

You are the very best Christian somebody knows.

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"To the law and to the testimony; if they speak not according to this word it is because there is no light in them."—Isaiah 8:20.

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Hindrances To One's Prayer Life

By Roy Mason
Tampa, Florida

When one is traveling, he wants to know the condition of the road ahead. If there is a block—a bridge out—a meandering end, he wants to know so it can be avoided. There are things that block the way of prayer such that the way of words become a vain exercise. We need to know what these are, so we can avoid them, in praying, we want to get to the heart of the matter. What are some of the things that constitute hindrances to prayer?

AN UNFORGIVING SPIRIT

(Matt. 6:12-15). Perhaps there are few things that hinder more prayers than this. Often people don't stop to realize this. They harbor grudges—they hold enmities—they bitterly dislike someone, and sometimes they won't even speak to someone else—yet they go through the motion of praying. Their heart attitude is this: "Forgive my trespasses Lord, but I am NOT going to forgive those who have trespassed against me."

LACK OF FAITH

(James 1:6-7). We are reminded of the old woman who prayed for the hill between her house and the highway to be re-

AN UNCLEAN LIFE

(Isa. 59:1-3). Again we read, "I will that men pray everywhere lifting up HOLY HANDS without wrath and doubting." The bloody handed, muddy footed individual needs both hands and feet cleansed, if his prayers are to be heard. The sin stained child of God must right his fellowship with God through confession of his sins. "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness."

WRONG FAMILY RELATIONS

(See I Peter 3:1-7). Duties and obligations of husbands and wives are set forth, and both are urged to live up to them "THAT Continued on page four"

Return! Bring In The Tithes

Halt! Ye have wandered far today,
And from My teachings of 'The Way'
For ye have robbed! Where are My tithes?
Yes, gone to feed thy puny lives!
Your lives are sordid, mean, and bare,
Because you rob Me of My share.
Return! Bring in the tithes!

Lo! Hath thy fields my harvests shown?
What of the blessings ye have known?
Where are My tithes and offerings?
Are these few crumbs thy profferings?
I am the Lord Who changeth not—
Haste! rid thy soul of this dark blot,
Return! Bring in the tithes!

List! Ye are cursed now with a curse,
While with My tenth ye fill thy purse;
Bring ye the tithes that there may be
For all My work sufficiency.
Come, test Me now, and let Me prove
The boundless nature of My love:
Return! Bring in the tithes!

Yea! Bring the tithes unto My store,
A blessing on thee I will pour;
Rebuke the pests, enrich the vine;
Uplift the curse, and call thee Mine!
A prosperous land shall give thee rest!
And nations all shall call thee blest!
Return! Bring in the tithes!

—Mary R. Powell

THE WAY THE HOLY SPIRIT WORKS FOR BELIEVERS

He makes no promise to bless us if we make a promise with error or sin, we do so at our own risk. If we do anything that we are not clear about, if we tamper with truth and holiness, if we are friends of the world, if we make provision for the flesh, if we preach

CROWN THAT IS FITTED FOR A QUEEN

Armed detectives took Britain's Imperial State crown from the Tower of London to the Jewelers who will make it to the head of Queen Elizabeth II. It was carried to west side Regent Street in a plain black box which gave onlookers no hint of the glittering contents—183 diamonds, 277 pearls, sixteen sapphires, eleven emeralds and five rubies.

Very few persons are privileged to wear crowns such as the one to be placed on the head of Queen Elizabeth; but myriads of believers shall wear crowns of a different nature.

There is the incorruptible crown for those who run the Christian race and fight the good fight of faith, according to the will of God. (I Cor. 9:24-25).

There is the crown of righteousness for soul-winners. (I Thess. 2:19) And a crown of life awaits each of those who patiently endure the trials of life. This crown is also proffered to such as seal their testimony with their life's blood. (James 1:12; Revelation 2:10).

For those who feed the flock of God willingly and of a ready mind, and are ensamples to the flock, there is a crown of glory to be given when the Chief Shepherd appears. (I Peter 5:4)

half-heartedly and are in league with errorists, we have no promise that the Holy Spirit will go with us. The great promise runs in quite another strain: "Come ye out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you, and will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord God Almighty."

He makes no promise to cowardice. If you allow the fear of man to rule you, and wish to save self from suffering or ridicule, you will find small comfort in the promise of God. "He that saveth his life shall lose it." The promises of the Holy Spirit to us in our warfare are to those who quit themselves like men, and by faith are made brave in the hour of conflict. I wish that we were come to this pass, that we utterly despised ridicule and calumny.

The Holy Ghost never sets His seal to falsehood. Never! If what you preach is not the truth, God will not own it. See ye well to this.

The Holy Ghost never sets His signature to any blank! That would be unwise on the part of man, and the Holy Lord will not perpetrate such a folly. If we don't speak clear doctrine with plainness of speech, the Holy Ghost will not put His signature to our empty prating. If we do not come distinctly with Christ and Him crucified, we may say farewell to true success.

The Holy Ghost will never sanction sin: and to bless the ministry of some men would be to sanction their evil ways. "Be ye clean, that bear the vessels of the Lord."

He will never encourage idleness. The Holy Ghost will not come in to rescue us from the consequences of wilful neglect of the Word of God and study.

If we allow ourselves to go up and down all the week doing nothing, we may not climb the pulpit stairs and dream that the Lord will be there and then tell us what to speak.

The Holy Ghost will not bless us in order to sustain our pride! Is it not possible that we may be wishing for a great blessing that we may be thought great men? "Pride goeth before destruction, and a haughty spirit before a fall." Keep humble if you would have the Spirit.

The Holy Ghost will not dwell where there is strife. Let us follow peace with all men, and specially keep peace in our churches.

The Holy Ghost will only bless in conformity with His own set purpose. Our Lord explains what this purpose is: "He shall glorify Me." He has come forth for this grand end, and He will not put up with anything short of it. If then we do not preach Christ, what is the Holy Ghost

to do without preaching? If we do not make the Lord Jesus glorious; if we do not lift Him high in the esteem of men, if we do not labour to make Him King of kings, and Lord of lords; we shall not have the Holy Spirit with us.

—Spurgeon

TIPPLING ENVOYS FACE CHECK-UP

Washington — W. A. Scharrfenberg left recently on a world tour to check personally on how much drinking is being done by U. S. diplomats. His plans were announced Monday in a news release, and he later amplified his views in an interview.

As executive secretary of the American Temperance Society, Mr. Scharrfenberg has been carrying on a campaign against diplomatic drinking. It was he who announced recently that 122,000,000 cocktails had been consumed by State Department people over a nine-year span.

Mr. Scharrfenberg said he reached this figure after an official in the department had made a study of expense accounts.

"You'd be surprised at what the expense accounts 'show'", Mr. Scharrfenberg said. "Why, the gin bill alone came to \$6,000,000."

He's sure U. S. Drinking produces a poor impression in Moslem countries, where religion condemns the use of alcoholic beverages.

"Our drinking is just the waving of a red flag in their faces," he said. "When one of those countries gets its independence, as soon as it kicks out the white man, it kicks his bourbon and Rye right behind him."

—Buffalo Evening News
February 17, 1953

Editor's Note: What a pity!

The First Baptist Pulpit

"SEVEN WOMEN HOLDING ON TO ONE MAN'S COAT TAIL"

"And in that day seven women shall take hold of one man, saying, We will eat our own bread, and wear our own apparel; only let us be called by thy name, to take away our reproach." —Isa. 4:1.

"And I say also unto thee, That thou are Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." —Mt. 16:18.

Every few days I hear someone say, "One church is just as good as another." In saying

this, the individual uses logic that he would not use elsewhere in life.

Before us are two tables of food. One is loaded with all good things, both in and out of season. On it is fried chicken, strawberry shortcake, and other delicacies that makes one's mouth water. In contrast, on the other table there is jail food—beans, bread and water. Now, if one table of food is just as good as another, you sit down and eat the food that was prepared for jailbirds and I, in contrast will eat the fried

chicken that has been prepared for the preacher.

You see, beloved, you don't use that logic that one table of food is just as good as another, and if that be true, then surely there must be a difference so far as churches are concerned.

