

**Restraining Prayer: Is It Sin? By Andrew Murray "Thou restrainest prayer before God" (Job 15:4 - posted by EAGLE**

Restraining Prayer: Is It Sin?

By Andrew Murray

"Thou restrainest prayer before God" (Job 15:4).

"God forbid that I should sin against the Lord in ceasing to pray for you" (1 Sam. 12:23).

If we are to deal effectually with the lack of prayer we must ask, "Restraining prayer (prayerlessness), is it sin?" And if it be, how is it to be dealt with, to be discovered, and confessed, and cast out by man, and cleansed away by God? Jesus is a Savior from sin. To see that our prayer sins are indeed sins, is the first step to a true and divine deliverance from them. Let us look at the sin of prayerlessness, and at the sinfulness that lies at the root of it.

1. The presence of sin makes the presence of God impossible. The presence of God is the great privilege of God's people, and their only power against the enemy. Throughout Scripture is the great central promise: "I am with thee." This marks off the wholehearted believer from the worldly and worldly Christians around him: he lives consciously hidden in the secret of God's presence.

2. Defeat and failure are always owing to the loss of God's presence. In the Christian life and the work of the Church, defeat is ever a sign of the loss of God's presence. If we apply this to our failure in the prayer life, and as a result of that, to our failure in work for God, we are led to see that all is simply owing to our not standing in clear and full fellowship with God. His nearness, His immediate presence has not been the chief thing sought after and trusted in. He could not work in us as He would. Loss of blessing and power is ever caused by the loss of God's presence.

3. The loss of God's presence is always owing to some hidden sin. Defeat is God's voice telling us there is something wrong. He has given Himself so wholly to His people, He delights so in being with them, and would so fain reveal in them His love and power, that He never withdraws Himself unless they compel Him by sin.

Through the Church there is a complaint of defeat. Powerful conversions are comparatively rare. The fewness of holy, consecrated, spiritual Christians devoted to the service of God and their fellow men is felt everywhere. The power of the Church for the preaching of the Gospel is paralyzed by the scarcity of money and men; and all owing to the lack of the effectual prayer which brings the Holy Spirit in power, first on ministers and believers, then on missionaries and the unsaved.

4. God Himself will discover the hidden sin. God must show to us how the lack of prayer is the indication of unfaithfulness to our consecration vow that God should have all our heart and life. We must see that this prayerlessness, with the excuses we make for it, is greater sin than we have thought, for it means that we have little taste or relish for fellowship with God; that our faith rests more on our own work and efforts than on the power of God; that we have little sense of the heavenly blessing God waits to shower down; that we are not ready to sacrifice the ease and confidence of the flesh for persevering waiting on God; that the spirituality of our life, and our abiding in Christ, is altogether too feeble to make us prevail in prayer.

When the pressure of work for Christ is allowed to be the excuse for our not finding time to seek and secure His own presence and power in it as our chief need, it surely proves that there is no right sense of our absolute dependence upon God; no deep apprehension of the divine and supernatural work of God in which we are only His instruments, no true entrance into the heavenly character of our mission and aims, no full surrender to and delight in Christ Jesus Himself.

If we were to yield to God's Spirit to show us that all this is in very deed the meaning of remissness in prayer, and of our allowing other things to crowd it out, all our excuses would fall away, and we should fall down and cry, "We have sinned!" Samuel once said, "As for me, God forbid that I should sin against the Lord in ceasing to pray for you" (1 Sam. 12:23). Ceasing from prayer is sin against God.

5. When God discovers sin in us, it must be confessed and cast out. When the sin is no more hidden, when the Holy

Spirit begins to convince of it, then comes the time of heart-searching. If we have reason to think this is the sin that is "in the camp," let us look the solemn fact in the face. Let us bring it out before God, and give up this sin to the death. Let no fear of past failure, let no threatening array of temptations, or duties, or excuses, keep us back. It is a simple question of obedience. Surely we can count upon God's grace to accept and strengthen for the life He asks of us.

6. With sin cast out God's presence is restored. God's presence restored means victory secured. In this matter of prayer God does not demand of us impossibilities. He will give the grace to do what He asks, and so to pray that our intercessions shall be a pleasure to Him and to us, a source of strength to our conscience and our work, and a channel of blessing to those for whom we labour. Bow in silence and wait before God until He overshadows you with His presence and leads you out of that region of argument as to human possibilities where conviction of sin can never be deep, and full deliverance can never come. Take quiet time, and be still before God, that He may take this matter in hand. Leave yourself in God's hands.

Abridged from The Ministry of Intercession by Andrew Murray.

**Re: Restraining Prayer: Is It Sin? By Andrew Murray "Thou restrainest pray, on: 2016/9/15 19:57**

Dear Frannie,  
May God bless you for posting these reviving messages. This one was timely for me.

Quote:  
-----We must see that this prayerlessness, with the excuses we make for it, is greater sin than we have thought, for it means that we have little taste or relish for fellowship with God; that our faith rests more on our own work and efforts than on the power of God; that we have little sense of the heavenly blessing God waits to shower down; that we are not ready to sacrifice the ease and confidence of the flesh for persevering waiting on God; that the spirituality of our life, and our abiding in Christ, is altogether too feeble to make us prevail in prayer.  
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Please pray that God would personally reveal these to me and others.

Zsuzsanna