



“Shut the Door”

Matthew 6:6

“But you, when you pray, enter into your room, and when you have shut your door, pray to your Father who is in secret; and your Father who sees in secret shall reward you openly.” King James 2000 Bible (©2003)

“But when you pray, go away by yourself, shut the door behind you, and pray to your Father in private. Then your Father, who sees everything, will reward you.” New Living Translation (©2007)

“But you, when you pray, enter into your closet and lock your door, and pray to your father who is in secret, and your Father who sees in secret will reward you in public.” Aramaic Bible in Plain English (©2010)

“But thou, when thou mayest pray, go into thy chamber, and having shut thy door, pray to thy Father who is in secret, and thy Father who is seeing in secret, shall reward thee manifestly”. Young's Literal Translation

I believe that shutting the door in your private time with God is one of the most difficult commands of Jesus when praying in secret.

Some people think they don't need much time with God i.e. quality is better than quantity. However, knowing God takes time.

As a business man, I know how I would feel if someone came to my office to talk to me and they continually watched the door; as if they wanted to exit all the time. I would, frankly say, why don't you go and take care of your business and come back when you have time to visit. I will be here.

The world's pressures and personal strains have their toll on time with God. One missionary pastor of mine years ago said, "We need to pray until the parade passes." "Then we can really pray." I understand and practiced it for years, But, Jesus said, "Shut to the door."

Adam Clarke's Commentary. "*Shut the door*"

Prayer is the most secret intercourse of the soul with God, and as it were the conversation of one heart with another. The world is too profane and treacherous to be of the secret. We must shut the door against it: endeavor to forget it, with all the affairs which busy and amuse it. Prayer requires retirement, at least of the heart; for this may be fitly termed the closet in the house of God, which house the body of every real Christian is, 1 Corinthians 3:16. To this closet we ought to retire even in public prayer, and in the midst of company.

Barnes notes on the New Testament Explanatory and Practical. "*Shut the door*"

Enter into thy closet. Every Jewish house had a place for secret devotion. The roofs of their houses were *flat* places for walking, conversation, and meditation, in the cool of the evening. Matthew 9:2. Over the *porch*, or entrance of the house, was, however, a small room of the size of the porch, raised a story above the rest of the house, expressly appropriated for the place of retirement, in secrecy and solitude, the pious Jew might offer his prayers, unseen by any but the Searcher of hearts.

To this place, or to some similar place, our Savior directed his disciples to repair when they wished to hold communion with God. This is the place commonly mentioned in

the New Testament as the *upper room*, or the place for secret prayer. The meaning of the Savior is, that there should be some place where we may be in secret-where we may be alone with God.

There should be some *place* to which we may resort where no ear will hear us but His ear, and no eye can see us but His eye. Unless there is such a place, secret prayer will not be long or strictly maintained. It is often said that we have no such place, and can secure none. We are away from home; we are travelling; we are among strangers; we are in stages and steam-boats, and how can we find such places of retirement?

I answer, the *desire* to pray, and the love of prayer, will *create* such places in abundance. The Savior had all the difficulties which we can have, but yet he lived in the practice of secret prayer. To be alone, he rose up "a great while before day," and went into a solitary place and prayed. With him, a grove, a mountain, a garden, furnished such a place; and though a traveler, and among strangers, and without a house, he lived in the habit of secret prayer.

What excuse have they who have a home, and who spend the precious hours of the morning in sleep, and who will practice no self-denial that they may be alone with God?

O Christian! thy Savior would have broken in upon these hours, and would have trod his solitary way to the mountain or the grove, there he might pray. He *did* do it. He did it to pray for thee, too indolent and too unconcerned about thy own salvation and that of the world, to practice the least self-denial in order to commune with God! How can religion live thus? How can such a soul be saved?

Life Application New Testament Commentary

"When you pray, go away by yourself, shut the door behind you, and pray to your Father secretly." Matt. 6:6

Private prayer enables believers to pour out their hearts to God, express their true feelings, and listen in the quietness for God's answer.

Shut the Door

April 19, 2012 in Spiritual Disciplines

Matthew 6:6 *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. (ESV)*

Distractions abound today. Social media, email, YouTube, television, text messages, and iPods are just a few of the distractions all of us have succumbed to in the last five minutes. Multi-tasking has reached its zenith in our everyday lives. And, I believe that these modern day conveniences have become our greatest hindrances to our devotional life.

In [Matthew 6:6](#) Jesus speaks of prayer and getting alone with God. He commanded that we go in secret to our closets, or our rooms to commune with God. Yet, if you continue in the same verse He says “shut the door.” It’s not good enough to enter the confines of the prayer closet if the door is wide open.

This reference to the prayer closet might certainly mean a physical closet, with a physical door to be shut. And we should find a place of solitude such as Jesus did. Jesus went to the mountains; His prayer closet was somewhere alone communicating with His heavenly Father. So, Jesus’ prayer closet wasn’t a physical closet with Sunday’s clothes hanging nicely from their wooden hangers.

Our prayer lives, and times of devotions are suffering because we have the door standing open. Distractions are getting the best of us because we refuse to shut the door to them. How many of us take our iPhones with us to pray? How many keep our laptops open while we study? How many of us text during our times of devotion?

And let me just get on my hobby horse and rock for a moment. I highly doubt you are truly in prayer and communing with God if you are tweeting all that God is supposedly speaking to you. You are simply standing on the corner making long prayer to be heard of many people. The door to your prayer closet is in need of being shut. If you are truly entering the prayer closet people will see the fruit for themselves and they won’t have to be told.

I believe we need to shut the door to every distraction to our devotional time. I had to stop listening to music while I prayed because I kept shuffling song to song. Not only that, I saw that I was keeping time while I prayed simply by how long my play list lasted. I had to shut the door. Before I go to prayer now, I check all my email as I walk from the bed to the coffee pot to my prayer closet.

...I keep my iPhone away from where I spend my time. I'm shutting the door to distractions.

Let's get our devotional lives in order. Let's enter the privacy of the prayer closet and shut the door behind us. I want to give Jesus my undivided attention

One Christian who was tired of this world's parade keeping him from closing his closet door prayed for the Lord to help him. He prayed and listened and prayed until finally he heard the voice of the Good Shepherd.

This is what he heard. **"Cling to my Cross and and pray."** He gladly obeyed and here is what he experienced. He saw himself clinging to the old rugged cross and praying and thanking God for His mercy. He began to kick the sand at the bottom of the Cross where he was clinging. He kicked and kicked, and the sand began to dissipate, and he was surprised to see what was under the sand.

Solid Rock. Nothing but Solid Rock was holding up the Cross in which he was clinging. Immediately the prayer closet slammed shut. He knew he was in the presence of God. He continues to cling to the Old Rugged Cross. It is the Gate-Way to prayer for him. He thinks now of the closet door as the Cross of Calvary. Entering into God's presence is simply a matter of Clinging to His Cross and thanking Him for His blood and death on the Cross. It is his immediate entrance and the door is shut and locked.

"He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?" Romans 8:32 King James Bible (Cambridge Ed.)