

Ps. 101 (LD 21, Q. 55) “Who Ministers to You?”

For the Children: Who is your best friend? Why do you like them? Because they like the things you like? Because they are cool, or funny? Because they give you lots of stuff? The people we should be closest to, are the ones who will help us serve and obey the Lord. We can spend time with people who do not love the Lord, to tell them about Him. But we should not get so close to people who will try to stop us from obeying God, that we end up not so close to the Lord ourselves! **Questions:** What does the Bible mean by saying, “Bad company corrupts good morals”? What is the “communion of the saints”? In what ways can God’s people show their unity with each other in the Lord?

Introduction:

First Point: Fellowship based on Our Relationship with the Lord

- 1) The Work of Christ and His Spirit: When the Holy Spirit gives us the gift of faith, we are joined to the Lord Jesus and all His benefits. This unites us to each other in Him, giving us much in common and much to share with each other.
- 2) The Blameless Way: God calls us to “walk” (habitually) in the “blameless” way, in integrity. “Blameless” does not mean we are personally perfect. It does mean we are being faithful, upright, wise, sincere, whole-hearted and are “above reproach” – not liable to be charged in the courts of the church. It also means that we will seek to surround ourselves with influences for good rather than for evil. See Phlp. 4:8. This affects how we live in the home as well as at church, and elsewhere. It affects the company we keep and the friends we choose.
- 3) Praising God for All His Attributes: The Lord does not call upon us to be equally accepting of all people. We must indeed reflect His loving kindness as we deal with others, but also His justice (v. 1). Therefore we must at times exclude others from close contact with us – as the Lord does (Rev. 22:14-15).

Second Point: The Duty to Break That Fellowship

- 1) Hating Their Works: David states that he hates the works of those who have fallen away. He is talking about covenant-breakers who have given themselves over the habitual sin without repentance.
- 2) No Evil Dwelling: Though it is really the apostate who breaks the bond of fellowship – which was really only a pretense in the first place – the righteous have a duty to ensure that such a person does not continue to be closely associated with them. They are not to be allowed to “dwell” in his house, or maintain their position before him. They must be made to “depart.” See 2 Thess. 3:6,14. We can continue to call such a person back to the Truth, but should not continue in close association. We are not to “know” evil (v. 4) – to be intimately connected to it. For the danger is that worthless things can easily get a grip on us (v. 3). “Bad company corrupts good morals”!
- 3) The Responsibility of Discipline: David was also prepared to discipline the wicked in Israel, even to the point of “destroying” them (vss. 5,8). David was called to do so as king in Israel. He promised to make an early start to removing evil every day. This is a “type” of Christ’s zeal for His Father’s House. He removes the wicked, in time, from His church and draws His faithful people close. What David did in Israel finds its parallel in church-discipline, but also in the zeal of the godly man to ensure that evil finds no safe haven in his home.

Third Point: The Duty to Build That Fellowship

- 1) The Righteous Dwelling with Us: By way of contrast, the godly focus on those who are faithful (v. 6). They may “dwell” with us. They are the ones we should choose to minister to us. For they are the ones in whom Christ and His Spirit dwell. They can therefore encourage us in the “blameless way.”
- 2) Ministering to Each Other: Believers thus minister to each other, expressing their unity in Christ, enjoying the communion of the saints. They do so by sharing the Word with each other; praying for each other; worshipping together; striving to be of the same mind; using their gifts for the common good; and empathizing with each other (Rom. 12:15, 1 Cor. 12:26).

Conclusion: