

# Northern Messenger

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## Hindering Prayer.

There are some conditions to prayer being answered. In the first place, there must be true adoration. It was when Abraham fell on his face before God that his prayer was answered.

Then, there must also be confession. The reason our prayers are so cold and remain unanswered is because there is something in our hearts. If we don't confess our sins our prayers will be lifeless.

A woman once came to me and said that she was very unhappy because she could not convert her husband. He was a pretty good Christian when she married him, but he had drifted away.

I asked her if she ever lectured him, and she confessed that she did. I told her that unless she went to him and confessed her wrong doing she would never have any influence over him. She told me afterward that when her husband came home that night she fell on his neck and kissed him and confessed her own weakness. It was not long before she had won him to Christ. She said to me, 'I thought I was happy the day I was married, but the happiest day of my life was when I won my husband for God.'

Nothing chills prayer like cold formality, I don't fear the infidels and atheists as much as I do the cold formalism that has crept into the church. The words may be beautiful, but they don't come from the heart.

Another element is restitution. A lady came to me in England once and said that she had years ago taken five bottles of rare wine from a man she was nursing and that she could not pray because every time she knelt down those five bottles of wine came up before her. I told her she must make restitution. She said she couldn't, because the man was dead, but she would give the money to the Lord. I told her she didn't owe it to the Lord, and he did not care for stolen money and she must find one of the heirs. Well she did, for the son was living and she got \$25 and took it to him, explaining the whole matter. He didn't want it, and said that the wine didn't cost that much. 'I don't care,' he replied, 'I don't want any of that debt to remain on my soul.' Later on that woman became a power in the church.

If there's anyone here not willing to confess, his prayers won't go higher than his head. That's what makes skeptics.

Don't pray if you owe money. If I owe a man five dollars and won't pay him, it's not a bit of use in my praying. It's wrong for a man to pray who doesn't live as he should. I don't want any man to shout, 'Hallelujah! Bless the Lord! Glory to God!' who doesn't pay his debts. Don't sneak around corners and dodge your creditors, and think then to get God's ear. God hates a sham. God hates a fraud. If you've wronged anyone and will not make restitution your prayers won't be heard. There must be truth in the inward parts.

We must not only confess our sins but we must turn from them if we want our prayers to go farther than the breath we use in uttering them.

What's killing lots of our prayer meetings?

It's because there are lots of men praying there who have no business to be there. Let them get right, let each person get right, and then see what power there'll be in our meetings.

Never ask God to do something you can do yourself. Do your best to do the right thing and God will come in and help you.

All of us can pray. Let us get out of the way everything that hinders prayer, and we will have the fires of Pentecost here in New York.—D. L. Moody.

## The High Priest's Jewels.

Many beautiful thoughts are suggested by the breast-plate worn by the Jewish high priest when he ministered in holy things, especially when he went into the holy of holies to make atonement once a year. In that breast-plate were twelve precious stones on which were graven the names of the twelve tribes. These names the priest bore over his



heart when he went into the tabernacle or temple to make atonement and intercession. He was not to pray for himself alone. He would have been untrue to his sacred trust if he had not thought of each of the tribes and the people of each and prayed to him who dwelt between the cherubim on their behalf.

This is a reminder of what our Lord Jesus is doing for us continually. If the apostle could write to the people to whom he had preached that gospel, 'I have you in my heart,' if we can say that concerning those whom we hold dear, how much more true this is of our Lord who gave himself as our ransom upon the cross! His ransomed ones are far too precious for him even to permit them to pass out of his mind and heart. He bears them in his heart continually as he intercedes on their behalf before the throne of mercy.

Perhaps we do not make enough of our Lord's ministry of intercession. Perhaps we do not consider how essential it is to our salvation—just as essential as the atonement it-

self. Listen to what the inspired apostle says in Hebrews vii., 25: 'Wherefore also he is able to save to the uttermost them that draw near unto God through him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them.' We often assure our hearts by the earlier part of this declaration, but do we keep in mind the great reason for this assurance, 'Seeing he ever liveth to make intercession?'

Think you our High Priest ever loses sight of one of his jewels? He knows that they are exposed to perils, but this is all the greater reason why they should be continually surrounded by his omnipotence as a shield. King Edward keeps continually a strong guard around the crown jewels of England. They are kept within a strong iron cage in the Tower of London, itself a strong garrison, surrounded by heavy walls and occupied by garrisons of soldiers continually. But these general precautions are not enough. British yeomen have not forgotten that one night, years ago, a man attempted to enter the strong cage and carry away the treasures. So day and night special guards are detailed to keep constant watch over them. And think you not that the Lord of Glory, our Redeemer, keeps not a special and continual guard over those whom he calls his jewels? They are to him as precious as the apple of his eye, and whoever or whatever touches them touches the apple of his eye. And he says concerning them, 'They shall be mine in that day when I make up my jewels.'—'Christian Union Herald.'

## 'Tithes of all I Possess.'

A lady sat in her quiet, beautiful room. In the early morning she had read the words of the Pharisee: 'I give tithes of all I possess,' and now, in thought, she was reviewing the busy day's work; but all through the crowded hours the words had followed her persistently, and she found herself continually repeating, 'I give tithes of all I possess.'

Shopping in the crowded stores, poring over the wealth of new books, choosing the exquisite roses for her sick friend and the beautiful picture for her young daughter, sitting in her sunny home with fingers moving swiftly over beautiful fancy work, continually the refrain ran on: 'I give tithes of all I possess.'

It annoyed her, as she had often been annoyed by the strain of a foolish song, caught up by the memory and reiterated mechanically.

'It was a miserable Pharisee who said it,' she reflected, 'and I don't know why I should be haunted by it. It is much the easier way to keep the peace between your conscience and so many conflicting claims. When I've laid aside my tenth I feel perfectly comfortable over the rest of the dollar.'

Silence for a few moments in the busy brain and then a little laugh, with the thought: 'The Pharisee seems to have been perfectly comfortable about the rest of his dollar or shekel. I suppose the great trouble with him was feeling too comfortable about his tithes—as if that ended the matter. I never felt so, I am sure. My tithe is a real thank-offering, not a tax.'

Again the needle sped on its way, but the face above it grew every minute graver and more thoughtful, until at last the hands lay