

Faith Christian Fellowship
Sunday, May 26, 2013
A Closet Revival 1
It Starts With YOU

TEXT: Matt 6:5-8

As Spirit-filled folks we have a particularly privileged place in our lives. All religions pray. What makes Christian prayer any different? All Christian groups pray. What makes us any different? The Lord spoke to me and said, "Revival starts in the closet."

- ❖ Revival starts in the closet
 - Public prayer is fine, but what is the motive. Hypocrisy prays to impress a human audience. How often do we do that?
 - Jesus acknowledges that heathen pray, and that we have a possibility of being like them.
 - Jesus warned against vain repetitions –
 - Remember James 5:16? What does it mean to be fervent?
 - The two things He warns against are public show and empty repetitions. How much of your prayer life is public and repetitive? **If prayer has no purpose or result, it is simply another dead religious work.**
 - He then tells us to go in the closet, and ask Him even though He knows what we need.
- ❖ God will not move in the earth unless we ask Him
 - Remember that old saw: "Prayer doesn't change things, but it changes me"? That is hogwash. God designed the system so that we have a part to play in it. James 4:2-3
 - You have to ask
 - You need a right motive
 - We ask because God cannot (because he cannot lie) move if no one asks Him.
 - Need does not move God. Prayer does.
 - "God does nothing but by prayer, and everything with it." John Wesley
 - **Here is the key** understanding necessary for Biblical prayer:
 - God gave dominion in the earth to Adam. (Gen 1:26 / (Ps 8)
 - Adam bowed his knee to Satan, but authority in the earth is still ours. Note Eph 2:1-3)

- God is our covenant partner who will intervene only if asked or if some other covenant condition is enacted. Note Genesis 18: 16-33
 - ◆ The Lord is on His way to intervene in Sodom because someone there has prayed. Compare Gen 4:10 / Ex 3:6-9 / Exodus 22:20-24, 27 / 1 Sam 9:16 / James 5:4 / Rev 6:10
 - ◆ He confers with Abraham because of the covenant and the presence of Lot in the city. He actually amends His plan based on Abraham's request.
- **Closet first, then open reward. Revival begins in the closet long before we see it in the streets.**
- ❖ Christian prayer:
 - John 16:22-23 We pray to the Father in the Name of the Son
 - The name of a person stands for that person's character, position, identity. EXAMPLE: Exodus 34:5 / John 17:6 / Psalm 75:1 / Psalm 34:3
 - Name reflects all a person is and does. "In the Name" means to ask on the basis of the Lord Jesus Christ and His completed work.
 - VV 26-28. We now have access to the Father on the same sonship basis as Jesus did while on the earth.
 - Heb 4:14-16. We have a mega High Priest who gives us boldness to come. Heb 10:19-23. He has opened the way. .
 - James 5:16. Righteousness is our platform for prayer. No shame, no guilt, no fear. Pr 28:1 (2 Cor 5:12 / Romans 5:9-21 / Eph 4:24)
 - Move beyond self-centered prayer: I have to move beyond
 - Sin consciousness holds me captive to my own failings. 1 Jn 1:9 / Heb 10:2
 - Provision consciousness: My prayers for me are short: Mk 11:23-24 + Phil 4: 6-8 and are 90% thanksgiving.
 - **In my prayer closet I primarily pray for the saints and the ministry, not me and the sinner.** Eph 6:18-20 Always, all prayer, for the saints and for me
 - Rom 8:27 / James 5:16 / Eph 1 and 3 / Col 1:9-13 / 4:12 / Phil 1:9-11,19 / Rom 15:30-32 / 2 Thess 5:1 / Col 4:2-4

Prayer in private results in boldness in public.
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