

The Ungodly and the Godly

He does not delight in the strength of the horse; He takes no pleasure in the legs of a man. The LORD takes pleasure in those who fear Him, In those who hope in His mercy. (Psalm 147:10-11)

The first psalm contrasts the ungodly and the godly as the wicked and the righteous. In this psalm a more subtle, yet every bit as powerful and certain, contrast between those two peoples is declared. We are told what God does and does not take pleasure in. That which He holds in high regard is put in contrast with that in which He has no interest. Now, godly people are those who are like God, not only in their morality and rectitude, their behavior, but also in the things of which they approve and disapprove. Such things as bring them pleasure and delight in contrast to those things which do not move their affections are identical with God's. Ungodly people, on the other hand are those who contrast with Him; they are most unlike Him. Their affections are centered on things which are trifles to Him. And they have no interest whatever in that which is at the center of God's heart.

Ungodly people put great stock in fleshy power. At the time this Psalm was written, something like 98% of work done was done by muscle contraction in men or beasts. Strong horses and mules were much in demand. We still rate engines and motors by the amount of "horsepower" they produce. Carnal men have not lost their romantic weenings for big trucks with roaring engines as well high-powered automobiles, boats and aircrafts. Their love for these overpriced toys keep them in debt up to their ears. And every other dime they do not have to spend on food and shelter, they throw away on the pleasure of spectator sports. Football, soccer, baseball, tennis and hockey, keep municipalities and colleges scrambling for enough money to build bigger stadiums to accommodate the multitude of "leg-lovers" crowding to see this display of flashing flesh. These poor kids have been seduced into prostituting their bulging muscles, quick wits, and deft limbs to the lusts of men's eyes. Such flesh lovers on the other hand have zero interest in God-fearing people who employ their time and energies in seeking to please God, and whose hope of life is in His mercies.

The more a person knows God, the more he loves Him and His people. The warmer one grows toward the gathering of God's people to love and worship Him in Spirit and in truth, the less interest he has in sports, athletes, fleshy performances of either man or beast.

In vain aggressive churches try to combine these two opposite affections. They try to increase attendance through the fleshy hankering for performances of men and beasts by church-sponsored sports and games. Two things will inevitably happen: Flesh will attract flesh, and the numbers of carnal unconverted people will multiply. At the same time, the saints, starving for God and godliness will leave and seek a company of humble people who have nothing to offer except worship of the living God. These will always...always...always be the few, but they are those in whom God takes pleasure.

—C. M.