

# Life in the Red Letters

## Living in the Secret Place

Prayer was so significant in the Life of Jesus that it is almost puzzling. This is the God man, Christ Jesus and we find him often slipping away to commune with the Father and often times he was found praying all night.

Not only was Jesus a Praying Man, he also received and answered prayers!

Jesus answered prayers of:

- Lepers
- Rulers
- Blind people
- Demon possessed people
- Dad's with sick daughters
- Mom's with a dead son

Who better to mentor us than the one who prays like we should pray and the one who answers prayers that are prayed to him in like manner?

The disciples had learned from Jesus, that there was a connection between Christ's powerful public life and His secret life of prayer. They had been with Him and seen him pray. **Luke 11:1** Now Jesus was praying in a certain place, and when he finished, one of his disciples said to him, "Lord, teach us to pray..."

God wants us to know how to pray. And, according to Jesus being alone with God in a secret place is where we must begin.

## The Sermon on the Mount

### Mt. 6:1-4 Giving

**1** "Beware of practicing your righteousness before other people in order to be seen by them..."

**2** "when you give to the needy, sound no trumpet before you..."

**3** "when you give to the needy, do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing

**4** so that your giving may be in secret. And your Father who sees in secret will reward you.

### Mt. 6:5-6 Praying

5 “And when you pray, you must not be like the hypocrites. For they love to stand and pray in the synagogues and at the street corners, that they may be seen by others. Truly, I say to you, they have received their reward.

6 But when you pray, go into your room and shut the door and pray to your Father who is in secret. And your Father who sees in secret will reward you”

### **Mt. 6:16-18 Fasting**

16 “And when you fast, do not look gloomy like the hypocrites, for they disfigure their faces that their fasting may be seen by others. Truly, I say to you, they have received their reward.

17 But when you fast, anoint your head and wash your face,

18 that your fasting may not be seen by others but by your Father who is in secret. And your Father who sees in secret will reward you

These three instructions emphasize to us the importance and value of dwelling in a secret place with God. Living in the Secret Place.

Building that face to face - heart to heart – one on one relationship with God. This must become our highest priority.

In the days of social media it seems like everything just has to be shared!

Where we are; what we eat; how we feel; we share our political views; we share our favorites sports team’s accomplishments and we share our disappointments in our favorite teams failures.

Perhaps there are some things we get from God that are not meant to be shared immediately on instagram.

We must break our addiction to the approval and the praises of man.

We must build a life that finds its center in that one to one relationship with God.

## The Secret Place

### 1. A Place for Solitude

- a. Solitude is a place of refreshing. A place to be alone with Jesus.

Jesus desired this for his disciples: **Mark 6:30,31** The apostles returned to Jesus from their ministry tour and told him all they had done and taught. <sup>31</sup> Then Jesus said, “Let’s go off by ourselves to a quiet place and rest awhile.” He said this

because there were so many people coming and going that Jesus and his apostles didn't even have time to eat.

- b. Spiritual prosperity begins with the intimacy of spiritual aloneness.
- c. The entire story of the Bible is God longing for a personal relationship with human beings.
- d. A. W. Tozer on the Secret Place : Retire from the world each day to some private spot. Stay in the secret place till the surrounding noises begin to fade out of your heart and a sense of God's presence envelops you.

Deliberately tune out the unpleasant sounds and come out of your closet determined not to hear them. Listen for the inward Voice till you learn to recognize it.

This is man who's ministry spanned 44 years in the 30' 40's and 50's.

Stop trying to compete with others. Give yourself to God, and then be what and who you are without regard to what others think.

Learn to pray inwardly every moment. Pray for a single eye. Read less, but read more of what is important to your inner life.

Call home your roving thoughts. Gaze on Christ with the eyes of your soul. Practice spiritual concentration.

All the above is contingent upon a right relation to God through Christ and daily meditation on the Scriptures.

## 2. A Place for Soaking

- a. God's presence is the answer for a dry heart.
  - i. Psalm 63:1 A PSALM OF DAVID, WHEN HE WAS IN THE WILDERNESS OF JUDAH O God, you are my God; earnestly I seek you; my soul thirsts for you; my flesh faints for you, as in a dry and weary land where there is no water.
  - ii. Isaiah 44:3 "For I will pour water on him who is thirsty, And floods on the dry ground; I will pour My Spirit on your descendants, And My blessing on your offspring."
  - iii. Jesus said the Spirit will cause **rivers of living water to flow out of your heart! (Jn 7:38)**

b. What is soaking?

Definition: to lie in and become saturated or permeated with water or some other liquid.

- i. So soaking in the secret place means to come into your prayer closet with no agenda but let Jesus pour out His love on you.

“Now hope does not disappoint, because the love of God has been poured out in our hearts by the Holy Spirit who was given to us.” (Romans 5:5).

- ii. When we neglect our personal quiet time with Jesus, and fail meditate on His love, that’s when we get disappointed and lose hope.

3. A Place for Seeking

a. Ask God to speak to you.

I love what God told Jeremiah: Call to me and I will answer you, and will tell you great and hidden things that you have not known (Jer. 33:3).

b. The secret place with God is where you will learn to the language of the Spirit.

c. Make a list of the things you want to seek this next year

- i. To know his love better.
- ii. To hear his voice more clearly.
- iii. To have better insight into the scriptures.

Practical Instructions:

- 1) Find the right place where you are comfortable and will not be distracted or interrupted. Acts 10:9 “... Peter went up on the housetop about the sixth hour to pray...”
- 2) Take enough time for God to speak to you and for you to listen for God.
- 3) Confess any known sin. “If I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear.” (Psalm 66:18NKJV).

Note: Go back and obey the last thing God told you to do. **Jn. 10:27 My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me.**

- 4) Take your Bible with you and read it. Meditate on the verses or phrases in which you sensed a personal impression.

- 5) Practice hearing God's voice. Journal what you think God is saying and pray for clarity and confirmation.
- 6) Leave the secret place with a spirit of humility and obedience.

**Conclusion:** What is done from the right heart in the secret place is always rewarded by God! Your Giving, Your Fasting, Your Praying... God sees the things that others cannot see and He rewards accordingly.