

Proper Adornment

“Exhort servants to be in subjection to their own masters, and to be well-pleasing to them in all things; not gainsaying; not purloining, but showing all good fidelity; that they may adorn the doctrine of God our Savior in all things” (Titus 2:9-10).

The “adorning” of which Paul speaks is “to put in order, that is decorate.” When the child of God considers their relationship with God, and how it is viewed by the world, it is easily understood that proper conduct is to be highly prized. Peter said, “And who is he that will harm you, if ye be zealous of that which is good? But even if ye should suffer for righteousness’ sake, blessed are ye: and fear not their fear, neither be troubled; but sanctify in your hearts Christ as Lord: being ready always to give answer to every man that asketh you a reason concerning the hope that is in you, yet with meekness and fear: having a good conscience; that, wherein ye are spoken against, they may be put to shame who revile your good manner of life in Christ” (1 Peter 3:13-16). This same sentiment was professed by the Lord, saying, “Even so let your light shine before men; that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father who is in heaven” (Matthew 5:16). It is evident, from these passages, that the child of God will be seen by the world, and judged: what does the world see in your life?

Examples carry a strong influence: examples of good as well as evil. The Hebrew writer used examples of faith, to those who were being persecuted, to give them strength and encouragement.

When the Hebrew writer addressed his audience, he said, “call to remembrance the former days, in which, after ye were enlightened, ye endured a great conflict of sufferings; partly being made a gazingstock both by reproaches and afflictions; and partly, becoming partakers with them that were so used. For ye both had compassion on them that were in bonds, and took joyfully the spoiling of your possessions, knowing that ye have for yourselves a better possession and an abiding one. Cast not away therefore your boldness, which hath great recompense of reward. For ye have need of patience, that having done the will of God, ye may receive the promise” (Hebrews 10:32-36).

The scriptures reveal that the children of God can become fearful or doubting in their faith. You may recall the appeal of Asaph, saying, “Surely God is good to Israel, even to such as are pure in heart, But as for me, my feet were almost gone; my steps had well nigh slipped” (Psalms 73:1-2).

The very nature of the child of God's confession draws a line in the sand regarding worldly living. Yes, often times, questions of equity arise in the mind. Paul told the brethren of Thessalonica, "when we were with you, we told you beforehand that we are to suffer affliction; even as it came to pass, and ye know" (1 Thessalonians 3:4).

What type of example will you be to those with whom you come into contact? Will you allow the world to dictate your actions, or will you do as Paul instructed the Corinthians, saying, "Watch ye, stand fast in the faith, quit you like men, be strong" (1 Corinthians 16:13).

Remember the words of the Lord, saying, "A disciple is not above his teacher, nor a servant above his lord. It is enough for the disciple that he be as his teacher, and the servant as his lord. If they have called the master of the house Beelzebub, how much more them of his household" (Matthew 10:24-25). ret