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"CONDITIONS OF PRAYER" OR "HINDERED PRAYER"

By I. A. J. Ward

In the King's Highway of some months passed I noted with pleasure the helpful article on prayer on the "Young People's Page," written by Brother Bennett Cochrane, dealing with "Necessity of Prayer," "Possibilities of Prayer," and the "Promises of Prayer."

While reading same it at once flashed in my mind that there was an all essential, important and most vital factor in our prayer life and one which can only make effectual prayer possible, namely, "Conditions of Prayer."

While living in Hartland, N. B., the dearest spot on earth to me, many times I have remarked in public and private that I believed that there were only two classes of people that God would hear pray, viz., those who were right with God and their fellow man, and those who had purposed in their hearts that they were going to be right with God and man, and I still hold that view.

No doubt a goodly number who read this will not agree with me, and I would be quite surprised if they did, knowing quite well the attitude some good people take. Some of these good people may say this is only another of his pre-conceived and radical ideas.

I remember well being in conversation with a very good friend of mine in Hartland, who long since has departed, and I said to him, do you know, sir, that there have been people that lived such a rebellious and sinful life that God told His people that He wouldn't hear prayer for them? The look he gave me still lingers but the bitter things he said to me I have forgotten. I said to him after things cooled off a little: Don't take my word for it, sir. When you go home take your Bible and turn to JEREMIAH 7:16: "Therefore PRAY NOT for this people, neither lift up, cry nor pray for them, neither make intercession to me for I WILL NOT hear thee."

The other day while in conversation with some friends, mention was made of the special day of prayer, and I made the remark that no doubt much time and breath was wasted in saying prayers, because many who didn't believe on Jesus or in Him, meaning the JEWS, who do not recognize Jesus as Saviour, and who were classed in with those who prayed, and also unregenerated Gentiles who may believe in Him, but not ON HIM, and I said God's word says He heareth not sinners. One of my listeners said, "Well, then, no prayers were heard because there is no one that lives without sin." Oh, I said, "He that is born of God doth not commit sin."

This much repeated expression that "there is no one liveth without sin," came as it always does, from an unregenerated natural heart. "But the natural man receiveth not the

things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness unto him, neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned. I. Cor. 2:14: If my conception of prayer life, in fact anything pertaining to Christian living were simply my own, I would consider it folly on my part to put it in print, but no one can deny the Word of God. "Yea, let God be true, but every man a liar." Romans 3-4. "He that rejecteth me, and receiveth not my words, hath one that judgeth him; the word that I have spoken the same will judge him in the last day." St. John 12:48.

Man's ideas on Spiritual things, no matter how learned he may be, have no influence with me unless he can seal it with the word of God and has Spiritual vision enough to place the Word of God he uses in its proper setting. Now to prove what I have been saying I will quote again the Word of God: "Now we know that God heareth NOT SINNERS, but if any man be a worshipper of God and doeth His will, him He heareth." St. John 9:31. If I regard iniquity in my heart the Lord will not hear me. Psa. 1. 66-18.

And when ye spread forth your hands I will hide my eyes from you; yea, when ye make many prayers I will not hear. Your hands are full of blood. Wash you, make you clean; put away the evil of your doings from before your eyes, cease to do evil, learn to do well, seek judgment, relieve the oppressed, judge the fatherless, plead for the widow. **Then come,** now let us reason together, saith the Lord. Isa. 1-15.

The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much. James 5:16. Please note (Righteous MAN) one that is right, inside and out, holy man.

Ye ask and receive not, because ye ask amiss, that ye may consume it upon your lusts. James 4:3.

I once read an account of some great public church function held in Boston in which it stated in glowing words that a very noted D. D. offered the most pleasing and well worded prayer ever offered to a Boston audience. Would it be uncharitable for me to ask the question, Might it not be possible that the Boston audience was all he had?

Also not long since I read another account of a worldly gathering in which some of the ministers of the different churches of the town participated. Rev. T. conducted the service. Rev. H. read the scriptures, and Rev. M. said prayers. Knowing the Rev. M. quite well, it was quite amusing to me to say the least to connect this Rev. gentleman with saying prayers, and wondered if he had fallen from grace or returned to his childhood days. Paul said, when I was a child, I spoke as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child; but when I became a man I put away childish things. I. Cor. 13:11.

There is such a thing as "hindered prayers," as you will note by reading I. Peter 3:7.

Speaking of family relations, Peter says: Likewise ye husbands, dwell with them according to knowledge, giving honour unto the wife as unto the weaker vessel and as being heirs together of the grace of life, "that your prayers be Not Hindered." Now while this admonition is to husbands, and while we admit the wife is the weaker vessel, it does not licence the wife to give her husband a piece of her mind (so to speak) just because of some trivial act or word (rightly meant by husband, but wrongly taken by wife) If she does she will have hindered prayers until she makes confession and asks forgiveness.

One morning recently while sitting alone eating my breakfast, I put two slices of bread in toaster and continued reading morning news, waiting for toast. Soon I opened the toaster to find the bread was as when I placed it there. I looked to find the cause, and behold I had not connected the electricity. No connection, no results, and again I was reminded of how much like so many of us who say our prayers, get no results, because of no connection.

Well do I remember one day while I was waiting on a customer in the store I was managing in Hartland, N.B., a lady came in and as she passed me she asked if she could use the phone. "Certainly," I said, "you will find it in the office at rear of store. After the lady had been there a few minutes I could hear her saying, "Hello, Hello, Hello," then a pause, then a faint ring, then again, "Hello, Hello, Hello". Finally she called out to me saying, "there must be something wrong with this phone." Walking back to the office I said to her, "Can't you get Central?" She said, "No! I have rung several times and no response." I said, "that's strange for I had just been talking over it a few minutes before." "Where did you ring the bell?" I inquired. "Right up there," she said, pointing to a little machine with a little handle on top of desk. "Oh!" I said, "no wonder you didn't get the operator as that has no connection with the telephone; that's only a pencil sharpner." I said to the lady, "You reach right under the desk, ring that bell there and see if you don't get results." She did, lifted the receiver and was at once connected with operator. I said how much this reminds us of we who cry Lord, Lord, and do not the things he says, and thus get no response or answer to our prayers, (using a disrupted line).

A very little thing will disrupt the line of communication between us and God and very, very often do we not continue calling over this disrupted line, at last, only to find dry and juiceless prayers and dry and juiceless and fruitless lives.

In my school boy days, (so that's long ago), I remember well the many times I visited a grand old couple, the husband a member of the Methodist Church, and I believe a possessor of the Wesleyan and Bible doctrine of Holiness. His wife belonged to the Anglican Church. They always had their family prayers and grace at every meal. They lived a life of real happiness and devotion to each other. Often have I heard

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