**ENTER INTO THY CLOSET**

**SCRIPTURE…MATTHEW 6:1-6**  ***Take heed that ye do not your alms before men, to be seen of them: otherwise ye have no reward of your Father which is in heaven.2Therefore when thou doest thine alms, do not sound a trumpet before thee, as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets, that they may have glory of men. Verily I say unto you, They have their reward.3But when thou doest alms, let not thy left hand know what thy right hand doeth:4That thine alms may be in secret: and thy Father which seeth in secret himself shall reward thee openly.5And when thou prayest, thou shalt not be as the hypocrites are: for they love to pray standing in the synagogues and in the corners of the streets, that they may be seen of men. Verily I say unto you, They have their reward.6But thou, when thou prayest, enter into thy closet, and when thou hast shut thy door, pray to thy Father which is in secret; and thy Father which seeth in secret shall reward thee openly.***

***PRAYER***

***WED NITE PRAYER MEETING….!!!!! OCUPY TILL I COME!!!***

1. **1. In His many teachings, while delivering His sermon on the mount, Jesus taught His disciples some very important** **valuable lessons on being one of his disciples, He made strong emphasis on giving of alms, and He instructed them on refraining from being and acting like a hypocrite, by keeping things in their right perspective by doing things in a secret type of manner especially while praying, He instructed them to Enter into thy closet, and shut the door behind you ~while praying, there they were to learn the value of praying secretly to the Father As opposed to prayer done to be seen of men!**

[**Mt 6:5**](http://biblia.com/bible/nkjv/Mt%206.5)***5And when thou prayest, thou shalt not be as the hypocrites are: for they love to pray standing in the synagogues and in the corners of the streets, that they may be seen of men.***

1. **There was one thing that Jesus wanted them to fully understand and that was to ensure them that the Father in heaven will hear and respond to their prayers when done in a secret manner….!!!!!**

**????Ever Wonder Why So Many Prayers Go Unanswered, Here’s the Key…..????**

[**Mt 6:6**](http://biblia.com/bible/nkjv/Mt%206.6)***6But thou, when thou prayest, enter into thy closet, and when thou hast shut thy door, pray to thy Father which is in secret; and thy Father which seeth in secret shall reward thee openly.***

***Today I would like to make the emphasis on the benefits and advantages of this form of spiritual devotion to God by being in secret devotion with Him through prayer, and also to encourage our daily walk with God as we adopt His principles in our prayer life!!! NOT MANS!!!!***

Today We want to see the value of secret prayer and what fruit it produces in our life of Prayer!!

The First thing we want to understand is that when we engage in a secret prayer life to the Father is …..

**SECRET PRAYER ENCOURAGES US TO CULTIVATE OUR SPIRITUAL NATURE** **THROUGH REGULAR SPIRITUAL EXERCISE...**

**You See Beloved,**

1. Our bodies are developed through regular physical exercise, through it we tone our muscles, strengthen our bones, improve our flexibility, it develops a stronger heart, our circulatory system gets vastly improved, our overall shape and appearance are also all enhanced and lastly it may deter many forms of sicknesses we may encounter because of the desire to help the physical man stay in shape by consuming the right foods and exercising regularly.
2. Beloved, just like the Physical man needs its regular daily exercise to stay in shape, The spirit of man also benefits through regular spiritual or godly exercise –

**Here’s what the Bible teaches us**

[***1Ti 4:7-8***](http://biblia.com/bible/nkjv/1Ti%204.7-8)***7But refuse profane and old wives' fables, and exercise thyself rather unto godliness.8For bodily exercise profiteth little: but godliness is profitable unto all things, having promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come.***

1. Therefore, the Bible teaches us that the practice of prayer is a form of spiritual exercise, which was what Jesus was teaching his disciples !!
2. Let’s not forget that "Secret Prayer” is the spiritual gymnasium in which we exercise and practice godliness." PLANET FITNESS, YOUFIT AND OTHERS ARE only there to provide good exercise for the body, and while we must exercise for the good of the body we need to exercise the spiritual man on a higher level!!
3. "Another thing is that...Prayer is very educational. The man who prays grows; and the muscles of the soul swell from this daily exercise.

