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The Secret Place **Pastor Charles Mendenhall**

What is our source? Where does our source come from? Is it abiding in the vine or abiding in Jesus? Where is the secret place? The challenge is to find a secret place consistently in our lives. We become weighed down with the busyness in our lives. Luke tells us "it is the spirit of the age." That it will deaden our spiritual perception and we will not be able to hear and understand the voice of God. Where do we go for life?

In John 4, Jesus talks with the Samaritan woman at the well, she understood the water that was drawn from the well, but Jesus told her about the water that He offered, how she would never thirst again if she took what He offered. He spoke about her life and her source, the men in her life. Jesus was trying to get her to let Him be her source. He would meet her needs and she would never thirst again.

Where do we go for joy and peace? Daniel prophesied that the devil comes to wear out the saints of the most high God. Wore out saints have no strength.

Chapter 5 of Matthew, Jesus gave His Sermon on the Mount, and in it He tells all that they are blessed regardless of the situations in their lives.

Matt 5:20. *"For I say unto you, that except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven."* KJV

This verse was "good news" to the crowds, but "bad news" to the scribes and Pharisees. What is good news to one might not be good news to another. Jesus was bringing good news to the publicans and sinners.

John 15:1-5 *"I am the true vine, and my Father is the husbandman. 2 Every branch in me that beareth not fruit he taketh away: and every branch that beareth fruit, he purgeth it, that it may bring forth more fruit. 3 Now ye are clean through the word which I have spoken unto you. 4 Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; no more can ye, except ye abide in me. 5 I am the vine, ye are the branches: He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing."* KJV

The life is in the vine, the trunk of the tree, we are the branches. This is where our source is at.

We must have a secret place, we will not have the staying power needed; it is the absolute key to having a consistent Christian life. Habitually neglecting the secret place will cause us to yield to our emotions, begin to react wrongly and lose the sense of God's presence. The secret place is very, very important.

Matt 6:6 *"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."* KJV

Experience the reward of the secret place. God's reward is greater than we can imagine, we have been invited. The secret place is a place of seclusion, where there are no interruptions, no distractions, focusing only on the Lord. This is where we will hear His voice.

Why are we not going to the secret place? Are the priorities in our life out of line? We cannot allow our emotions or the unworthiness that we feel keep us from entering into the place. It is not about our works, but His presence.

Heb 10:19-23 *"19 Having therefore, brethren, boldness by to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus, 20 By a by new and living way, which he hath consecrated for us, through the veil, that is to say, his flesh; 21 And having an high priest over the house of God; 22 Let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water. 23 Let us hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering; (for he is faithful that promised;)"* KJV

We have boldness to enter into His presence because of what Jesus did for us. Why are we not entering in? Jesus has made us worthy because of His blood.

Psa 16:11 *"Thou wilt shew me the path of life: in thy presence is fullness of joy; at thy right hand there are pleasures for evermore."* KJV

Luke 10 tells about Martha and Mary and about how Mary found time to set at the feet of Jesus, but Martha being so busy with the everyday things that she missed out. She even became upset when she didn't receive the help that she needed. She said that she just didn't have time to set at Jesus' feet. Mary chose the things that couldn't be taken from her. Choosing to find time in the "secret place" allows us to hear from God.

After setting in His presence in the secret place, we will begin to hear Him tell us that we are faithful, trustworthy, His children and we have made Him proud. Things that we need to hear that build us up. There may be words of correction, but those will also lift us up to be able to receive from God.

Psa 84:10 *"For a day in thy courts is better than a thousand. I had rather be a doorkeeper in the house of my God, than to dwell in the tents of wickedness."* KJV

Being in God's presence because He loves us makes us want to spend more time with Him. We can do this by being in our secret place and listening to His voice. We can't function without Him.

Exo 33:11-15 "11 And the LORD spake unto Moses face to face, as a man speaketh unto his friend. And he turned again into the camp: but his servant Joshua, the son of Nun, a young man, departed not out of the tabernacle. 12 And Moses said unto the LORD, See, thou sayest unto me, Bring up this people: and thou hast not let me know whom thou wilt send with me. Yet thou hast said, I know thee by name, and thou hast also found grace in my sight. 13 Now therefore, I pray thee, if I have found grace in thy sight, shew me now thy way, that I may know thee, that I may find grace in thy sight: and consider that this nation is thy people. 14 And he said, My presence shall go with thee, and I will give thee rest. 15 And he said unto him, If thy presence go not with me, carry us not up hence." KJV

Joshua was in His presence in the tabernacle. We find ourselves hanging around after the services at church because of the anointing and the presence that is there.

Moses was getting ready to lead the children of Israel, who did not want to be led, so he was getting in God's presence awaiting wisdom to know what to do.

Jesus went to his secret place in order to be able to hear from God, His Source.

Isa 40:29-31 "He giveth power to the faint; and to them that have no might he increaseth strength. 30 Even the youths shall faint and be weary, and the young men shall utterly fall: 31 But they that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary; and they shall walk, and not faint. "KJV

Those that find their secret place shall renew their strength. The Lord rewards us openly; others will be able to see the blessings that are resting upon our lives and what the Lord is doing for us.

An invitation to come to the secret place is given and commitments are made regarding this. It is not about performance but coming into the presence of God, receiving the rewards that He has for us and hearing His voice.

"Father, right now I'm making a commitment to be faithful, to go to the secret place, a place away from distractions, where I can minister to you and you can minister to me and I'll hear your voice and then you said; that the Father who seeth in secret will reward us openly, I thank you for the reward, I thank you Lord and once again I purpose to find that secret place, in Jesus name."