

CAMP DAVID

The Secret Place of God



Peter Scott . 2010

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INTRODUCTION

I was on a familiar bike trail a couple of weeks ago, dressed in my Triathlon racing gear thinking I looked rather formidable with my trek bike, trek water bottle, Triathlon shirt, etc. Usually nobody stops to talk to me, but on this five mile trek, I stopped twice to refresh with water. On the first stop, a girl was searching the woods to find an eagle's nest. I told her this was a hard place to find a nest and told her another location where one might be found. Then went on.

Towards the end of my trek another person came up to me from their parked car and mentioned this was one of the most beautiful days of the year, just beautiful. I didn't think too much of it until later when I had a dream. And the Lord said, "You know the angels of the Lord don't have to appear as angels; the word 'angel' really just means a messenger of God." After this I thought I should pay more attention to hidden meanings in the circumstances of my life.

For instance, in the first instance, the message was to *seek* the Lord. The girl was looking for an eagle's nest; we should never stop this seeking process. In the second instance, the message was that we should *appreciate* to its fullest what God has given us. It is really awesome, His blessings in this country and what we personally enjoy.

HARD TIMES OF TESTING

Now, our enemy's strategy is opposed to this truth. This last week I recovered from a very bad cold losing two days off from work. Then this week, I experienced a severe pain in my jaw that made a visit to the dentist unavoidable; I needed a root canal. As we went into the procedure, the dentist couldn't penetrate the tooth because it had become calcified. Something was obviously wrong, so I was sent to a specialist.

The specialist said I must have been in a serious trauma in order to have a tooth with so much calcium that one couldn't get through it (It was the result of a previous bike accident). He finally found two of the roots and got those done. I was in all kinds of pain through these procedures. It was so painful, I thought I must have ripped some of the leather off the chair. After all was said and done, I realized, "*the strategy of the enemy is to come in and push us right over the edge, when we are in pain, physically, emotionally, and spiritually.*"

At work it's worse because there may be all kinds of spirits present over which we have no control. We often tend to think that we are just dealing with natural phenomena. But the enemy of our souls is at work; he wants to divide our heart. *However*, God has provided a **secret** place for us in all this we face.

CAMP DAVID

I can remember when President Nixon was in office, he frequently went to Camp David. What a great name! It must be a good place since King David in the Bible was always talking about the secret place that he found in the Lord. Now I am not *pro* or *anti* Nixon; all I am saying is that he knew a sanctuary when he found one. If any president ever needed a sanctuary, it was Nixon.

Notice David's words in Psalm 27:5,

For in the time of trouble he shall hide me in his pavilion: in the secret of his tabernacle shall he hide me; he shall set me up upon a rock. (NKJ)

The storms may be all around, but the Lord has a place of protection for you.

You hide them in the secret place of Your presence from the conspiracies of man; You keep them secretly in a shelter from the strife of tongues. (Ps. 31:20)

Now most of us cannot really say we have seen the amount of persecution that King David went through. However, we are a pretty sensitive people, as we *should* be. If we are sensitive we will know how much we need the Lord in these troubled areas of our lives. So when we are attacked emotionally, spiritually or physically we will run to the sanctuary of the Lord, where the strife of tongues cannot come near us, where

the words and gossip of others shall not bother us at all. We are in the presence of the Lord.

I believe there is a special place for us in *prayer*. In Matthew chapter six, Jesus begins to teach his disciples a lot of things as in “*don’t do this, don’t do this, and don’t do that.*” I always thought Christianity was a positive thing. What are all these “don’t do” things? We need to love the Lord; that’s a “do” thing. We need to love our neighbor, again a “do” thing. But when the Lord comes and says that there are indeed some things we should NOT do, that probably means we are doing them.

HOW TO DWELL IN PROTECTION

I’m preaching to myself here as well, since if anyone has a problem in these areas, it’s myself. I know myself; I know that I have to reach the Lord in my own troubled areas.

*(Matthew 6, Verses 1-4) Beware of practicing your righteousness before men to be noticed by them; otherwise you have no reward with your Father who is in heaven. So when you give to the poor, **do not** sound a trumpet before you, as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets, so that they may be honored by men. Truly I say to you, they have their reward in full. But when you give to the poor, **do not** let your left hand know what your right hand is doing, so that your giving will be in secret; and your Father who sees what is done in secret will reward you.*

Often times we think that we should be communicating every relevant fact to others around us, communicate, communicate. But there are times when communication should *not* take place because God wants to use such times to adjust and then *seal* the motivation of our heart. In other words, we are not to be motivated by how men think, or how I think, or how anybody else thinks. We are to be motivated by the Spirit of the Lord. When He says not to let your left hand know what your right hand is doing, it means that there is to be no communication between the two.

