

Enemies Of Christ's Cross

"For many walk, of whom I told you often, and now tell you weeping, that they are enemies of the cross of Christ, whose end is perdition, whose god is the belly, and whose glory is in their shame, who mind earthly things" (Phil. 3:18-19).

It was earlier shown that those of whom Paul writes here, those who profess to be friends of Christ, were actually enemies: they worked against the thing for which Christ died. It has been seen that perdition is the destiny which awaits such ones.

"Walk" very often is a word which denotes one's manner of life. Certainly in this Philippian passage, that is its meaning. Paul writes there are three things which characterize those who are "enemies of the cross." These enemies have as their god, their belly. "Belly" here stands for appetites; cravings, desires, lusts. It stands for all of man's desires and cravings, not simply an appetite for food (for frequently one will deprive the body of that desire) but a craving to fill any desire the body ("belly") may have. Some may desire to have a slick, smooth, physical frame, envied by those of the same sex, lusted after by those of the opposite sex. When one's belly is one's god; he makes that lust the ultimate of all things.

Those who walk as "enemies of the cross" are those who "glory in their shame." Things they should be ashamed of are things they rejoice in! In the Ephesian letter Paul wrote, "For the things which are done of them in secret it is a shame even to speak of" (Eph. 4:12). Some boast in unrighteousness and some are so hardened in their lusts they are as people in Jeremiah's day: a people who cannot blush (Jer. 8:12). People boast of our "open society" in which homosexuals openly admit their "nature" and band with others to promote their sinful deeds. Rather than being ashamed of their deeds, they glory publicly in their "different life style."

"Who mind earthly things." With some, whose aspirations and hope ought to be on heaven, they think of nothing except this present, fleeting life. For such "Christians" we should remember Paul's words to Colossians: "If then ye be risen with Christ, seek the things which are above, where Christ is, seated on the right hand of God. Set your mind on things that are above, not on the things that are upon the earth" (Col. 3:1f). Jesus said, "Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon the earth, where moth and rust consume, and where thieves break through and steal: but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth consume, and where thieves do not break through nor steal: for where thy treasure is, there will

thy heart be also" (Mt. 6:19-21). Where are we laying up our treasures, dear brethren?

Jim McDonald