Let's use another illustration. Here are two girls. One of them is beautiful. She has a beautiful face, a beautiful figure, and beautiful manners. She is talented; she is refined; she knows how to keep house and how to make a home. In con-

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"Seven Women"

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called the Episcopal church in America and thus from an adulterous beginning, the Episcopal church, or the church of England, came into existence. The Presbyterian church was ushered into being about the same time. In fact, just a year after the church of England was born, John Calvin drew up the plans for the Presbyterian church in Switzerland. Evidently encouraged by the efforts of Martin Luther and Henry VIII, John Calvin brought his church organization into existence and this in turn caused other fainting hearts, who favored a reformation to attempt likewise further reformation concerning what was then called Christianity.

The Congregationalist was the next Protestant church organization that came into being. Robert Brown, its founder, was a school-master, lecturer and teacher. He didn't like many things that the church of England had retained from Catholicism. He was particularly opposed to the episcopal government of the Church of England, believing that the congregation should have full control. Furthermore, he was definitely opposed to sacerdotalism, and denied that salvation could come through ordinances. Thus in 1540, just a few years after the Church of England was born, Robert Brown organized in England the Congregationalist church.

You will notice, beloved, that the Congregationalist was thus a daughter of the Church of England and the first granddaughter of Catholicism.

Some two hundred years passed and other granddaughters of Catholicism were born. When John and Charles Wesley brought the Methodist Church into existence, to be sure they didn't call it a Methodist Church, but rather they termed it as "the Methodist Society." John and Charles Wesley organized it in order that they might have a simple form of worship.

It is highly conspicuous, however, that John Wesley wasn't even saved at the time when he organized his church in 1740. He came as a missionary to America and began to do missionary work among the Indians in the state of Georgia. He got into difficulty with a woman in Georgia and it became necessary that he leave. If you will read the diary of his experiences both as a missionary to the Indians, and of his experience with this woman, and of his later experience on his return to England, you will find that he doesn't even claim to have been saved until after he had come back to England. However, he had already brought into existence the Methodist Church.

The Campbellite Church has had a rather striking and unusual background. Alexander Campbell was the founder of it. He was educated as a Presbyterian. He and his father came to this country and Mr. Campbell became pastor of a Presbyterian Church in Pennsylvania in the year 1809. However, becoming an Arminian at heart he became dissatisfied with Calvinism and accordingly left the Presbyterian denomination and he and his father joined the Baptists. They sojourned with Baptists for only a very, very short time. However, a Scripture is appropos concerning their departure: "They went out from us, because they were

not of us." After this brief sojourn with the Baptists which lasted only a very short time, Mr. Campbell, in 1827, organized his own church bearing his name, the Campbellite Church. It is highly conspicuous that this church has borne at least a dozen names since that day. It is still further highly conspicuous that today his followers are ashamed to be recognized as Campbellites, although they know that their church began as a separate denominational existence in 1827 and that it was begun by Alexander Campbell himself.

In America Campbellism wasn't the only church that came into existence, for the Mormon organization was ushered into being by Joseph Smith. After telling of his dream and vision of the golden plates which comprised the Mormon Bible, Joseph Smith organized his church. It was organized in 1830 at Fayette, New York. He then moved to Kirtland, Ohio, then to Independence, Missouri, and then to Hancock, Illinois. It was in this last town that Joseph Smith himself was mobbed and killed. However, a young follower of Joseph Smith's, by the name of Brigham Young, immediately organized an exodus and led a thousand families west to the Great Salt Lake where they established permanent residence for the Mormon religion.

Christian Science came about in rather an unique manner. Mrs. Mary Baker Eddy, in Boston in 1879, brought Christian Science into being. She had learned from Dr. Phineas P. Quimby his method of treating diseases without medicine and having learned of his treatment she professed to have discovered a Christian-scientific treatment for diseases.

I am reminded, though, whenever I think of Christian Science of that famed humorist, Josh Billings, who was asked several years ago to address the Christian Scientists at one of their annual conventions. After a wonderful dinner which he enjoyed at their expense, when he was introduced he said in substance, "My message to you is of two parts: Christian Science, first of all, is not Christian, and in the second place, it is not Science."