1. The opposite is also true: "Seven days without prayer makes one weak spiritually eventually

 leading up to a fall away from the faith!

 **B. ANOTHER VALUE OF “SECRET PRAYER” IS FREEDOM FROM DISTRACTIONS...**

**Jesus said….**[**Mt 6:6**](http://biblia.com/bible/nkjv/Mt%206.6)***6But thou, when thou prayest,*** ***enter into thy closet, and when thou hast shut thy door…!!!***

**Beloved I consider this the Key to a successful prayer life….KNOW WHY????**

**BECAUSE Distractions come in many forms while one is praying….**

1. **Our very own concern as to how we sound to others as we pray distracts our prayer.**
2. **By noise or movements from others around us can be very distracting and our mind begins to wander!**
3. **Our own lifestyles, our financial situations and health worries can all be distracting.**
4. **Even in the church while all are praying at the same time…one person takes over the prayer meeting and all our efforts to concentrate or focus on our own prayer is completely dissolved.**
5. **Satan himself will cloud our minds with trivial mindful things just to get us off the track of praying and being in communion with God.**
6. **News events in the world can clutter the mind rendering our prayers useless.**

**It is with this in mind that I repeat the words of JESUS HIMSELF,**

**ENTER INTO THY CLOSET,CLOSE THE DOOR BEHIND YOU, AND PRAY UNTO THE FATHER!!!!**

Where else but in the privacy of one's own closet room can one fully concentrate his efforts in communion with God and can one engage in prayer without outside distractions?

Anyone ever see the movie…**WAR ROOM ?** Watch it !!!

 Two things I’ve learned through my years of praying they are the following…

 1. Public prayer by its nature rarely addresses the specific needs of the individual.

 2. Private prayer provides opportunity to pour out one's soul to God in our own private **WAR ROOM!**

When the Bible tells us to fight the good fight of faith…its inside the **WAR ROOM**, where the war is won!!

**II. THE VALUE OF SECRET PRAYER ALSO HELPS TO** **FORM A HABIT OF CLOSE COMMUNION WITH GOD**.

1. It is said that, Man is a creature of habit, we cannot help but form habits and Habits can be bad or good.
2. One who allows himself to engage in a sinful practice over time will find themselves enslaved by force of habit to sin.

[***Jn 8:34***](http://biblia.com/bible/nkjv/Jn%208.34)***34Jesus answered them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, whosoever committeth sin is the servant of sin***

1. However, one who engages in a regular godly practice, the formation of godly habits can be a WISE THING !

 **THE HABIT OF SECRET PRAYER IS NO EXCEPTION...**

 1. Regular practice of secret prayer soon forms a habit that lends itself to the development of close

 communion and fellowship with God.

1. Once a Christian develops the habit of close fellowship with God, one cannot help but be influenced by the constant presence of God. WHEN THAT HAPPENS, NOW YOU ARE READY TO THINK OUTSIDE THE BOX, Just like Moses, BEFORE HE COULD BEGIN HIS 40 YEAR JOURNEY AND **“OCUPY TILL HE COMES”**, MOSES FIRST HAD TO GO THROUGH THE BOX. His face changed, his demeanor changed, God’s brightness was all over him and it was seen by the people and they knew he had been in the presence of His God! People will also notice that on you when you commit yourself to God in “Secret Prayer”.**YOU WILL FEEL THE WARMTH OF THE FATHER. Jesus said …ENTER INTO THY CLOSET AND WHEN THOU HAST SHUT THY DOOR*…!!!!***

 [***Pr 13:20***](http://biblia.com/bible/nkjv/Pr%2013.20)***20He that walketh with wise men shall be wise: but a companion of fools shall be destroyed.***

It is this close communion with God that will also preserve us from many evils that may come our way!!

1. **BELOVED, THE REAL SOURCE OF OUR WORST EVILS IS REALLY WITHIN US AND AROUND US EVERY DAY!**
2. Think about it, is it not our own lusts and passions that contribute to our own spiritual demise by sin?

