**Topic:** Paul mentions enemies of the cross of Christ

**Date:** November 6, 2019

**Introduction:** In his epistle to the Philippians the Apostle Paul speaks of ones that are “…the enemies of the cross of Christ…”, elaborating on their “end”, “belly”, “glory” and what it is that they “mind”. The matter was of such importance to Paul that it caused him to weep.

Paul said to the Corinthians “…the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness…” then referring to those that were not saved. 1Corinthians 1:18

Paul also said that he had been sent to preach the gospel, though not with wisdom of (men’s) words, “…lest the cross of Christ should be made of none effect.” 1Corinthians 1:17

Paul shows that the wisdom of man is hostile to the cross of Christ.

Who are these that are as Paul describes? How are we to understand who it is that are such enemies? What are the wisdom of words that would have such an effect on the cross of Christ?

**Study:**

Read: Philippians 3:13-21

1. Verse 13 What did Paul leave behind? See Philippians 3:2-7
2. Verse 14 What did Paul press toward…”?

“mark” = goal; the end one has in view. A watchman

“high” = that which is above; of heaven

“calling” 1Thessalonians 4:16-17

1. Verse 15-16 Considering what Paul has left behind and is making progress in attaining, how

are those many as be perfect to “walk”?

“perfect” = mature

To what “…same rule…” is Paul referring? See Philippians 3:13-14

1. Verse 17 Who is the believer to follow?

“followers together” = imitators of others

“mark” = observe

“ensample” = of men worthy of imitation; a figure formed by the impression of a die.

Some Bible commentators twist this instruction of Paul. They assert that Paul

does not mean the believer should follow Paul any further than he in his imitation of Christ. Others suggest that Paul is writing to, “…my fellow imitators of Christ…”.

1. Verse 18 “enemies of the cross of Christ” = by implication the atoning work of Christ on

the cross.

enemy/enemies = hostile, hateful, opposing

What did God do to change us “…when we were enemies…”? Romans 5:10

Why was the Apostle Paul considered an enemy; what reason? Galatians 4:16

What was it that once made one alienated and an enemy? Colossians 1:20-22

How does Paul instruct the believer to respond “…if any man obey not our

word by this epistle…”? 2Thessalonians 3:14-15

1. Verse 19 Observe Paul’s use of the same words “destruction”, “belly”, “shame” and

“earthly” in the following references.

“whose end is destruction” Romans 9:18-24 “…destruction…”

(destruction = ruin)

“whose God is their belly” Romans 16:17-18 “…belly…”

(belly = inner most part of a man, thought, feeling, choice; figuratively: the heart)

“whose glory is in their shame” 2Corinthians 4:1-2 (Note: “dishonesty”

same Greek word translated “shame”.)

(shame = ignominy, disgrace, dishonour)

“who mind earthly things” Colossians 3:1-7 “…earth…”

(earthly = worldly: physically or morally)

1. Verse 20-21 How does Paul conclude; to what was he looking forward?

“conversation” = citizenship

“vile” = sinful, worthless, despicable, body of humiliation

“glorious” = splendor, brightness

“working” = efficiency, power

“subdue” = subordinate, control

**Conclusion:**

Philippians 3:21 Who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself.