

“Glory In Their Shame”

I was having a good day ... until Facebook reminded me that people are susceptible to the “the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life” (1 John 2:16). These are not from the Father, but are from “the world” (v. 17). “The world” is synonymous with walking “according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience: Among whom also we all had our conversation in times past in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind; and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others” (Ephesians 2:2-3).

This isn't just an article about Facebook; it can apply to all social media, texts, emails, or any other means of communication, including the spoken word. How you communicate shows something about you. Jesus said, “But those things which proceed out of the mouth come forth from the heart; and they defile the man. For out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, blasphemies” (Matthew 15:18-19). What proceeds out of a man can come from his fingers as well as his mouth.

In Philippians 3:17-19, Paul wrote, “Brethren, be followers together of me, and mark them which walk so as ye have us for an ensample. (For many walk, of whom I have told you often, and now tell you even weeping, that they are the enemies of the cross of Christ: Whose end is destruction, whose God is their belly, and whose glory is in their shame, who mind earthly things.)” While Paul wanted all Christians to follow him, sadly this will not be the case. There will be “enemies of the cross of Christ,” and sometimes those enemies are in the Lord's church. The ultimate end for such persons is “destruction,” i.e. eternal damnation. “Their god is their stomach” suggests people who indulged in unrighteousness without restraint (Romans 16:18; 1 Corinthians 6:13; Jude 11). Notice that the “enemies of the cross of Christ” gloried in their shame. The Contemporary English Version translates the phrase “brag about the disgusting things they do.” The final description characterizes these “enemies of the cross of Christ” as continually minding what is earthly and carnal when they should be focusing on what is heavenly and spiritual (Colossians 3:1-2).

We can see the same attitude now when people blatantly post on social media or send something via text or email that is profane, immodest, or sacrilegious. Not only is it done, but it is done with smiling faces and happy emojis! It is people glorying in their shame! “Shame” in the text of Philippians refers to a person, action, or situation that brings a loss of respect or honor. When people see you in revealing clothes, or read your inappropriate texts or emails, or hear the euphemistic and off-color language you use, it brings a loss of respect or honor to yourself and your Lord. Your life becomes a disgrace to the name you claim to bear. It should be your craving to “walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called” (Ephesians 4:1), not soil it with ungodly conduct.

This article is not intended to be harsh or mean. I want nothing more than for you and your conduct to glorify God. I want you to show “forth the praises of him who hath called

you out of darkness into his marvellous light” (1 Peter 2:9). Don’t let yourself have any agreement or participation with anything that even looks like wickedness — on the screen or in real life. Ephesians 5:11-12 says, “And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them. For it is a shame even to speak of those things which are done of them in secret.” Your body is your tool to be used for good, and that is why Paul wrote, “What? know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God’s” (1 Corinthians 6:19-20). While the “enemies of the cross of Christ” can expect “destruction,” John affirms, “he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever” (1 John 2:17). What is the will of God? “For this is the will of God, even your sanctification ...” (1 Thessalonians 4:3). “Be ye holy” (1 Peter 1:16) by watching what you post, say, and do.

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