[**Jm 1:14**](http://biblia.com/bible/nkjv/Jm%201.14)**,** ***But every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed.***

**Jam 1:**[**15**](http://biblia.com/bible/nkjv/Jm%201.15)**;*Then when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin: and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death.***

**Jam** [**4:1-3**](http://biblia.com/bible/nkjv/Jm%204.1-3) ***From whence come wars and fightings among you? come they not hence, even of your lusts that war in your members?2Ye lust, and have not: ye kill, and desire to have, and cannot obtain: ye fight and war, yet ye have not, because ye ask not.3Ye ask, and receive not, because ye ask amiss, that ye may consume it upon your lusts.***

***This is exactly what Jesus was trying to communicate to his disciples “Ye ask and receive not, because ye ask amiss.!!! ENTER INTO THY CLOSET!!!***

1. The lusts of the flesh wage war against what the Spirit desires.

[**Ga 5:16-17**](http://biblia.com/bible/nkjv/Ga%205.16-17) ***6This I say then, Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh.17For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other: so that ye cannot do the things that ye would.***

1. Therefore, controlling self has become a difficult challenge for many of Gods children but God speaks through his word and reminds us that….

[**Pr 16:32**](http://biblia.com/bible/nkjv/Pr%2016.32) ***2He that is slow to anger is better than the mighty; and he that ruleth his spirit than he that taketh a***

 ***city.***

1. **Beloved, A PRAYERFUL SECRET PRAYER CAN HELP WITH ADDRESSING THE ISSUES AND CONTENTIONS THAT WE FACE IN LIFE.**

**FOR EXAMPLE…**

1. The problem of **pride** can be treated with humbling oneself in prayer, confessing one's own sins,

Inadequacies and faults before Almighty God!!

1. The problem of **revenge** can be addressed when imploring forgiveness from God who says,

"Vengeance is mine; I will repay, says the Lord"

1. How can the problem of anger, wrath, malice...be dealt with?
2. Everything that’s in the heart of one who often prays in the **“war room** “with the help of the Spirit it can all be taken away.

[**Ro 8:26**](http://biblia.com/bible/nkjv/Ro%208.26) ***6Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities: for we know not what we should pray for as we ought: but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered.***

1. That same Spirit whose fruit is "love, joy, peace, longsuffering..."?

[**Ga 5:22**](http://biblia.com/bible/nkjv/Ga%205.22)**,**[**23**](http://biblia.com/bible/nkjv/Ga%205.23) ***22But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith,23Meekness, temperance: against such there is no law.***

[Beloved, private secret prayer can be instrumental in **controlling the flesh** while at the same time **cultivating the godly virtues of the soul!**

1. **BELOVED, “SECRET PRAYER” IS MORE THAN PSYCHOLOGICAL...**
2. Yes, it does help one in a subjective or reflective way.
3. But it also reaches out to God, who hears prayer

[***Ps 65:2***](http://biblia.com/bible/nkjv/Ps%2065.2)***2O thou that hearest prayer, unto thee shall all flesh come.***

1. He will reward one openly –

[***Mt 6:6***](http://biblia.com/bible/nkjv/Mt%206.6) ***But thou, when thou prayest, enter into thy closet, and when thou hast shut thy door, pray to thy Father which is in secret; and thy Father which seeth in secret shall reward thee openly.***

1. Especially when we ask according to His Will –

[***1Jn 5:14-15***](http://biblia.com/bible/nkjv/1Jn%205.14-15)***14And this is the confidence that we have in him, that, if we ask any thing according to his will, he heareth us:15And if we know that he hear us, whatsoever we ask, we know that we have the petitions that we desired of him.***

1. **“SECRET PRAYER” HAS BEEN KNOWN TO CHANGE GOD'S PLANS...**

 1. The prayer of **Hezekiah** gave him 15 more years – [**2 Ki 20:1-6**](http://biblia.com/bible/nkjv/2Ki%2020.1-6) **ISAIAH…***Thus saith the* ***Lord, Set thine house in order; for thou shalt die, and not live.***

 2. The prayer of **the Ninevites** spared them and their city

**Jonah 3:1-10**

Since the God who hears prayer is our Father in heaven who delights in those who pray in secret, dare we neglect that which secures so much good for ourselves?

