

The Man Who Will Not Compromise

Psalm 141

Introduction: 1) One of the most difficult, if not the most difficult, Christian disciplines is prayer.

2) Jesus gives us a “model” for prayer in the greatest sermon ever preached, His Sermon on the Mount. We find it in Matthew 6:9-13 and its parallel account in Luke 11:2-4. A quartet is found from the pen of King David in Psalms 140-143.

3) In Psalm 141, we find a prayer for sanctification and protection crafted as a wisdom psalm, where David asks the Lord for guidance and deliverance as he seeks to live a life without compromise to the glory of God.

I. He will ask the Lord for help. 141:1-2

A life without compromise will run to the Lord. In the psalm, David actually asked the Lord to run to Him! Perhaps he was trapped (v. 9)!

- 1) Call on the Lord. 141:1
 - Twice David cries or calls to *Yahweh* (Jehovah). There is desperation in his voice as he asks the Lord to 1) make haste (*NIV*, “come quickly”) and 2) give ear to my voice.
- 2) Worship the Lord. 141:2
 - Urgency is complemented by worship. The Lord he runs to is the Lord he worships.
 - Let my prayer be as incense means let my prayer be a sweet aroma and a pleasing offering.
 - Lifting up of the hands (cf. Ps. 134:2) was a demonstration of worship and adoration. Reference to the evening sacrifice (note the word “as”) may indicate this was a prayer prayed at night as he prepared to go to bed, a prayer he voiced after a long and difficult day.

II. He will ask the Lord for wisdom. 141:3-4

- James 1:5 says, “if any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask of God who gives to all liberally and without reproach, and it will be given to him.”
 - “Wisdom is the ability to see life as God sees it and then respond as He would.”
- 1) Give me wisdom with my words. 141:3
 - James 3:1-12 provides an expanded commentary on the trouble with the tongue.
 - 2) Give me wisdom in my heart. 141:4
 - (cf. Proverbs 4:23; Jeremiah 17:9)
 - David knew, as must we, the deceptive power of the heart. He knew we all need a “spiritual heart transplant.” Jesus taught us to pray, “Lead us not into temptation” (Matthew 6:13).
 - 3) Give me wisdom in my actions. 141:4
 - David notes the close connection between what I think and what I do. If my heart is leaning toward evil it will eventually do evil.
 - Jesus powerfully reinforces this in Mark 7:21-23.
 - 4) Give me wisdom with my companions. 141:4
 - Often Satan tempts us thru our companions.
 - David warns us concerning those who are evildoers, but whose evil is camouflaged with delicacies. These are men of influence and status, popular and powerful, whose wealth and position allow them to enjoy the “finer things of life” as the world measures things.

III. He will ask the Lord for good friends. 141:5

- Good friends are 1) few in number, 2) valuable beyond words and 3) essential to a consistent walk with God over a lifetime.

- Your friends will influence you. No debate. No question about it.
- 1) Let them rebuke me when I need it.
 - It is actually an act of “hesed” (*NASV*, “kindness”; *HCSB*, “faithful love”)
 - In *The Jesus Storybook Bible: Every Story Whispers His Name*, such love, whose origin is always God, is said to be, “never stopping, never giving up, un-breaking, always and forever love.”
 - 2) Let me receive it when they do it.
 - How do you handle rebuke and correction? It is not easy to receive for any of us.
 - “Lord, let me see it as *hesed*.” Lord, let me receive it as excellent oil and an act of honor and respect. Remember Proverbs 27:6, “Faithful are the wounds of a friend.”

IV. He will ask the Lord for vindication. 141:5-7

- Once again we encounter what is called an imprecatory psalm where the psalmist prays in very strong language for God to judge his enemies. Ultimately because of their evil, they are the enemies of God. And yet do not miss the redemptive note in this stanza, tucked away at the end of v. 6.
- 1) Ask Him to judge the works of the wicked. 141:5-7
 - David will continually pray against evil and those determined to do evil (v. 5).
 - He asks God to throw them off the side of the cliff (v. 6).
He asks God to scatter their bones so that they do not even receive a decent burial (v. 7). This would point to there being under God’s curse and judgment. (cf. Revelation 6-19).
 - 2) Ask Him to approve the words of the righteous. 141:6

V. He will ask the Lord for protection. 141:8-10

- 1) Look to Him. 141:8
 - David will keep his eyes on his king, Yahweh his Lord (*NIV*, “O Sovereign Lord”). He will strive to maintain a Godward, heavenly perspective (cf. Col. 3:1-4).
- 2) Flee to Him. 141:8-10
 - We must run to our Lord taking refuge in Him (v. 8).
 - We must ask the Lord to “not make my soul bare,” “give us over to death” (*NIV*) (v. 8).
 - We must ask the Lord to keep us from the snares and traps laid for us by these workers of evil. (v. 9).
 - Indeed, we may pray that they are actually ensnared by their own evil devices (boomerang judgment) which God allows us in grace to safely escape.

Conclusion:

- The man who will not compromise is an incredible individual. I am not sure I have ever met such a man who completely and fully fulfills the portrait we see in Psalm 141. But then I turn to Jesus and I do meet such a man. Here I discover a man who in times of trouble:
- 1) Asked the Lord for help (Hebrews 5:7).
 - 2) Asked the Lord for wisdom (Mark 1:35).
 - 3) Asked the Lord for good friends (Luke 4:12-13).
 - 4) Asked the Lord for vindication (John 17:1).
 - 5) Asked the Lord for protection (Luke 23:46).
- Here is the man who would not compromise! Here is the man we have as an example. Here is the one who enables us to live as we ought. Here is the God we honor and worship and run to that we may live a life without compromise.