Sometimes we don’t know certain things because we don’t need to know. Perhaps God doesn’t want us to know. It is hard to understand but His reasons are always scriptural. First He says, “*to give in secret,*” and then further on He talks about “*your treasures.*” I don’t know of

anyone in America who doesn't have some kind of treasure. We are living in a country where every one of us has all kinds of treasures. But what is the motivation of our hearts towards that treasure? You may have a lot of treasures, physical treasures, but your real treasure, if it's from the Lord, is in a safe place.

Secondly, we need to *pray in secret*. I often forget this; that is why I'm reminding and equipping you, so when you go through the storms of life you will find this sanctuary.

*(Verse 5) When you pray you are **not to be** like the hypocrites where they love to stand and pray in the synagogues, on the street corners, in order to be seen by men.*

Notice what motivates you.

Truly I say to you, they have their reward in full.

You may say, "I'm not like that." But in fact all of us have failed in these issues.

(Verse 6) 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.

Awesome?! I often forget there is a place where we need to go into our inner room and *close the door*. This means all the distractions of the world are not going to be there. If you haven't found this place yet, you need to make one, physically. Close the door, *physically*. Say, "Okay, Lord, I belong to you for the next hour."

A lot of times praying to the Lord consists not so much in our talking, but in our listening. So don't be upset with not saying anything or not knowing what to say. Rather, be still, sit there and be quiet before the Lord. Sit there at His feet. He tells us how to pray. When we pray, go into the inner room, shut the door and,

*(Verse 7-8) . . . when you are praying, **do not** use meaningless repetition as the Gentiles do, for they suppose that they will be heard for their many words. So **do not** be like them; for your Father knows what you need before you ask Him*

I remember when I was a boy; I grew up hearing on the radio a broadcast of a Catholic church service. They prayed "Holy Mary, mother of God" a million times! I would think, "What on earth is this

all about?” I really didn’t know why people would say that over and over and over again. This is repetition with no meaning! I’ve since come to realize that they were trying to make some tangible meaning out of their words, but Jesus says, “*Don’t be like that. Don’t just say words over and over again.*” Your prayers have to be real before God. He isn’t a fake religion. It’s real. God is real.

Don’t be like them for your Father knows your needs. But then pray this way:

Now He begins to say the Lord’s prayer.

*(Verse 9) “Our Father who is in heaven, hallowed be Your name.
..”*

So we are to acknowledge Father God, first of all who He is in heaven, the Creator of all things. He is the holy of holies.

(Verse 10) “Thy kingdom come and will be done,”

There is no created thing, no purpose, no angel more powerful than God. His purposes will be done upon this earth just like they are in heaven with or without us. This one part of the Lord’s prayer is powerful enough all by itself. If we preface our prayers in this way, the rest of what we say to Him will be permeated with faith concerning what He will do “*on this earth just as it is in heaven.*”

(Verse 11) “Give us this day our daily bread.”

One part of prayer is asking, but what should we ask for? “*Lord, I need all these problems and issues taken care of.*” No. Scripture says, “*Give us this day our daily bread.*” In other words, let Your provision be mine! Daily bread means the provision of God. We need His provision to be there for us in every circumstance. That’s the bread of God. In fact, His primary provision is His eternal life which we have *already* received, *now*. This promise is not just for when we die. He Himself is the daily bread.

Next He teaches us to pray that Father would,

(Verse 12-13) “. . . forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors. And do not lead us into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For Yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen.”

Don't "lead us into temptation?" I thought in the book of James, it says that God doesn't tempt anyone. Why did the Lord teach us to pray this prayer? *Because*, it is almost always in human nature to blame God, though the fault really lies within ourselves. This prayer is how we *should* pray to the Father.

Here is how I often pray in seeking to obey Jesus' instructions, "Lord, don't lead me into temptation. I know that in the circumstances I go through, it's not You tempting me to sin. The temptation to sin is already there in me. However, I don't even want to be found in such situations! Deliver my heart from the evil attitudes that cause certain circumstances to tempt me to sin." I don't want to be in a place where I am going to be tempted. I want to be an overcomer as He called me to be, a tower of strength. Such ability I cannot find in myself, but only in the Lord Jesus. He is sending out a call to every one, not just to me. "... deliver us from evil. For Yours is the kingdom, and the power and the glory forever."

