Acts 4:32:** *“Now the multitude of those who believed were of one heart and one soul...”*).
- E. Unity is good and pleasant (**Psa. 133:1:** *“Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity! 2 It is like the precious oil upon the head,”*).
- F. We must endeavor to keep the unity of the Spirit (Eph. 4:3). Who would ever be attracted to the gospel by a divided people, constantly bickering and criticizing one another?! Jn. 17:21

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5. 8 Peace of mind:

- A. Everybody seeks peace of mind; someone wisely said: *“There is no greater wealth in this world than peace of mind.”*
- B. Peace of mind should be one of the outstanding characteristics of every faithful Christian:
Phil. 4:4, 6-7: *“Rejoice in the Lord always. Again I will say, rejoice! 6 Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God; 7 and the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.”*
- C. How do we find such peace of mind in this crazy world?
- (1) If we seek God first He guarantees He will take care of us: **Matt. 6:33-34:** *“But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you. 34 Therefore do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about its own things. Sufficient for the day is its own trouble.”*
- (2) Man can do nothing to us to rob us of this peace because God is on our side: **Heb. 13:5-6:** *“Let your conduct be without covetousness; be content with such things as you have. For He Himself has said, ‘I will never leave you nor forsake you.’ 6 So we may boldly say: ‘The LORD is my helper; I will not fear. What can man do to me?’”*
- D. The world is looking everywhere for this kind of Christian today.

- (1) How effective is our example if we go about as if we were nursed on vinegar and weaned on a pickle?
- (2) We can take strength in knowing God is for us! **Rom. 8:31-32:** *“If God is for us, who can be against us? 32 He who did not spare His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not with Him also freely give us all things?”*
- E. When we are as unhappy and afraid as people of the world, we don’t make the gospel one bit attractive; most people are as happy as they allow themselves to be (**Phil. 4:11:** *“I have learned in whatever state I am, to be content...”*; Heb. 13:5).

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6. 9 Consistency:

- A. The inconsistency of the Jew made Judaism unattractive to the Gentiles (**Rom. 2:17-24**).
- B. Some of our inconsistencies: Some say they believe the Bible, but:
 - (1) Forsake the assemblies (Acts 2:42; Heb. 10:25; Acts 20:7).
 - (2) Try to worship with a heart of bitterness (Matt. 5:23-24).
 - (3) Say they love God, but don’t love the brethren (**1 Jn. 4:20-21:** *“If someone says, ‘I love God,’ and hates his brother, he is a liar; for he who does not love his brother whom he has seen, how can he love God whom he has not seen? 21 And this commandment we have from Him: that he who loves God must love his brother also.”*).
 - (4) Say we want to go to heaven, but we are not spiritually minded (**Col. 3:1-3:** *“If then you were raised with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ is, sitting at the right hand of God. 2 Set your mind on things above, not on things on the earth. 3 For you died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God.”*).
- C. Nothing more quickly and completely damages the effectiveness of one’s Christian example than when our lives are inconsistent with what we profess to believe.

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7. 10 Consecration and devotion:

- A. Paul was such a wonderful example of this:

Gal. 2:20: *“I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me.”*

1 Cor. 9:27: *“But I discipline my body and bring it into subjection, lest, when I have preached to others, I myself should become disqualified.”*
- B. There is no chance for us to attract someone to the gospel if we only make a half-hearted attempt ourselves (e.g., heroes attract admiration due to their consecration and devotion.)

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8. 11 Constancy:

- A. One of the human traits we most admire is constancy; “stick with-it-ness” (e.g., movie “Rudy”): 1 Cor. 15:58; 1 Pet. 3: 15; 2 Tim. 4:2
- B. Christians who are constant in their duty:
 - (1) Make a big impact on the local work.

- (2) And, attract people to the truth.

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9. **12** Doing our best:

- A. The world is littered with talented people who failed to find success because they didn't give it their best.
 - (1) Nobody wants that said of them: "Oh, he had loads of talent, but he flopped because he didn't strive to do his best!"
 - (2) Half-hearted Christians NEVER make the gospel attractive to anyone.
- B. The church at Laodicea was not attractive (Rev. 3:14-22).
- C. We admire the widow who gave the two mites because she did her best (Mk. 12:41-44).
- D. Even though we are imperfect, the gospel will have appeal if we do our best!

III. CONCLUSION: 13

1. Let us recognize we have the power to make the gospel attractive to others.
2. We have the truth! God's Word!
3. But we can detract or attract others to the truth by our lives.
4. Which will it be?!

Adapted from a sermon ("Adorning the Doctrine of God Our Savior In All Things") by Donald Townsley.