Though Christian Science is neither Christian nor Science but, rather mental gymnastics, it is one of the foremost isms by way of the Protestant reformation.

You will notice that I have named nine of these so-called churches. There is first of all the Catholic Church and then eight Protestant denominations which I have named. I might have taken time to have shown you the genesis and the development of many other smaller organizations. However, these will suffice to show you that these organizations, both Catholic and Protestant, cannot claim to be the church which Jesus built because they have come into existence since the days of Jesus and they were not in existence at the time when Jesus said, "I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." Although these churches were not in existence then but rather have come into existence since His day, they now wish to be recognized as churches of the Lord Jesus Christ. Just as these seven women wished to be called by the name of the man upon whom they lay hold, so these churches wish to be recognized as churches of the Lord Jesus Christ.

It is rather interesting to notice that Christ did not choose these churches. If you will read

the text carefully, you will see that the man did not choose these women but rather they laid hold of him, simply to take away their reproach. So it is with the Catholics and with these Protestant denominations. The Lord Jesus Christ has never chose, started nor organized one single one of them. Instead, they have laid hold of the Lord Jesus Christ and have made claims in the eyes of the world whereby they have deceived an unsuspecting public into thinking that they are the churches of the Lord Jesus. They have done this simply to take away their own reproach.

II

IT IS HIGHLY CONSPICUOUS THAT WE NOTICE THE SACRIFICES WHICH THESE WOMEN ARE WILLING TO MAKE.

In our text you will notice that they even suggest they eat their own bread and furnish their own apparel. This means that they will furnish their own doctrines, and surely Catholicism and the various Protestant organizations have furnished much false doctrine. There are many, many heresies that have been brought into existence through Catholicism and these heretical Protestant organizations—heresies which have no Scriptural background and which are also contradictory to the Word of God. Let's notice how these women eat their own bread—let's notice some of the doctrines which they furnished.

There is, first of all, the doctrine of baptismal regeneration. I shouldn't call it a doctrine because it isn't such. It doesn't deserve the name of doctrine. It is merely a heresy from beginning to end. There isn't one scintilla of truth within the Word of God that will back up

this heresy of baptismal regeneration. Instead, the Word of God makes it clear that we are saved by grace through faith, apart from any ordinance. Listen:

"He that believeth on him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God."—John 3:18.

"He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him."—John 3:36.

"Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation: but is passed from death unto life."—John 5:24.

"Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me hath everlasting life."—John 6:47.

As a good example, notice the thief on the Cross. He wasn't baptized yet Jesus said to him, "Today shalt thou be with me in paradise." As this thief went to Glory apart from baptism, then, beloved friends, I am persuaded to believe that everyone who trusts the Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity as did this thief, that he, too, will be saved apart from baptism.

There is only one question in the Bible as to salvation and it is found in Acts 16:30. It is the question asked by the Philippian jailer, when he said, "Sirs, what must I do to be saved?" Now notice the answer: "And they said, Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house." (Acts 16:31). Here, I say, is the only direct question in all the Word of God as to how to be saved, and the answer omits

baptism in its entirety. Therefore, I contend that baptismal regeneration is one of the heresies which these false churches have furnished.

Then there is the heresy of sprinkling. Any student of the Word of God knows that it is heretical to talk about sprinkling, for the Word of God makes no provision for baptism other than by immersion. Notice these Scriptures:

"Then cometh Jesus from Galilee to Jordan unto John, to be baptized of him. But John forbade him, saying, I have need to be baptized of thee, and comest thou to me? And Jesus answering said unto him, Suffer it to be so now: for thus it becometh us to fulfill all righteousness. Then he suffered him. And Jesus, when he was baptized, went UP STRAIGHTWAY OUT OF THE WATER: and, lo, the heavens were opened unto him, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove, and lighting upon him."—Mt. 3:13-16.

"And John also was baptizing in Aenon near to Salim, because there was MUCH WATER there: and they came, and were baptized."—John 3:23.