IMPORTANCE OF FORGIVENESS

(Verse 14-15) For if you forgive others for their transgressions, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. But if you do not forgive others, then your Father will not forgive your transgressions.

This is a very powerful statement; *do not play around*. We need to forgive others. A lot of problems in our prayer lives and in our circumstances come from the fact that we haven't truly forgiven those who have offended us. This is emphasized in the Lord's prayer. If we go through the whole list of things we pray about, *remember* that failing to forgive others is a root cause of our problems. If we are not forgiving, we are in trouble. We need to be a forgiving people. Amen.

Have you ever said to someone who has offended you, "I prayed for you today that God would help me to forgive you." But then, how are you praying in secret? These should be *secret* prayers, in the secret place, a place about which only you and God know. Perhaps you have bad attitudes you haven't talked to anyone about; they are too embarrassing for even you to face. "Lord, I just hate that person so much. I cannot believe what is in my heart. Please help me with my problem?"

Keep turning to Him; let the Him deal with it. He will give you the power to overcome.

A CLEAR EYE

So, go in secret, pray in secret. Then He says something I'm sure most of us don't practice,

*(Verse 16-18) Whenever you fast, **do not** put on a gloomy face as the hypocrites do, for they neglect their appearance so that they will be noticed by men when they are fasting. Truly I say to you, they have their reward in full. But you, when you fast, anoint your head and wash your face so that your fasting will not be noticed by men, but by your Father who is in secret; and your Father who sees what is done in secret will reward you.*

Then Jesus talks about the treasures we mentioned before,

*(Verse 19-21) **Do not** store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy, and where thieves break in and steal. But store up for yourselves (where?) treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys, and where thieves do not break in or steal; for where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.*

So the problem here in much of our prayer life, in many of our circumstances, and in what we need to bring to the secret place, is to clear our vision to see what our true treasures are. Something that lasts forever is not found in what we own, nor our job, or who we think we are in our careers. It's not in how other men see us. Rather, it's who we are in God. Here is our true treasure.

Some of the treasures I didn't value very highly early in life are now the most precious to me. For instance, when I was not feeling well the other night, my wife reached over and just touched my arm. That was worth \$300 million to me. That's the value I put on it! That's my treasure. Treasure was something God put into her heart to reach out and bring comfort and healing to my body.

For if we don't reckon things correctly, Jesus says,

(Verse 22-23) The eye is the lamp of the body; so then if your eye is clear, your whole body will be full of light. But if your eye is

bad, your whole body will be full of darkness. If then the light that is in you is darkness, how great is the darkness!

If we don't get this right, if we don't go into that secret place, if we don't have our motivations on the right track, we are in trouble! Everything we see will be clouded. And then He takes us one step further,

(Verse 24) No one can serve two masters. . .

Maybe you think you can. Sometimes I think I can. I can go to work and serve this guy and do a better job than anybody else! But the Lord says, *"No, you cannot. You cannot serve two masters. If you are going to serve him while serving your own ends, the end thereof is death! But if you are going to serve Me, while serving him, that's a different process, a different story."* The truth is, you can honor a leader, an employer, etc., but you cannot serve two masters. It cannot be done.

Some years ago in the secret place I told the Lord, *"Everything in me is Yours, my will, my heart, everything."* When we say this to Him, our whole life is changed. These are not merely words, these are words that are said in a secret place to the Lord. God will hear and our lives will change forever. We cannot be the same.

(Verse 24 continued) . . . for either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to one and despise the other You cannot serve God and wealth.

If you have two masters, here's what will happen. You will either hate the one and love the other or you will hold to one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and mammon.

THE CURE FOR ANXIETY

*(Verse 25) For this reason I say to you, **do not** be worried about your life . . .*

For *what* reason?! The source of all of our problems, anxiety, worries, etc. is that we have not followed Jesus' instructions. We have not been giving in secret. We have been doing it to be noticed by men. We have not been praying in secret just to the Lord; we have been praying so as to be seen as having "spiritual stature" in the church. I want people to know that I am a "man of God." When we go through a difficult circumstance, we tell everyone, *"Oh man, the Lord really put me*

through it this week.” We do so because in our hearts we’re saying, “Look at me; look at me. Look how strong I am in myself.”

For too many of us, treasures are in everything *but* what God wants. When we do not have the proper value system, we become anxious. For this reason we are in trouble. For this reason we need to go to Camp David, a place of refuge in Him where the hands of men are unable to reach us, but the heart of God is revealed.

