

## PSALMS: DIARIES OF GODLY OLD TESTAMENT SAINTS

### Psalm One Hundred And Forty-One - Overcoming The Temptation To Yield To Ungodly Peer Pressure (Psalm 141: 1-10)

#### I. Introduction

- A. When "everybody **else** is doing it" pressures mount up, particularly when we **know** that the peer group majority is **unbiblical**, a great tension can mount up in the believer: he is caught between the desire to be **accepted** by the majority and then to heed God on the other!
- B. We know from Hebrews 12:3-4 that the believer is to resist sinful pressure even to the point of death. The Hebrew Christian recipients of this letter were required to resist yielding to pressures of their countrymen to use the temple rituals and trust in the unseen Christ instead, and that to the point of death if so required!
- C. Well, Psalm 141 sets the pattern for **how** the believer can counter the temptation to yield to such pressure:

#### II. Overcoming The Temptation To Yield To Ungodly Peer Pressure, Psalm 141:1-10.

- A. Psalm 141 considers the temptation David felt to yield to ungodly peer pressure and do what was wrong:
  1. David was a king, and the men in verse 4 who influenced him to err were **noblemen**: the word for men in verse 4 is **'ish** in the Hebrew, a term for noblemen, Girdlestone, Synonyms of the O. T., p. 49).
  2. Since David as king struggled with the influence of fellow noblemen with whom he had dealings, he revealed a struggle he had overcoming bad peer pressure in Psalm 141!
    - a. David admitted that he needed a guard to be set over his mouth so as not to be drawn into saying something evil brought about by the influence of ungodly fellow noblemen, Ps. 141:3-4.
    - b. He admitted that he struggled to keep his deeds pure from the influence of such colleagues, 141:4b.
- B. Thus, organizing the content of the psalm supplies a lesson on **how** to handle bad peer pressure as follows:
  1. Step One - David **fervently** requested help from God in prayer to handle bad peer pressure, 141:1-4, 9:
    - a. In clear terms, David sought God's deliverance through prayer from bad peer pressure, 141:1.
    - b. He sought for that help **fervently** by prayer: David asked that his request be seen as incense, the holy incense that was offered by the priests alone in the tabernacle before God, Ps. 141:2a with Lev. 2:2. He also asked **consistently**, requesting that his prayer be like the evening sacrifice that was given at 3 o'clock in the afternoon at mid-day when most people were busy in business activities, 141:2b.
  2. Step Two - David asked to God to supply **righteous** associates to hold him **accountable**, 141:5a,b: He asked God to supply a man to "strike" him in rebuke if David became wayward in joining evil peers!
  3. Step Three - David considered the **end result** of following bad peer pressure as opposed to being upright as motivation to stay true to the Lord, Ps. 141:5c-8, 10:
    - a. As for evil noblemen, David knew the end result of their words and actions would be their tragic overthrow from leadership positions because of their sin, Psalm 141:5c-6a.
    - b. In contrast, David's words in standing against their evil words (141:6a-7 versus 141:3-4a) would be ultimately shown to be right and theirs wrong, motivating David to stay true with his words.
    - c. David thus was motivated to avoid following the bad peer pressure to obey the Lord, Ps. 141:8, 10.

***Lesson:*** We should handle the temptation to follow ungodly peer pressure by the following ways: (1) Make it a matter of fervent, consistent prayer to God for help whenever we sense the peer pressure is upon us to lead us to say or to do what is wrong, Ps. 141:1-4, 9. (2) Then, wisely ask God to supply upright associates in contrast to the godless peer group who will help us be accountable for our words and actions, 141:5a,b. (3) In the process, constantly focus on the **END RESULTS** of following bad peer pressure versus functioning in God's will, 141:5c-8, 10.

***Application:*** (1) On a **PERSONAL** basis, we can resist ungodly peer pressure by (a) fervently praying for divine help under temptation and (b) considering the end result of our choices either to follow the ungodly crowd's pressure or to do what is right. (2) On a **GROUP** basis, we can counter peer pressure by **REPLACING** mingling with ungodly associates to associate with **GODLY** ones who help us be accountable, Ps. 141:5a,b (cf. 2 Tim. 2:20-22 NIV; 2 Tim. 3:1-5a, 5b NIV).