"And as they went on their way, they came unto a certain water: and the eunuch said, See, here is water; what doth hinder me to be baptized? And Philip said, If thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest. And he answered and said, I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God. And he commanded the chariot to stand still: and they WENT DOWN BOTH INTO THE WATER. (Continued on page four)



"Seven Women"

(Continued from page three)
both Philip and the eunuch; and he baptized him. And when they were come UP OUT OF THE WATER, the Spirit of the Lord caught away Philip, that the eunuch saw him no more; and he went on his way rejoicing."—Acts 8:36-39.

Surely no one can read these verses from God's Book without realizing that baptism must be by immersion and that there is no room in the Word of God for sprinkling. It is a heresy that has been brought into existence by these false churches who are willing to furnish their own doctrine.

Likewise, there is **infant baptism** which is even a more bold heresy than that of sprinkling. It is not even hinted at in the Word of God. There is no Scripture in all the Bible that would in any wise at all justify it. The nearest that any of these heretics have even come to offering a Scripture to justify infant baptism is Luke 18:16. Listen:

"But Jesus called them unto him, and said, Suffer little children to come unto me, and forbid them not: for of such is the kingdom of God."

You will notice, though, that in this case babies were invited to come to Christ but were not invited to come to the baptismal fountain. You remember the Gospel of John tells us that Jesus Himself did not baptize. Listen:

"Though Jesus himself baptized not, but his disciples."—John 4:2.

Therefore, since Jesus did not baptize, and in view of the fact that these children were invited to come to Him, then it is plainly evident that they were not invited to come for baptism. Thus it would appear that infant baptism is some more of the bread which these false churches offer to furnish.

Then there is the heresy of **apostasy**. When God saves a man, He saves him forever. There is no teaching that is more profoundly presented to us in the Word of God than the doctrine of the security of the saved. However, these false churches have brought about the heresy of apostasy—that one may lose his salvation after having been saved. Notice what God's Word says concerning this:

"And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand. My Father, which gave them me, is greater than all; and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand."—John 10:28, 29.

"Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you will finish it until the day of Jesus Christ."—Phil. 1:6.

"For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, Nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord."—Rom. 8:38, 39.

"For the which cause I also suffer these things: nevertheless I am not ashamed: for I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day."—II Tim. 1:12.

No individual can read these Scriptures apart from prejudice and bias without the full realization that when one is saved,

he is saved forever. However, these heretical churches, along with their heretical pastors, have brought this false doctrine of apostasy into existence. They have furnished this heresy as a part of the bread which they propose to offer.

Time would fail me in mentioning all of the bread which these women have furnished. They have furnished so much falsehood by way of religion for which there is no foundation. Take, for example, **open communion**. It certainly is not to be found in all of the Word of God. Jesus Christ was a close communionist. He was so close in His communion that He didn't invite His mother to the table. Furthermore, He didn't ask the man in whose house the Supper was first observed. Surely that is close communion, but these heretics insist on inviting everybody to the Lord's table; and when they do so, they are furnishing some more bread—some more heresy.

Then there is the heresy of **Easter**. There is no Scripture that will authorize it. Everybody who has ever studied anything at all knows that Easter came from Babylon, that it is of heathen origin, and that when it is observed in our churches today, it is purely paganism that has been brought over into our churches. The Catholics got it from Babylon, a bunch of fool Protestants got it from Rome, and a lot of bigger fool Baptists have gotten it from the Protestants.

We don't need Easter to teach the resurrection of the Lord Jesus. Our Lord gave us a better picture. Baptism is to picture the resurrection. When you see a candidate immersed in water, that is the picture of the death, the burial, and the resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ, as well as a picture of the death of the old life to sin, the burial thereof, and the resurrection to walk in newness of life.

I say, beloved, baptism is all we need as a reminder of our Lord's resurrection. However, these churches that have not come into existence through Christ, but rather have come into existence through the efforts of man, and have attached themselves to Christianity as a parasite, in order that they might have their man-made reproach taken from them, and thus lay claim to being churches of the Lord Jesus, have been willing to furnish their own doctrine, so that they might be thus considered true churches.

These false churches want to deceive the world into thinking that they are true churches of the Lord Jesus Christ. They are willing to make many sacrifices if only they might deceive the world into thinking that they are real churches of the Lord Jesus Christ.

III

IN CONTRAST TO THESE FALSE CHURCHES, I WISH THAT WE MIGHT NOTICE THE DIGNITY OF THE TRUE CHURCH.

The small group who remained faithful to the Word of God through the Dark Ages became true Missionary Baptist churches of today. They have been called by various names all down through the ages. However, the doctrines which have been held by the Waldenses, the Albigenses, the Paulicans, the Henricians, and the Anabaptists are the same doctrines which are held by true Baptists.

Suppose I drop a chip of wood into the water. I follow the course of that chip as it floats along upon the waves. Presently this stream becomes

an underground river and I lose sight of that chip. However, long afterward, when the water emerges again from the ground, I find that that chip comes out on the other side of the tunnel. I haven't been able to see it in all of its journeys in the darkness, yet I know that its journey has been continuous.

So it is with Baptist principles. We have them today just as they were in the New Testament, and accordingly I am sure that Baptist principles have had a continuous existence all down through the Dark Ages from the day when our Lord Jesus Christ first brought Baptist churches into existence by the establishment of that church when He said, "I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it."

I'd like to give you a few historical quotations in this respect that you might see that even the historians of the world have proven that Baptists have had an unbroken line of continuity from the days of Jesus down to the present.

Alexander Campbell, who hated Baptists perhaps more than any man within the past century wrote:

"The sentiments of Baptists and their practice of baptism from the Apostolic age to the present, have had a continued chain of advocates and public monuments of their existence in every century can be produced."

John Clark Ridpath, doubtless the greatest historian the world has ever produced, (a Methodist by denominational conviction) said:

"I should not readily admit that there was a Baptist Church as far back as 100 A. D., although without doubt there were Baptist churches then, as all Christians were then Baptists."

Mosheim, the outstanding Lutheran historian, said:

"Before the rise of Luther and Calvin, there lay secreted in almost all the countries of Europe, persons who adhered tenaciously to the principles of the modern Dutch Baptists . . . the origin of Baptists is lost in the remote depths of antiquity . . . the first century was a history of the Baptists."

"Crossing the Centuries," edited by William C. King, having as associate counselors, editors, collaborators and contributors such as: Cardinal Gibbon, Roman Catholic; Bishop John H. Vincent, Methodist; President Theodore Roosevelt; President Woodrow Wilson; W. H. P. Founce (President of Brown University); Albert Bushnell Hart, Ph. D., L.L.D., Litt. D., head of the History Department of Harvard University; George B. Adams, M. A., Ph. D., Litt. D., of Yale, and many more such famous men, says:

"Of the Baptists it may be said that they are not reformers. These people, comprising bodies of Christian believers known under various names in different countries, are entirely distinct and independent of the Roman and Greek churches, and have an unbroken continuity of existence from apostolic days down through the centuries. Throughout this long period, they were bitterly persecuted for heresy, driven from country to country, disfranchised, deprived of their property, imprisoned, tortured and slain by the thousands; yet they swerved not from their New Testament faith, doctrine and adherence."

Not only is the dignity of the true church presented to us by its historical existence through all ages since the days of Jesus, its dignity is likewise brought before us by the Biblical description that is given in the Word of God. That true church is called "the salt of the earth."

"Ye are the salt of the earth."—Mt. 5:13.

It is salt that preserves, and I would remind you that it is Baptists who have preserved Bible doctrines from the corruption of Catholicism. If Baptists had not been in existence, all the true teachings of the

Word of God long ago would have been corrupted by the Catholics and later by the Protestants.

Furthermore, the Bible describes the Baptists as "the light of the world."

"Ye are the light of the world."—Mt. 5:14.

I would remind you that it is Baptist light that this world has enjoyed for the past two thousand years. If you remove Baptist light and the teachings for which Baptists have contended for two thousand years, this world would be living in absolute darkness so far as the truth of God's Word is concerned.

Again, Baptists are described as being "the pillar and ground of the truth."

"But if I tarry long, that thou mayest know how thou oughtest to behave thyself in the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth."

—I Tim. 3:15.

