

Hindrances

I once read of a Catholic priest lamenting the plight of another priest who had been jailed in Nazi Germany and “*forbidden to practice his religion*,” which seemed difficult to understand.

Yet if a person’s religion consists in outward practices and rituals then their religion can be hindered, or even forbidden.

John 4:23 [NIV] “*Yet a time is coming and has now come when the true worshippers will worship the Father in spirit and truth, for they are the kind of worshippers the Father seeks.*”

If a person is a true worshipper of God in spirit and in truth, then their worship cannot be hindered or destroyed, for there are no laws that can forbid them thinking and praying.

No laws, jails, abuses or deprivations can prevent a spiritual person from worshipping the Creator God.

Let a person set their heart and mind only on doing the will of God, they are free from any hindrances.

Matthew 22:35-40 [NIV] “*One of them, an expert in the law, tested him with this question: ‘Teacher, which is the greatest commandment in the Law?’ Jesus replied: ‘Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.’ This is the first and greatest commandment. And the second is like it: ‘Love your neighbour as yourself.’ All the Law and the Prophets hang on these two commandments.*”

If we understand and apply in our lives these words of Jesus Christ, we are instantly free from any hindrance.

We can then enjoy spiritual tranquillity under every circumstance, for we know that we are fulfilling the will of God and that He is accepting even our very suffering as a sacrifice that is pleasing in His sight.

Romans 12:1 [NIV] “*Therefore, I urge you, brothers, in view of God’s mercy, to offer your bodies as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God, this is your spiritual act of worship.*”

It is only when we introduce our own will into our relationship to God, not making a complete sacrifice of our lives, that we find we are troubled and distracted by hindrances from the outside of our life.

If I mingle some pet religious enterprise of mine with the will of God and come to think of them as one, I can be hindered in the maturing of my Christian life.

In such a situation I begin to blame whoever stands in my way and excuse my “*spiritual breakdown*” as being caused by someone or something that is working to “*hinder*” me.

The essence of spiritual worship is –

To love supremely God and other human beings. [**Matthew 22:36-40**]

To trust God confidently. [**John 14:15-18; Hebrews 13:5-6**]

To pray without ceasing. [**1 Thessalonians 5:17**]

To seek to be Christ-like and holy in all that we do for Jesus Christ’s sake. [**1 Peter 1:13-16**]

How impossible for anyone or anything to hinder this kind of “*religious practice*.”

If our normal “*churchgoing*” religion is debarred by government decree or old age and disability, we can retire to the sanctuary of our own hearts, minds and human spirit and worship our Creator God acceptably until He sees fit to change the circumstances.

If we find ourselves irked by external hindrances, be sure that we are **not** victims of our **own** self-will.

Nothing can hinder the person who is fully surrendered and quietly trusting our Creator God, for nothing in this universe can hinder God. [Luke 1:37; Luke 18:27; Matthew 19:26]