

## Psalm 141 — “An Evening Prayer for Your Spiritual Growth & for God’s Protection! A Model Prayer for ‘Ending the Day with God!’”

**\*\*READ THE TEXT\*\***

### INTRO-

#### *Introductory Illustration*

- “Prayer is our drawing near to God, lifting up our souls to Him, & pouring out our hearts to Him.” (Matthew Henry in the beginning of his book: *Method for Prayer*)
  - >> a golden thread of HEART-PRAYER must run through the web of the whole Christian life
- Matthew Henry -- 17th c. Puritan -- gifted scholar, faithful pastor, prolific author & well-known bible commentator. He wrote much on prayer.
- **he has 3 discourses that are fairly well known...**
  1. how to **begin** every day with God (Ps 5.3)
  2. how to **spend** the day with God (Ps 25.5)
  3. how to **close** the day with God (Ps 4.8)  
**Ps 141 is *how to close your day with God.***
- Matthew Henry writes:
  - "The psalmist having done his day's work, and perhaps fatigued himself with it, it being now bedtime -- *and he having given good advice to those to whom he had wished a good night, to commune with their own hearts upon their bed, and to offer the evening sacrifices of righteousness* -- he now retires to his chamber with this word, I will lay me down in peace and sleep" (Matt Henry)
    - "That will break a worldly man's heart, which will not break a godly man's sleep. [*in other words: what keeps the ungodly awake at night doesn't keep the godly man awake at night!*] Let them do their worst .. saith David, but I will lay me down and sleep, the will of the LORD be done" (Matt Henry)
- PRAYER AT NIGHT:
  - ✓ **frees your conscience** -- from the burden, weight of sin; no guilt
  - ✓ **applying Christ's blood** -- thru repentance/confession
  - ✓ **assuring your soul** --- remembering heaven is coming
  - ✓ **closing the day** --- end/conclude the day w/ God & remember He's been faithful with & walked w/ you!
  - ✓ **trusting in God** -- take refuge in Him
  - ✓ **leading the family** -- God is to be sought at all times

Remember By way of reminder:

•Prayer moves the invisible hand that moves the world...Prayer unleashes the power of God to do the will of God...There is no greater need than to pray (Lawson, 342)

#### *Background to Psalm 141*

- David wrote this; **don't** know the situation/context. NOTE the full-orbed personal nature of this prayer...

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诗篇 141 — “一篇为你属灵成长和神的保护献上的晚祷！一篇 ‘在一天结束时和神相交’ 的示范祷告！”

- VOICE...HANDS (vv.1-2), MOUTH...LIPS (vv.3-4), HEAD (vv.5-7), EYES (vv.8-10)
  - sanctification encompasses the whole man
  - prayer is for the whole person, and all spheres of life.

#### NOTE:

✓every Christian is a **BIBLICAL COUNSELOR** -- we're filled w/ all goodness & competent to counsel using God's Word, by God's grace, with His wisdom & applying that sufficient Word in our own hearts & lives & in others'.

✓Ps 141 is a clear example of the Word & its usefulness for us as we journey thru life.

- ♣a man undergoing hardship, suffering
- ♣a man struggling w/ his tongue/words
- ♣a man who wants to NOT fall into temptation
- ♣a man who knows GOD has the victory & all wicked leaders will fall
- ♣a man who preaches to his soul to take REFUGE IN GOD
- ♣a man desperately, earnestly crying out to God to deliver/protect him!

**THESIS** — This is an evening prayer.- It’s an evening prayer of a man of God desiring the ear of God — *hear!*

likeness to God — *sanctify!*

protection from God — *protect!*

#### I. **HEAR ME!** (1-2)

*Is any man distressed? Let him pray. Pray & comfort your soul!*

*The child of God finds hope in calling on God! God hears!*

*These prayers denotes urgency as a child calling upon parent:*

- A. recognition of God
- B. calling upon God
- C. hastening to God
- D. impudence to God [boldness; unashamed courage/unafraid.]
- E. worship of God

##### 1. **NOTE the incense metaphor!**

##### 2. prayer is to God like the sweet-smelling aroma of evening incense/sacrifices

- ➡ prayer is SWEET to God
- ➡ prayer is COMMANDED by God
- ➡ prayer is WORSHIP to God
- ➡ prayer is DELIGHTFUL to God
- ➡ prayer is CONTINUAL to God
- ➡ prayer is SPECIFIC to God

##### 3. As incense is carefully prepared, kindled with holy fire, and devoutly presented unto God, so let my prayer be (Spurgeon)!

