

## Sunday Morning Message

December 9, 2012

Christmas Decorations

Text - Titus 2

Congregational Reading – Titus 2:6 - 10

Joke – Four Stages of Life in a Man

1. He believes in Santa Claus.
2. He doesn't believe in Santa Claus.
3. He is Santa Claus.
4. He LOOKS like Santa Claus.

### Introduction

#### Read Titus 2

Notice – v. 7 the phrase “shewing thyself a pattern”; and then again “shewing incorruptness, gravity, sincerity”.

Notice also in v. 10 the word “adorn”. The Greek word that is translated “adorn” here in Titus 2:10 is the word “kosmeo”, which means to arrange in order, or to decorate or ornament.

Sometimes this Greek word, “kosmeo” is translated into the word “garnish”:

*“And the foundations of the wall of the city were garnished with all manner of precious stones. The first foundation was jasper; the second, sapphire; the third, a chalcedony; the fourth, an emerald;” - (Revelation 21:19)*

The precious stones are ornaments, and serve to make Heaven more beautiful.

In fancy restaurants they will garnish the plates of food. It makes the food look better.

We understand what it means to adorn, garnish, or decorate.

More than any other time of the year, Christmas is the time for decorations:

Americans this year will spend an estimated \$6 Billion on Christmas decorations. The average American will spend nearly \$700 on Christmas – Approximately \$90 of that will be spent on decorations.<sup>1</sup>

We decorate our homes with lights.

Illustration – “Keith Shaw is just your average guy with a passion for the holidays, and that’s why his Christmas Spectacular on Main Street in Cranbury, New Jersey, is a must-see. His 36-foot-tall Christmas tree is a towering spectacle with over 50,000 lights — that’s more than the Rockefeller Plaza tree! Each show features 120,000 lights and musical synchronization all in one yard.”<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> <https://lendedu.com/blog/cost-of-christmas/>

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.thedailymeal.com/best-christmas-lights-in-every-state-photos-slideshow/slide-31>

The Apruzzi Family in Old Bridge, NJ is facing fines of \$3,000.00 per day from the township because of the traffic problems caused by his Christmas Light display, which has grown through the years and has cost him nearly \$150,000.00.<sup>3</sup>

We buy Christmas trees and decorate them with ornaments.

We adorn our presents with colorful wrapping paper, ribbons, and bows.

Even here at the church, we have purchased these poinsettia plants, and have put up a tree with lights and bows. There are wreaths on our front door. These are all ornaments, or decorations. They are designed to reflect in a visible, outward way, the spirit of the Christmas holiday.

Our text today tells us that there are ways that we can “adorn” in a visible way the doctrine of the Saviour that we have received on the inside. We can make God and the Christian faith look good to those around us. Adorning or garnishing or decorating the doctrine of God is the best kind of decoration that we can display, not only at Christmas, but also throughout the rest of the year.

## I The Purpose of Adorning

### 1 To Glorify God

*"Ye that fear the LORD, praise him; all ye the seed of Jacob, glorify him; and fear him, all ye the seed of Israel." - (Psalm 22:23)*

*"O magnify the LORD with me, and let us exalt his name together." - (Psalm 34:3)*

*"Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ: According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love: Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will, To the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved. In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace; Wherein he hath abounded toward us in all wisdom and prudence; Having made known unto us the mystery of his will, according to his good pleasure which he hath purposed in himself: That in the dispensation of the fulness of times he might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth; even in him: In whom also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestinated according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will: That we should be to the praise of his glory, who first trusted in Christ. In whom ye also trusted, after that ye heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation: in whom also after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that holy Spirit of promise, Which is the earnest of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, unto the praise of his glory." - (Ephesians 1:3-14)*

Perhaps our primary job here on this earth is to glorify God – to make God look good.

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<sup>3</sup> <https://www.cbsnews.com/news/new-jersey-family-faces-thousands-in-fines-christmas-light-display/>

## 2 Because We Are the “Go-Between” between Him and this World.

*"Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new. And all things are of God, who hath reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ, and hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation; To wit, that God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them; and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation. Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us: we pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God. For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him." - (2 Corinthians 5:17-21)*

## II Preparations for Adorning

The adorning that we are talking about here are more spiritual than physical, although they do involve the physical somewhat; therefore the preparations will be primarily spiritual as well.

