



CORNELIUS  
ministries

# REFLECTIONS *from* ROME



## Why Are We Not Crying?

**I remember, when watching a movie with my boys, that sometimes the kids would ask me if I was crying, when they noticed a tear running down my cheek.** My lovely wife does the same thing, for she knows when to look, and her words ring like a challenge: "Are you crying again?" She knows what kind of movies and scenes make me tear up.

*For many, of whom I have often told you and now tell you even with tears, walk as enemies of the cross of Christ. Their end is destruction, their god is their belly, and they glory in their shame, with minds set on earthly things.* Philippians 3:18-19

Paul is writing to his beloved church in Philippi, and as he thinks of the believers he cannot help but cry, because of the danger of false influences upon their thinking. This is not a new warning, as he had told them before, in person and in the preceding words, to beware of such men.

Can you imagine the scene? Paul is dictating the letter and whoever is carefully writing his words for him looks up to see this seasoned evangelist and pastor, crying. Paul tells him to write down that he is crying, with no shame for his tears - for they are simply the tender expression of his love, his concern and his warning.

Never before had Paul written that he was crying, as he was writing his letters. But crying was not new to Paul's ministry. Speaking to the Ephesian elders, he reminded them of the way he had ministered among them.

*Therefore be alert, remembering that for three years I did not cease night or day to admonish every one with tears.* Acts 20:31

For Paul, it was normal to admonish the believers, night and day, with tears. His tears were not driven by his suffering or fear, but by his genuine concern for those to whom he was ministering. He knew their names, he knew their trials, their sinfulness, and was very aware of the external dangers to their spiritual lives. He wanted them to progress in their sanctification; he wanted them to resemble Christ more every day.

What were the evil characteristics of those who wanted to influence the Philippian believers? There were at least five!

- They are enemies of the Gospel message
- They are headed for destruction
- They are driven by their pleasure
- They boast in their sin
- They live for what is earthly

How many people today are enemies of the Gospel? Anyone who adulterates the Gospel by adding or watering down the message is an enemy of the pure Gospel. The evangelical church has become soft in their warning against false religions. The Roman Catholic church continues today to add meritorious works to the Gospel. Evangelical leaders are softening the Gospel, as they have relinquished any kind need for purity and the Lordship of Christ. We cannot deny that these voices are filtering into the church.

Those who live according to these truths are headed for destruction, which is sad in itself, but they are also leading people down a path of destruction. Can the faithful believers look the other way and not be overwhelmed by sadness, as they watch professing believers on that path away from truth, heading for the time when Christ's words, "I never knew you", will resonate in their ears? It is natural for man to be driven by his own desires, but has the church embraced a narcissistic view of Christianity? Churches where self-gratification and self-indulgence have become acceptable, where any kind of warning is dismissed with the accusation of legalism, are surrounding us, and their sinfulness is set aside by the boasting of numbers and the popularity of their preachers. Are we concerned about the voices that influence believers through television and internet, where superficial teachings are proliferating?

Licentious living is the norm in our society. In his letter to the Romans, Paul wrote that ungodly men not only commit sin, but approve those who do it. When the church allows this kind of subtle mindset to enter in, true believers cannot remain indifferent, not be moved to tears, as they watch people wrecking their lives.

The living for what is earthly mindset has infiltrated the church so much that it is surprising that any believers are still able to make a distinction between a heavenly mindset and an earthly one. Where are the Thessalonians, whose reputation was that they had turned from their idols to worship and serve the living God and lived expecting the imminent return of the Lord?

Today, evangelicals endorse religious leaders whose teachings should drive them to their knees, asking God for protection of their churches. Political leaders seemingly embrace Christianity as a way to promote their own success, and the church watches without concern and tears, as these ungodly men gain influence within the flock.

We cannot be surprised that this is the state of our fallen world, but we must be alarmed that we have stopped weeping about it. The Apostle Paul bid farewell to the Ephesians elders, warning them to watch carefully, as he entrusted them and their church into the care of God and the influence of His Word.

Please pray for us in Italy, as we minister in season and out of season, that we would not only be faithful to precise expository preaching and teaching of the whole counsel of God, but that we would be driven to our knees in prayer and continually faithful to warn and admonish those under our influence with loving, concerned tears.

May the Lord lead you, as you live for the Lord and influence others. Our children and grandchildren and all our loves ones are living in an ever-increasing ungodly world.

**If you would like to support our ministry to Italy**

BY CHEQUE: please send your tax deductible gifts to:

**CORNELIUS MINISTRIES**

**55 South Main Street #164**

**Oberlin, OH 44074**

Mark on the memo line or on a separate note:

"For the ministry of David and Loredana Standridge"

ONLINE: at [www.corneliusministries.org](http://www.corneliusministries.org)