

# THE BELLEVILLE MESSENGER

August 24

2008

**Editor's Note:** I wrote the following article some time ago but I thought it good to reprint the article as the thoughts contained in the article are thoughts that need to be impressed upon the mind of every Christian. *JH*)



## 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*" (1 Corinthians 15:58).

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

*JH* James Hahn

## A Bit of Methodist History Concerning Instrumental Music

[Note: Many of our readers are probably aware that instrumental music was not used in the worship of the first century church. In fact, instruments were not introduced into the Roman Catholic Church until more than 600 years after time of Christ. The Greek Orthodox Church has been very slow to allow them. Most of the major Protestant churches began without them. Robert Turner makes an interesting observation along these lines in the following article.]

While in Bangor, Maine, in bro. Ralph Smart's study, I had opportunity to examine a book called: HYMN STUDIES - ANNOTATED METHODIST HYMNAL by Charles S. Nutter, Tilton, New Hampshire; Feb. 15, 1884. On page 18 of this book there was hymn no. 27, "Praise The Lord." We give the first and fourth stanzas:

1. Praise the Lord! his glories show, Saints within his courts below, Angels round his throne above, All that see and share his love.
4. Strings and voices, hands and hearts In the concert bear your parts; All that breathe, your Lord adore, Praise him, praise him evermore!  
- Henry F. Lyte, Alt

What interested us particularly was the comment which followed the above hymn. Mr. Nutter, author of this Methodist Hymnal, said: "The fourth stanza would not have been admitted into any hymn book by the early Methodist. Instruments of music in the church, and especially those with strings" were an abomination to them.

Dr. Adam Clarke [noted Methodist commentator] said, "Music as a science I admire; but instruments of music in the house of God I abominate and abhor."

John Wesley ["founder" of Methodism] said, "I have no objection to instruments of music in our chapels, provided they are neither heard nor seen."

Readers of church history are familiar with these "quotes" - but in a Methodist Hymnal??? Hummmmm!!

*Robert Turner*

## "Religious News"

The local newspaper has a page devoted to "Religious News." This page contains information on the various activities of churches in the area. I find it interesting that there is hardly ever any mention of Bible study or preaching of the gospel on this page. There are announcements of picnics, rummage sales, entertainment by various celebrities or various social or entertainment events.

These announcements reflect the attitude that prevails on the part of many in our society. Many look upon churches simply as some type of social or country club to serve and fulfill the social and physical needs of mankind.

We need to realize that Jesus did not establish the church to fulfill the social or physical needs of mankind. Many social and benevolent organizations founded by men can accomplish this. However, man's greatest need, salvation from sin, cannot be accomplished by man or institutions of men. Paul said the gospel of Christ is the power of God unto salvation (Romans 1:16). The church, purchased by the blood of Christ (Acts 20:28), must be busy preaching that gospel that souls may be saved.

*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**

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

#### **Elders**

Charles Carpenter. . . . (317) 839-3873  
James Hahn. . . . . (317) 745-1507

#### **Deacons**

Leon Nevins . . . . . (317) 272-2966  
Don Perry. . . . . (765) 676-5825  
Alvin Stanley. . . . . (317) 831-3514

#### **Evangelist**

James Hahn. . . . . (317) 745-1507