

Lesson 148
Psalm 140-143 (Part 2)

- I. Introduction
 - A. We will continue to study Psalms 138-145, the last eight written by King David, as a unit of study. Last week, we saw the connectivity and harmony between the Psalms regarding the comfort of God's sovereignty over us, the boldness we can have in confidence in His word, and the humility we need to be dependent upon Him.
 - B. We spent the last half of the study focusing on Psalm 140 and how David prayed for God to deliver and preserve him from all his enemies. We saw the plan and purpose of the enemy, their desires against us, and the means they use to make us stumble. The Psalm reminded us of the motives behind the attacks and the truths about how they will get worse and worse, but finally, will be defeated. We saw Christ in His life as the example to us!
 - C. Today, we will look at Psalm 141 to see how we can benefit from David's four-fold prayer regarding "a safeguard against wickedness" and its application to our life in today's wicked culture. Could this Psalm be the result of I Samuel 24?
 - D. Spurgeon said, "this Psalm teaches us that prayer is the great engine to overthrow and rout my spiritual enemies, the great means to procure the graces of which I stand in hourly need." Lawson comments, "all can pray, and all must pray. Prayer moves the invisible hand that moves the world. Prayer is mighty because it summons the divine power to accomplish his sovereign will. Prayer unleashes the power of God to do the will of God. No Christian's ministry or life will advance any further than his prayers. There is no greater need than to pray."
- II. David's prayer of haste and desperation. (v1,2)
 - A. Urgency of the prayer. There is a tone of emergency to David's prayer. The verb cry out, mentioned twice in verse one, is the Hebrew word qara which means to call aloud, to roar, to proclaim, to preach! Although we do not know the specific context of this prayer, we do know David was compelled to ask God to pay specific attention to this request. (Ps 138:7,8, 142:1, 143:1,3,11)
 - B. Lessons about prayer (v2)
 1. Let it be pleasing. David asks that his prayer be acceptable as the burnt offerings and the offering of incense. (Ex 30:7,8, 29:38,39) Our prayers must be offered daily, consistently, in a disciplined manner. E.M. Bounds says this about prayer, "the men who have done the most for God in this world have been early on their knees. He who fritters away the early morning, its opportunities and freshness, in other pursuits than seeking God, will make poor headway seeking him the rest of the day. If God is not first in our thoughts in the morning, he will be the last place the remainder of the day."
 2. From Holy hands. David asked that his prayers come from a "Godly lifestyle." (Ps 143:6) David, in Psalm 66:18 said, "if I regard iniquity in my heart the LORD will not hear my prayers." (Isaiah 59:1,2) The lifting up of the hands illustrates humility, dependence, and obedience in trusting God! What else hinders our prayers?
- III. David's prayer for personal righteousness (v3-5)
 - A. Put a guard over my mouth. David desired to be separate and distinct from the ways of his enemies and the wicked. They were guilty of slander, lies, poisonous accusations, and malicious intent to harm. (Ps 140:3,11, 139:20-22, 143:12) We cannot worship God and curse man who is made in God's image! (James 3:1-12) We are to act like Jesus! (Isaiah 53:7,9, 42:1-4; Matt 11:28-29, 5:44)
 - B. Do not incline my heart to any evil thing. Spurgeon says, "it is equivalent to the petition of lead us not into temptation. David is asking that nothing would excite our desires in a wrong direction. The Psalmist is here careful of his heart. He who holds the heart is lord of the man; but if the tongue and heart are under God's care all is safe. Let us pray that he may never leave us to our own inclining's, or we shall soon decline from the right." (Prov 4:23; Jer 17:9; Matt 15:11,18)
 - C. Keep me from bad company, men who practice wicked works. Spurgeon comments, "if we collaborate with them, we shall soon eat with them. If we would not sin with men, we had better not sit with them, and if we would not share their wickedness, we must not share their wantonness." This illustrates multiple principles: bad company corrupts good mores, a little leaven leavens the whole lump, do not befriend an angry man lest you learn his ways, we are to consider the delicacies of the wicked. (1 Cor 5:6-12; Prov 23:1-3, 22:24,25) Our tendencies are to become like the people we spend time with; they drag us down, we usually do not lift them up!
 - D. Godly friends help us in righteousness(v5). In contrast to bad company, true faithful friends encourage us in our walk of holiness!
 1. Honest reproof (Proverbs 27:5-6, 9-10, 14,17) What is a friend who will be real blessing to my soul? A true friend: (1) watches over me and knows the wayward tendencies within me, (2) rebukes me in love, with kindness and consideration for my best interests (3) does not flatter me excessively (4) sharpens me intellectually and theologically, challenges me to a Godly lifestyle.
 2. Brings refreshment, safety. (Prov 11:14b, 12:15,17-22, 13:10,20)
- IV. David's prayer against enemies (v5b-7,10) As I mentioned in the introduction, could these verses be taken in the context of I Sam 24:11-22? David prays this imprecatory prayer which rightly predicts the fall of the wicked and exaltation of the righteous.
- V. David's prayer of devotion to his God (v8-10) David trusted that God would not leave his inner man (soul) exposed, empty, dishonored, or uncovered. David kept his eyes upon Elohim, his master and Lord! (Ps 142:5; Dt 33:27; 2 Sam 22:3; Ps 46:1, 71:7)