

Studies in Psalms by [John T Polk II](#) For [The Fellowship Room](#)

Psalms 141

4/30/13

Psalm 141

Shut My Mouth

This Psalm of David could have originated at one of several times in his life, so the historical background is not definitely set, but it clearly is similar to other of his Psalms.

Verses 1-2 appeal to God to hear this prayer;
Verses 3-4 concerned with one's words;
Verse 5-concerned with one's thoughts;
Verses 5c-7 concerned with one's bones;
Verses 8-10 concerned with one's eyes.

Verses 1-2: To "cry out" expresses immediate need(s). For prayer to be "set before" God "as incense" ([Exodus 30:1-10](#)), helps us see that when Moses' Law was taken out of the way by the cross of Jesus Christ ([Colossians 2:14-16](#)), Christian prayers ascend before God instead of incense ([Revelation 5:8](#)).

Verses 3-4: It is not asking for God to choose our words, but knowing we have called attention to the problem we have with wrong words should keep us more keenly aware ([Matthew 12:34-37](#)). "If anyone among you thinks he is religious, and does not bridle his tongue but deceives his own heart, this one's religion is useless" ([James 1:26](#)). "For we all stumble in many things. If anyone does not stumble in word, he *is* a perfect man, able also to bridle the whole body" ([James 3:2](#)). In fact, David realizes, to avoid sin, we must not lean toward "any evil thing," "practice wicked works," associate with evil workers, or commonly associate with sinners. This progression into sin is similar to [Psalm 1](#).

Verse 5: If we find ourselves heading in the wrong direction, the rebuke of a righteous person should bring us back to spirituality. "Open rebuke *is* better Than love carefully concealed" ([Proverbs 27:5](#)). "Brethren, if a man is overtaken in any trespass, you who *are* spiritual restore such a one in a spirit of gentleness, considering yourself lest you also be tempted" ([Galatians 6:1](#)).

Verses 5c-7: Our prayers should be not only for us to be strong, but for the wicked to be blunted and weakened. "Judges" are their leaders, but "sweet" "words" of a prayerful appeal to God can see them taken down. Their damage, however, may break up God's people as if physical bodies had been *plowed under!*

Verses 8-10: "Eyes," rightly focused on the goal, must not be misled. Once a person has been buried in the water of baptism into Jesus' death (and not before), and raised to a new life with Him ([Romans 6:3-5](#)), they are saved ([1 Peter 3:21](#)). "If then you were raised with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ is, sitting at the right hand of God. Set your mind on things above, not on things on the earth. For you died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God" ([Colossians 3:1-3](#)). By obeying God and

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following Jesus Christ, God will “keep” (avoid sin, [1 John 3:6](#)) a Christian from the “snares” and “traps” the wicked continually provide.

It was the partial obedience of the Israelites in cleaning the wicked nations out of the Promised Land, that God warned they would become “snares and traps to you, and scourges on your sides and thorns in your eyes, until you perish from this good land which the LORD your God has given you” ([Joshua 23:13](#)). “Thorns *and* snares are in the way of the perverse; He who guards his soul will be far from them” ([Proverbs 22:5](#)). David did not pray out of vengeance or hatred, but simply that God let “the wicked fall into their own nets” and he be allowed to “escape.” When the wicked are treated with their own wickedness is not only just, it is fair for the righteous. “Whoever digs a pit will fall into it, And he who rolls a stone will have it roll back on him” ([Proverbs 26:27](#)). A rolling stone may not gather moss, but often it punishes the ones who started it rolling!

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