

Sunday, April 6, 2014

Their glory is in their shame

In the Epistle to the Philippians, St. Paul speaks about those who defected from the faith after they were noted for their spiritual ministry: *“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 set their mind on earthly things.”* (Philippians 3:18-19)

I pondered upon the expression *“Their glory is in their shame”*! How could someone’s glory be in something shameful?

A normal person is ashamed if his faults are exposed, and he tries to quietly get rid of them. The Holy Scriptures emphasize this notion, *“Righteousness exalts a nation, but sin is a reproach to any people.”* (Proverbs 14:34). How could someone brag about their sins and disgraces and take pride in them overtly as though they are a crown of glory that adorns them?

Undoubtedly, this is not a normal behavior and it also reveals an inner distortion to the personality caused by the sin.

When a person allows sin to coexist in his life, not only it coexists within, but it also tries feverishly to reign over his life until it completely destroys him. It appears to me that **bragging about sins and shameful acts is a defensive mechanism that the devil uses to fortify the presence of sin within man. He, the devil, does so in order to circumvent any attempt of repentance that may spring within the heart.**

Let’s see some contemporary examples that depict the meaning of *“Their glor is in their shame”*:

- + **Those who write vulgar novels or any literature that contains sexual connotations** and consider that to be creative art. They take pride in their filthy product considering it great glory uncondemning themselves with the stumbling of the reader.
- + **Those who wear provocative wardrobe** and consider this an elegant fashion and style, although decent clothing doesn’t lower the value of a woman, but to the contrary, it gives her beauty and honor.
- + **Those who show themselves as heroes because they can drink so much Alcohol without getting drunk.**
- + **Those who brag about their unclean romantic encounters with the opposite sex**, bragging about how attractive they are and how many people they can trick.
- + **Those who publicly proclaim atheism, insult God, and mock the believers** instead of seeking the Truth with a humble heart.
- + **Those who boast in their violent acts, thuggery, and disobeying the law** instead of being orderly and respecting humanity.
- + **Those who boast in judging the clergy, expose their shortcomings**, and slander them on social media websites without first paying attention to the plank in their own eyes (Matthew 7:1-5)
- + **Those who pride themselves in reciting lewd songs or post nude pictures on their social media pages with no shame.**

Those and others, regarding them, St. Paul teaches us to remember them with tears in our prayers *“That they may come to their senses and escape the snare of the devil, having been taken captive by him to do his will.”* (2 Timothy 2:25-26).

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