The only support which the truth has in any community is Baptist churches. Methodists, Campbellites, and all the balance of the Protestants are supporting mostly the heresies which they have invented—in other words, the bread which they themselves have furnished. Only Baptists when they are true to the Word of God support the truth, and the only support that the truth has in any community is the support which it has from Baptist churches.

In noticing this description which the Word of God gives of us, you can see that Baptist churches are also described as being God's habitation.

"In whom ye also are builded together for a habitation of God through the spirit."

—Eph. 2:22.

God doesn't inhabit any body of people on earth but a New Testament Baptist church. He doesn't have His habitation in any Protestant church; surely He doesn't have it in any Catholic organization; certainly He doesn't have it in any lodge, but rather in a Baptist church. I say this in view of the fact that when Paul wrote to the church of Ephesus, he reminded that church that they were a habitation of God through the Holy Spirit. Well, beloved, if God in Paul's day was residing in a Baptist church in the city of Ephesus, I am sure that God is residing today through the Holy Spirit in Baptist churches, and in Baptist churches alone. I am sure that He has never moved His residence from a Baptist church to any corrupt, heretical Protestant nor Catholic organization.

Now, beloved, suffer this world of exhortation. I am glad this morning that I am a Baptist. I feel sorry, in contrast, for anyone that is a Catholic or a Protestant. I rejoice myself that I am a Baptist and that I have the privilege of preaching the truth which we as Baptists hold and maintain. If you are a Baptist this morning, you ought to rejoice because of your church membership. If you are not a Baptist, you ought to covet to be a member of the true church—the church that Jesus built, which was a Baptist church.

Beyond any shadow of doubt, there is no reason in this world for anyone to ever imagine that a Protestant organization or a Catholic church could even be the true church of the Lord Jesus Christ. These organizations were not in existence in the days of Jesus, and they did not come into existence in many instances until many cen-

turies after Christ had already organized His church. Therefore, beloved friends, the Catholic and Protestant churches cannot successfully lay claim to being called the church that Jesus built, but instead man-made organizations have laid hold of the Lord Jesus Christ just as these seven women lay hold of the man in order that their reproach might be taken away.

Oh, may God in His grace today enable you to see this truth and may we sing together:

"Through many dangers, toils, and snares,
We have already come,
'Tis grace hath brought us here thus far,
And grace will lead us home."

Hindrances To Prayer

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YOUR PRAYERS BE NOT HINDERED." People can't pray in a fight and a quarrel. They have ready access to God. If their husband or wife is doing his or her very best, and the other party is unreasonable, quarrelsome, and determined on trouble, then the blame belongs to the offender.

REJECTION OF THE LAW OR WORD OF GOD

(Prov. 28:9). One can not have an attitude of defiance toward the teachings of the Bible, and get anywhere praying. Face the fact that the Lord condemns something you are doing, and say, "I don't care what God says, I am going to go on as I have been going," and you had as well quit praying. So many church members reject the plain word of God. Many churches get no further than they do because they reject the word. They violate the Scriptures concerning the right observance of the Lord's Supper; the matter of women speaking in public; the New Testament pattern church organization, etc.

HUMAN SELFISHNESS

(James 4:3). People "ask and miss" meaning to consume what God gives them "on their lusts." When such is the attitude, God DOESN'T GIVE. When we check up, it is amazing how selfish we ask. Often sick people ask for healing and health. What for? So they can go on living for self, or even for the devil. How much of our praying relates to God and his kingdom? The model prayer puts first GOD and His Kingdom—the last of all human need is mentioned. When Solomon at the dedication of the temple did not ask selfishly, he was given more than he asked for—he was given great personal blessings.

THE OFFERING OF UNWORTHY SERVICE TO GOD

(Mal. 1:7-10) The people mentioned here brought old animals for sacrifices. They gave to God the scraps and left-over. When we belittle God with our gifts and our service, our prayers are hindered. Our love and regard is indicated by the expression of our devotion. If we can a person who tosses a few Lord a few nickles, and gives small scraps of his time to him, expect his blessing? Often people of this kind who they get into trouble pray lustily and wonder why they don't get a ready answer.

When prayers are unanswered, we need to examine ourselves and to see if there are some hindrances, like rocks and blocks, in the way.