### 1 Prayer

Confess your sins to make sure there is nothing hindering your ability to glorify and represent God

Pray that you will be a good testimony.

Pray for the people that you will meet.

Pray for patience with people.

Pray for boldness to speak up for the Lord:

Peter and John:

*"And now, Lord, behold their threatenings: and grant unto thy servants, that with all boldness they may speak thy word," - (Acts 4:29)*

Paul:

*"For I know that this shall turn to my salvation through your prayer, and the supply of the Spirit of Jesus Christ, According to my earnest expectation and my hope, that in nothing I shall be ashamed, but that with all boldness, as always, so now also Christ shall be magnified in my body, whether it be by life, or by death. For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain." - (Philippians 1:19-21)*

Pray for victory over temptation.

### 2 Bible Reading and Study

Bible study will teach you the principles, and give you the tools that you need to represent the Lord well.

### 3 Preaching

Preaching will provide the motivation.

## III The Practice of Adorning

*"I will therefore that men pray every where, lifting up holy hands, without wrath and doubting. In like manner also, that women adorn themselves in modest apparel, with shamefacedness and sobriety; not with broided hair, or gold, or pearls, or costly array; But (which becometh women professing godliness) with good works." - (1 Timothy 2:8-10 KJV)*

The adorning that glorifies God is not so much about what we wear, or how we look, as it is about how we live, and what we do.

*"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. Whose adorning let it not be that outward adorning of plaiting the hair, and of wearing of gold, or of putting on of apparel; But let it be the hidden man of the heart, in that which is not corruptible, even the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price. For after this manner in the old time the holy women also, who trusted in God, adorned themselves, being in subjection unto their own husbands: Even as Sara obeyed Abraham, calling him lord: whose daughters ye are, as long as ye do well, and are not afraid with any amazement." - (1 Peter 3:1-6 KJV)*

How can you adorn the doctrine of God? How can you make your faith in God look good to this world?

**Stay faithful to God** – the world can see if you are faithful or not. Put God first in your life. Don't let anything take the place of God in your list of priorities. Your job cannot come before God. Your hobbies cannot come before God. Your relationships with anyone else, including your family, cannot come before your relationship with God.

**Live separately from the world** – when the Christian participates in the ungodly practices of this world, he does the exact opposite of adorning the doctrines of God. He actually detracts from glorifying God; and will be ineffective as God's ambassador.

**Speak the truth in love** – look for opportunities to tell people about the wonderful grace of God.

**Show Love to People** – "They will know we are Christians by our love."

**Conclusion** – Instead of (or in addition to) decorating for Christmas this year, why don't you decorate your faith in Christ.

### **Illustration – 1 Corinthians 13 (Christmas Version)**

If I decorate my house perfectly with plaid bows, strands of twinkling lights, and shiny balls; but do not have love, I'm just another decorator.

If I slave away in the kitchen, baking dozens of Christmas cookies, preparing gourmet meals, and arranging a beautifully adorned table at mealtime; but do not have love, I'm just another cook.

If I work at a soup kitchen, carol in the nursing home, and give all that I have to charity; but do not have love, it profits me nothing.

If I trim the spruce with shimmering angels, and crocheted snowflakes, attend a myriad of holiday parties, and sing in the choir's cantata; but do not focus on Christ, I have missed the point.

Love stops the cooking to hug the child. Love sets aside the decorating to kiss the spouse. Love is kind, though harried and tired. Love does not envy another's home that has coordinated Christmas china and table linens. Love does not yell at the kids to get out of the way, but is thankful they are there to be in the way.

Love does not give only to those who are able to give in return, but rejoices in giving to those who cannot. Love bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, and endures all things. Love never fails.

Toys will break, pearl necklaces will be lost, golf clubs will rust; but giving the gift of love will endure.