

*by Karen Anderson*



### ***Dorian Gray and his portrait***

Every moment of every day creates a pattern like a beautiful tapestry that shows how you live your life. It reminds of the story of Dorian Gray by Oscar Wilde. A portrait is done of this young man who was cultured, wealthy, and handsomely beautiful. Dorian is upset by the conversation going on in the room that beauty and youth fade day by day. At that point, Dorian curses his portrait, which he believes will one day remind him of the beauty he will have lost. In his distress, he pledges his soul, if only the painting could bear the burden of age and cruelty, allowing him to stay young forever. As the story unfolds, you see more and more examples of Dorian's life of sin and corruption, and as expected, those acts of cruelty show up on the portrait while Dorian remains unharmed by his lifestyle. Later, Dorian resolves to confess his crimes, but the portrait again shows the truth of his thoughts, which are a lie. In anger, Dorian tries to destroy the painting. When the servants come into the room after a loud crash, they find the portrait, unharmed, showing the beautiful young man, Dorian Gray. On the floor lies the body of an old man, horribly wrinkled and disfigured, with a knife plunged into his heart.

Now this is an extreme example of what happened to the young man, but when you think about it, is it really? I want to remind you that God is watching your tapestry develop moment-by-moment. Would He be happy the way your tapestry is coming together? I used to

## God's Tapestry

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do a lot of hand embroidery and needlepoint. When I look at the underside of the work, it is messy with lots of knots and threads hanging down. Even though it's my personal handiwork, I try and make the back fairly clean and filled in. It still isn't as lovely as the actual picture itself. The finished product turns out so wonderful that it is ready for framing. Once it is framed, you would no longer see the back with the mess of knots; but a lovely picture before you.

How are you feeling about your life? Are you living the life God wants for you, or does it lean towards the story of Dorian Gray? You may be saying, "Well, I would never do, say, or act like Dorian Gray." That may be true, but what about that time when you had an unkind word about someone just because you were angry? Maybe you have a lustful thought about another person. You might like to read articles, magazines or watch something on television that is not appropriate in God's eyes. Will you then see the distorted or ugly threads mar your beautiful tapestry? You may not be able to relate to these examples, but there are others like bad habits, addictions, wrong words, or things that will destroy the lovely work of your life. Did you know that God can help you even with these things? God's says, "Finally, brothers, whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable if anything is excellent or praiseworthy think about such things."

None of us are perfect in our lives. The only place you will be perfect is when you are in Heaven with God. All you can do is your best, but it will be easier if you weigh your actions, including your thoughts and words, against what God wants for your life. It's time to continue your journey in life. I don't know about you, but I will walk hand-in-hand with my Lord, and He will get me through the obstacles in my life. I want my tapestry to be lovely to His eye and to mine when I am with Him for all eternity.

PASSAGE: Philippians 4:8 (NIV)

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