##### 4. William Law: Free access to the throne of grace is an inestimable privilege. No words can duly show the condescension of our God in permitting us to wrestle with Him, and not relax our grasp until responses come.

##### F. Hear this — **Don't be so tired that you retire without prayer!!**

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Perhaps we may need to **slow** down our pace a bit & pause, **reflect & ponder** the day that's just passed (consider your ways, confess your sin, comfort your soul, prize the Savior!)

## II. SANCTIFY ME! (3-7)

A. NOTE the cries for sanctification! A **Christian** living in such a godless culture as ours would do well to make these prayers his own!

Make me as **holy** as a justified man can be, O God!

Guard me, purify me, expose sin, blot it out, make me holy!

B. vv.3-5 sanctification:

### 1. guard my words! (v.3)

a)How to guard? **James 3:1-12**

### 2. guard my heart! (4a)

a)One translation: “don’t let me *drift* toward evil” (NLT)!

b)Luke 6.45 – ‘out of the overflow of his heart his mouth speaks’

### 3. guard my deeds! (4b)

### 4. guard my friends! (4c)

a)This man is aware of 1 Cor 15.33 - ‘bad company ruins good morals’

### 5. guard my passions! (4d)

a)Don’t let me eat of their delicacies [dainties/delights] >> *sensual, earthly satisfactions*.

b)“The holiest men of Scripture are those who are most aware of the powerlessness of their own free will & their own inability to resist temptation & thus they’re most dependent on God & most careful to make use of means to follow God. (David Dickson)

## C. Friends who rebuke me (5)

1. Spurgeon said: “My friend must love me well if he will tell me of my faults”.

2. Reproofs of instruction are the way of life (Prov 6.23); Prov 9.8 - ‘reprove a wise man & he will love you’; “Faithful are the wounds of a friend” (Prov 27.6).

3. This is good – this is necessary! If your brother sins, rebuke him (Luke 17.3). If you see your brother commit a sin, show him his fault (Matt 18.15). Admonish the unruly (1 Thess 5.14). **The goal = restoration, growth, sanctification, Christ-likeness!**

a)And James 5.20 – ‘he who turns a sinner from the error of his way will save his soul from death & will cover a multitude of sins’

## D. Live by faith! (6-7)

1. rest assured that ALL ungodly judges/leaders will be overthrown & cast down.

2. King Amaziah of Judah was defeating enemies from Seir -- 2 Chron 25.12 -- brought captives to the top of the cliff and threw them down from the top of the cliff -- so that they were all dashed to pieces. **Same language = definite, final doom.**

Rest assured -- O children of God!

\*\*Sanctification is the work of God in you as you energize yourself to serve Him, with His grace, in His strength, and employing the means that HE provides you!

You CANNOT do it on your own; Christ is in you!

**All this can teach a plan for battling sinful temptations:**

FIGHTING TEMPTATION: A BATTLE PLAN—

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1. **persist in prayer (v.2)**
2. **ensure heart purity (v.4)**
3. **find solid friends (v.5)**
4. **take refuge in God (v.8)**

### III. **PROTECT ME! (8-10)**

let your eyes look UP (toward you) O GOD, the LORD

>GOD = Yahweh

>Lord = Adonai

Covenant God

Creator God

Personal God

Powerful God

V.8 - a simple prayer of faith: simple spoken request for God to protect!

- A. the situation -- *the wicked have laid snares...*
- B. the prayer -- *don't leave me...keep me...let them fall prey...*
- C. the mindset -- *My eyes are to you! I take refuge in you! I pass by (live) for you*
  1. Fix your eyes on Christ; set them on Christ; cement them on the LORD! Hide under Him!
- D. V.10 - what do you do when others entrap you?
  1. **pray** (pray to God!)
  2. **flee** (flee from them!)
  3. **walk** (walk w/ integrity!)

### CONCL-

#### *Concluding Illustration*

- **Remember that our great desire & passion is GOD & the refuge under God’s Wings.**
- the aim of every Christian is GOD.
- the goal of every Christian is GOD.
- the pursuit of every Christian is GOD.
- the passion of every Christian is GOD.
- the boast of every Christian is GOD.
- the happiness of every Christian is GOD.

Let us make it our goal to *begin* the day, *spend* the day, & *close* the day with God in close communion with Him in prayer! Brothers -- let us pray for growth & protection!

Edward Payson said:

**"Prayer is the first thing, the second thing, the third thing necessary for a minister and a Christian. PRAY then my dear brothers; pray, pray, pray!"**