**THE FINAL VALUE OF “SECRET PRAYER” IN THIS MESSAGE IS THE FOLLOWING….**

**V. IT ENABLES US TO PROMOTE GOOD AND HAPPINESS FOR OTHERS.**

1. **THROUGH OUR VALUE PRAYER TIME IN SECRET WITH GOD WE ARE SECURING GOD'S FAVOR IN BEHALF OF THOSE WHOM WE RAISE UP IN THE PRESCENCE OF GOD WHO ANSWERS SECRET PRAYERS.**

 1. The prayers of **Abraham** did more to save Lot than any riches he or his nephew could ever fathom!

 2. The intercession of **Moses** saved the nation of Israel, he of his own strength could not do it ,but his

 Secret prayer on behalf of them saved them and delivered them with a mighty prayer to God!!!

 3. We too can secure much good for others through the value of secret intercessory prayer for them!

 a. We can bless our nation by praying for our leaders – though they may not understand this whole

 concept of secret prayer!!

***1Ti 2:1-3I exhort therefore, that, first of all, supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks, be made for all men;2For kings, and for all that are in authority; that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty.3For this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Saviour;***

 b. We can bless our preachers' efforts by praying for them

[**2Th 3:1**](http://biblia.com/bible/nkjv/2Th%203.1) ***Finally, brethren, pray for us, that the word of the Lord may have free course, and be glorified, even as***

 ***it is with you:***

1. We can bless our sick brethren by praying for them !

[***Jam 5:16***](http://biblia.com/bible/nkjv/Jm%205.16)***16Confess your faults one to another, and pray one for another, that ye may be healed. The effectual***

 ***fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much.***

1. **THROUGH THE EFFECT SUCH PRAYING HAS ON US...HERE’S SOME FOOD FOR THOUGHT…**

 1. An iceberg never promotes the growth of vegetation. NEITHER WILL A FROZEN CHRISTIAN.

 2. The frosts of winter do not cause the bud and tender flowers to

 spring forth...NEITHER WILL AN ICE COLD CHRISTIAN BRING FORTH A BUD.

 3. The heart filled with envy, jealousy, and revenge has no power to win souls to Christ…

1. But the soul of a man who through secret prayer...

 a. Has subdued his evil passions

 b. Has cultivated his spiritual virtues

 c. Can be a lasting influence for good, a living illustration of the saving power of the gospel to

 transform souls!

**CONCLUSION**

1. Why do many not engage often in the practice of secret prayer...?

 a. Perhaps they do not believe in the power of prayer!!!

 b. Perhaps they do not believe in the power of God who answers prayer!!!!

2. Today we have seen **"The Value Of Secret Prayer"** which...

 a. Cultivates our spiritual nature

 b. Forms a habit of close communion with God

 c. Preserves us from many evils

 d. Secures for us much good to bring others to Christ!

 e. Enables us to promote good and happiness for others

In closing I leave you with these words of comfort…….

If we desire to be good and do good, let us make **THE VALUE OF SECRET PRAYER IN OUR OWN WAR ROOM,** a habit in our lives. Then our Father who sees in secret will surely reward us openly...!

IN THE WORDS OF JESUS, ***But thou, when thou prayest, enter into thy closet, and when thou hast shut thy door, pray to thy Father which is in secret; and thy Father which seeth in secret shall reward thee openly.***

**I ENCOURAGE US ALL TO ENTER INTO THY CLOSET (YOUR OWN WAR ROOM) AND SEE WHAT A CHANGE HE WILL MAKE IN YOUR LIFE, BECAUSE IT IS HERE WHERE YOU WILL LEARN THE TRUE MEANING OF ……OCUPY TILL I COME !!**