After all this He says,

*(Verse 25) For this reason I say to you, **do not** be worried about your life, (It’s not yours anyway) as to what you will eat or what you will drink; nor for your body, as to what you will put on. Is not life more than food, and the body more than clothing?*

These are just physical needs. He’s talking about the rudimentary elements of shelter and clothing. In America that doesn’t make much sense to us. After all, we can go to any clothing exchange to get clothes. Still, our worries are based on the same problems those listeners faced; such worries seem universal.

(Verse 26) Look at the birds of the air, that they do not sow, nor reap nor gather into barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not worth much more than they?

Aren’t we worth more than birds? We tend to forget that. *Yes, we are.*

(Verse 27-29) And who of you by being worried can add a single hour to his life? And why are you worried about clothing? Observe how the lilies of the field grow; they do not toil nor do they spin, yet I say to you that not even Solomon in all his glory clothed himself like one of these.

True? True? Yes. It doesn’t matter how much you want to look nice to others; you are going to miss the mark if you don’t realize the premise that the beauty that God gives is of far greater value.

*(Verse 30-32) But if God so clothes the grass of the field, which is alive today and tomorrow (cut down with my lawnmower) is thrown into the furnace, will He not much more clothe you? You of little faith! **Do not** worry then, saying, ‘What will we eat?’ or ‘What will we drink?’ or ‘What will we wear for clothing?’ For*

the Gentiles eagerly seek all these things (You are not alone if you want to go down that road.); for your heavenly Father knows that you need all these things.

Okay, here's our special secret; *we are different*. God's call is going out to the nations for those who seek after His righteousness and truth. His call is going out to those who seek first His kingdom and His righteousness. You know what? As we respond, an awesome thing happens. *All* of the things that we've been worried about and all of the importance of those material possessions lose their priority; they fade. Then God will add to us what is needed, *beyond measure*. We'll say, "*Whoa, I cannot believe how much the Lord loves me!*" We'll realize His love is not primarily in these things. It is in the gentle touch of your friend. It's found in those who reach out to you and pray.

*(Verse 34) So **do not** worry about tomorrow . . .*

Are you anxious about tomorrow, Monday? Think about what's going to happen Monday morning. Does your blood pressure go up just a little bit? But don't worry about tomorrow,

. . . for tomorrow will care for itself. Each day has enough trouble of its own.

Truer words were never spoken. So don't worry; don't be anxious about it! Why? How can you be anxious about it after knowing this? You have found a secret place. You have found Camp David, a place of prayer, the sanctuary a young shepherd boy found for protection:

For in the time of trouble he shall hide me in his pavilion: in the secret of his tabernacle shall he hide me; he shall set me up upon a rock. (Ps. 27:5, NKJ)

CONCLUSION

On our last vacation some of my family went to the top of Mount Mansfield in Vermont (4393 feet). All around us thunderstorms were moving in. We heard the thunder and saw the lightning to the left and below us. But we were already high upon a rock, at the summit. We *stood* in the natural realm on the place where God wants to put us spiritually, above the storm in a place of protection, we can see what's going on around us, gain a new vision and understanding, and actually do what God wants us to do. There we won't simply react to the circum-

stances of our lives, rather we will respond to what the Holy Spirit wants. Remember what He has said to us. It's not the leaders who are the secret weapon of God; it's the *whole church*. We *all* need to be equipped, not just a few.

You hide them in the secret place of Your presence from the conspiracies of man; You keep them secretly in a shelter from the strife of tongues. (Ps. 31:20)

So we need to give in secret, pray in secret, fast in secret. Remember that our treasures are not the earthly ones. We need to make sure our eye is clear to understand these things. We will only see this happen in a secret place. In the secret place we may seem vulnerable but we're not vulnerable at all, because the Lord is the one who protects us. We have no worries. The outcome of "Camp David" is there are no longer worries at all, for we are seeking first the kingdom of God. As the darkness closes in, the brightness of the church is growing. Amen.

Well, Lord, we are standing upon the Rock, Christ Jesus, not in our own strength, not in our own righteousness, but upon Your righteousness. All of the worries and cares of this life we give over to You right now. We purpose in our hearts to find that secret place, a room with the door shut to come before You and ask You, Lord, and Your Holy Spirit to come to us and to show us those things that are still in our hearts that need to change. That we might have a clear eye, that our treasures might not be the things of this world. We'll be able to lay them all down at Your feet. I know I'm asking for a miracle among us, Lord, but I know that it's in our heart to not give up, to press in, to find that place, that secret place.

Amen, thank You, Lord.

