

Who is going to harm you if you are eager to do good? But even if you should suffer for what is right, you are blessed. "Do not fear what they fear; do not be frightened." But in your hearts set apart Christ as Lord. Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have. But do this with gentleness and respect, keeping a clear conscience, so that those who speak maliciously against your good behavior in Christ may be ashamed of their slander. (1 Peter 3:13–16, NIV84)

Did you know that yesterday, June 14, was Flag Day? Having a son in the military, Janet and I like to show our patriotism by constantly flying the American flag. We even have a light to illuminate it, so we can fly it at night.

A couple weeks ago, when all the violent protests broke out around our country in response to the death of George Floyd, we heard reports that in Kenosha County, residents of houses where the American flag was being flown were being targeted by having rocks thrown through their windows. Not wanting to invite such an attack, we took down our flag at night, and when we went out of town recently we left our flag inside.

Perhaps you've seen the brave slogan associated with the American flag: "These Colors Don't Run!" Well, apparently in my case, they do.

As Christians, do we proudly and boldly fly the "flag" of Christ in our lives? Do we let it be known to anyone and everyone that we are followers of Jesus Christ, or when in certain crowds and around certain people, do we roll up our Christian banner and hide it away so as not to draw fire?

I think it is fair to say that none of us wants to invite an attack from hostile unbelievers, but that's not really our call. Our God is with us and will never leave us and He says: "Do not fear what they fear; do not be frightened." There are far more important things in the life of a Christian than avoiding persecution. If, in His wisdom, God allows us to suffer for the sake of the Name of Jesus, He will also strengthen and uphold us to endure that suffering. Peter says, "If you should suffer for what is right, you are blessed."

Join me then in unfurling the "flag" of Christ and lift high His cross, proclaiming His love "...Till all the world adore His sacred Name."

Emboldened in Christ with you,
Pastor Golm

P.S. Just a reminder: we will resume in-person services at Messiah on Sunday, June 21st at 9:30 a.m. I hope to see you there!

June 15

The Life of Adornment

Adorn the doctrine of God, our Savior, in all things. Titus 2:10

A jewelry salesman spent an autumn evening painting storm windows. The following morning, as he took his place behind a counter of sparkling necklaces, he became painfully aware of his soiled hands.

"Of all people", he thought to himself, "I should have hands that are immaculately clean. There is nothing more unfitting than to offer a string of pearls for sale when one's fingers look soiled and stained. Hands like mine make a poor background for precious jewelry."

The jeweler was right. Stained hands were not meant to sell dazzling pearls. And neither were blemished lives meant to sell the pearl of great price. The man whose life has become soiled and stained by all manner of bad habits will not be an effective salesman for the Gospel of our Lord.

Christ does not expect us to make his Gospel unattractive to the unchurched and to the unbelieving by our careless speech and conduct. On the contrary, he expects us to make the Gospel attractive by our lives of love and consistent Christian virtues. This applies both to our lives as individuals and to our life as a Christian congregation.

The Bible tells us that we are to "adorn the doctrine of God, our Savior, in all things". Our lives are to be proper settings for the pearl of great price which the Christian Gospel offers. Our lives are to be adornments for the Gospel. What a precious privilege! What a tremendous responsibility!

Are our hands clean? Are we fit salesmen for our Lord? If not, let us plead for pardon, and strength to think and live in a manner that adorns his precious Gospel message.

Lord, may I adorn Your precious Gospel with a Christian life. Amen.

(Devotion from: Daily Walk With God - Meditations for Every Day, by Herman W. Gockel)