

## **Sermon Based Discussion**

**Sermon Title: Keep Me From Evil**

**Sermon Series: In Pursuit of God's Heart (Part 5)**

**Sermon Text: Psalm 141**

### **INTRODUCTION**

Many people might agree that a loving God keeps us from evil. And, to keep us from evil is to prevent evil from happening to us – to keep evil from us. If you asked God to “keep me from evil” perhaps that’s how you’d take it.

But the poet who wrote Psalm 141 helps us see what it really means to ask God to keep us from evil. Not to keep evil from happening to us, but to keep evil from happening from us!

### **OPENING QUESTION**

1. Can you think of a time you noticed one of your friends had a smudge on her face, or a friend’s fly was unzipped, or a friend had food stuck between her teeth. What did you do, and why?

If the roles were reversed, would you want someone to point it out to you? Why or why not?

### **INTO THE BIBLE (Read Psalm 141)**

2. Verses 1 and 2 are the opening verses of the prayer. What emotions or desires do David’s words convey?
3. With the urgency and fervency of the opening prayer, David then goes to pray that God keep him from evil. In your experience, are Christians more likely to pray that God keep them from encountering evil or from committing evil themselves?
4. Rather than pray for God to keep David from encountering evil, he prays that God keep himself from committing evil. In verses 3-4, what specifically does David ask?
5. After David prays that God keep him from committing evil, David prays about a way God will keep him from committing evil: correction from godly, sincere, loving people. In verse 5, how does David view correction?
6. David’s desire to be kept from committing evil leads him to pray for the judgment and destruction of evil doers in verses 5b-7. How does this prayer about the judgment of evildoers connect with his prayer to commit no evil?

## **GOING DEEPER**

If David prays for the destruction of evildoers (v.5b-6), then what does that mean for him who is prone to be drawn to evil? Surely it means that if God were to answer this prayer, that God would destroy David too! But in verses 8-10, we see David pray to God as his refuge and defense. Many people see this as David asking God to protect him from others who mean to do evil to him. But it also involves God to protect David from the evil within himself.

7. How has God provided a refuge for us from the evil within us? (v.8) How has God provided a way to keep us from spiritual death?

## **WHAT WILL YOU DO?**

Years after David prayed this psalm, a Son of David would come and provide a way for God to save us from the evil within us. God sent Jesus to die on a cross in our place. God saved us from death by sending His own Son to die. God saved us from the penalty of sin by placing that punishment on Christ. How much more should Christians now cry to God to walk in holiness and love? How much more should Christians now invite a righteous person to correct us when we stray?

For Christians, will you identify someone- an older adult, older couple, a significantly more mature person in the faith- to show you this refreshing kindness of correction? Will you commit to be open to this person? Know that it takes time to develop this kind of relationship. Know that it can be hard, awkward, and a very risky endeavor way out of your comfort zone. But know that it is worth it to experience the refreshing kindness of a sincere and godly person's correction.

For non-Christians, will you see that this is the gospel, the heart of Christianity: seeing that we are more sinful than we dare imagined, but more forgiven and loved by God than we dare hoped.

## **CHANGING YOUR MIND**

*Let a righteous man strike me—it is kindness;*

*let him rebuke me—it is oil on my head...*

*But my eyes are fixed on you, O Sovereign LORD;*

*In you I take refuge—do not give me over to death. (Psalm 141:5, 8, NIV)*