

The Essentiality of a Secret Life in God

by Bryan Anthony

The sermon highlights the vital importance of cultivating a secret life with God to sustain spiritual health and identity in Christ.

Scripture: Psalm 139:23, Matthew 6:6, John 4:23, Colossians 3:1, Hebrews 12:2

Topics: "Private Prayer", "Intimacy With God"

Description

Bryan Anthony preaches on the significance of cultivating a secret life with God, emphasizing the importance of engaging in private prayer and devotion away from the eyes of others. He highlights how neglecting this secret place with God can lead to moral collapses, compromises, and a lack of true foundations in ministry. By drawing from the example of Jesus Christ, who found His identity and lived distinctively through His intimate relationship with the Father, Bryan Anthony encourages believers to seek approval and recognition from God alone, rather than from men.

Transcript

"But you, when you pray, go into your inner room, close your door and pray to your Father who is in secret, and your Father who sees what is done in secret will reward you." -Matt. 6.6

There is something most holy and precious about obediences and acts of loyalty that are carried out unto the Lord in secret. The real discrepancy in modern ministry is not a lack of activity or enthusiasm, but a woeful lack of true foundations, and this malady stems from the neglect of a secret life with God.

At the end of the day, all our anxieties, fears, compromises, moral collapses, and worldly strivings can be traced back to a threadbare secret life. We may be gifted in some form of ministry, waxing eloquent in spiritual talk, and impressing our friends and colleagues, but when the heat and press of real life strikes our hearts, our best facades wither for want of the reality of Jesus Christ. "Beholding Him, we are changed," but when the secret place of prayer is forsaken for other things, we are "mere men" with no heavenly distinctive in the earth.

The Lord has never cared much for religious performances. Feverish and self-conscious attempts at spirituality are ever and always driven by the desire to be seen and approved by men. He has always been the great Purist in terms of a jealousy for reality and "truth in the innermost parts", and this can only be established and maintained when we are engaging Him in the secret place. It takes time to cultivate a secret life, for we are an inwardly itchy and distracted people, always yearning for recognition and praise.

But during Jesus' earthly sojourn, He left us with the preeminent example of Sonship, living out a seemingly mundane 30 years of submission to earthly parents and carpentry work, while abiding with His heavenly Father when there was no one to pat Him on His back. His identity was found totally in the favor the Father, and so He was able to live in a distinctive manner, "full of grace and truth", unmoved by criticism and unaffected by flattery.

He did not strive for the recognition of His name or His spirituality, but lived a common life in a radically uncommon way. If anyone had the earthly right to "toot" their own horn it would have been Him, but He demonstrated the wisdom of God by glorying in that which only His Father could see. And when the day of His showing forth came, He emerged from the Jordan waters as One upon Whom the Spirit rested "without measure."

Dear saint, get your eyes off of men, and cease this deathly cycle of seeking their praise and acceptance. As you fix your eyes upon "Jesus, the Author and Finisher of our faith," you will be delivered from strife and brought into the real rest of sonship. All things will be made new. He will bring you into His heart and purpose, and your secret life with God will become your supreme treasure.

The great enemy of the Lord Jesus Christ in the present day is the conception of practical work that has not come from the New Testament, but from the systems of the world in which endless energy and activities are insisted upon, but no private life with God. -Oswald Chambers

(Oswald Chambers: Abandoned to God, by David McCasland; Discovery House Publishers, 1993; p. 187)

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