

CHAPTER TWO

The Secret of the Shut Door

But you, when you pray, go into your room, and when you have shut your door, pray to your Father who is in the secret place; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you openly (Matthew 6:6).

These words came from the Master's lips. All Scripture is God-breathed, but followers of Jesus always find particular delight in heeding the words Jesus Himself gave. When He taught on prayer, He gave primary emphasis to the secret place. In fact, His very first teaching on prayer (above) was on the primacy of the secret place. Later, He taught *how* to pray; but first, He told *where* to pray.

Matthew 6:6 contains a powerful secret regarding the *where* of prayer, but first let me ask a question. Do you occasionally feel disconnected from God? Do you sometimes struggle to feel God's presence when you pray? Do you wish you could know He's with you, right now, drawing near to you?

If your answer to any of those questions is *yes*, then I have some wonderful news for you. There's a guaranteed, sure-fire way to have instant intimacy with the Father any time you want, and Jesus Himself told the way. He gave us the key (above) when He said, *Your Father who is in the secret place*. Jesus was saying, *Your Father is already in the secret place. He has gone ahead of you and is waiting for you. The moment you get to the secret place, you're in the immediate presence of your Father.*

Jesus affirmed this truth twice in the same chapter. He said it a second time in Matthew 6:18, "So that you do not appear to men to be fasting, but to *your Father who is in the*

secret place; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you openly.” Jesus said it twice to emphasize with absolute certainty, *your Father is in the secret place*.

Furthermore, Jesus gave us the key to finding this secret place. To get there, all you have to do is *shut your door*.

When you enter a room and *shut your door*, you’re in the presence of your Father. Instantly. Your shut door grants you instant intimacy with the Father. Even if you don’t *feel* that intimacy right away, you can believe Jesus’ assurance that it’s true. You’ve just stepped into the Father’s chamber. The secret place is your portal to the throne, the place where you taste of heaven itself. When you *know* you’re with your Father, amazing changes will happen inside. You’ll thrill with confidence in His nearness. As you reach for Him in faith, you’ll actually begin to *feel* His presence. Your awareness of His presence will strengthen your faith and love.

Jesus painted a picture to help us visualize what’s happening when we build our lives on a secret place relationship with God. We’re getting our foundations in order. He said it’s like building a house on rock:

Therefore whoever hears these sayings of Mine, and does them, I will liken him to a wise man who built his house on the rock: and the rain descended, the floods came, and the winds blew and beat on that house; and it did not fall, for it was founded on the rock. But everyone who hears these sayings of Mine, and does not do them, will be like a foolish man who built his house on the sand: and the rain descended, the floods came, and the winds blew and beat on that house; and it fell. And great was its fall (Matthew 7:24-27).

Jesus was saying, *If you’ll practice what I’ve just taught, you’ll lay foundations in your life that will survive the harshest storms*. And storms will most certainly come. Storms come to all—to both the foolish and the wise. What distinguishes the wise from the foolish? Their foundation. When the storm comes, the wise remain standing.

Again, one of the most essential foundation stones for disciples is a secret life with God. Those who carefully nurture it will enjoy daily intimacy with the Father and will be prepared to sustain raging storms—whether they originate from hell’s fury or the world’s tribulations or the floodgates of heaven’s blessings.

You have a guaranteed way to instant intimacy with the Father, every day. Don’t forget the secret: *shut your door*.