



### **The Secret Place**

“Pray to your Father secretly,  
and your Father who knows  
your secrets will reward you.”  
Matthew 6:6

## **Introduction:** a devotional reflection and guide.

*The Christian life is essentially a gift of God. It is also a meaningful, trust relationship with Jesus Christ.*

*The Christian lives every new day in the company of an unseen friend with whom they share the important details, the laughs and struggles of life. It must be like this because any relationship suffers, even dies if either party fails to relate or interact.*

*This is elementary, but it seems that it is in this area basic to any friendship that we can stumble or fall, either under-estimating, substituting or over-looking this ongoing interaction as an essential necessity.*

*With a new realised awareness of the importance of cultivating a meaningful, regular devotional time that is true to fact, faith and feeling I have prepared this guide for my personal use.*

*Its biblical content and personal nature may seem strange to some, but it is shared with the thought that it could be helpful for others.  
While it is not short, (nor should it be hurried) it is a penetrating personal guide that sometimes reflects a devotional Puritan spirituality that is directional.*

*The guide starts by pondering over the spiritual reason behind the devotional exercise itself.  
It opens the reader to an awareness of the Holy transcendence of God as the Almighty.*

*This confronts the reader with the fact of their moral weakness, and the human dilemma of sharing a nature that is totally sin-affected.  
The guide then progresses to the only true provision and source of forgiveness.*

*Equipped with the indwelling presence of God through the Holy Spirit, along with the gifts that the Spirit brings, comes new source of strength.  
With a new realised awareness of sharing spiritual gifts the reader is equipped to serve Christ in a needy world.*

*So this guide aims to introduce the Christian person to their new identity in Christ and to a fresh awareness of Jesus company as a special friend amid the daily round.*

### **My reflecting.**

When I think about; the existence of this world.  
The fact that this new day is lived in time and history.

When I think of the breath of my life, the fact that  
I am a person living every moment of this day.

When I am conscious of my life and existence;  
it's meaning and purpose, then I become aware  
of One Almighty who is there;  
The world beyond sense and touch and time;  
the world I cannot see is the most real world of all.

### **So this is my Reason.**

I will deliberately rekindle  
and constantly fan the personal spiritual union  
with that **One Almighty**, beyond sense, time and touch  
and yet a real living relationship, that envelops me  
through Jesus's living presence.

### **I will do this because:**

The call and purpose of my life  
is to proclaim Jesus, the image of the invisible God  
through whom all things visible and invisible  
were created, and I'm called to glorify now.  
While my life in this day is lived in time,  
my life in this day is a life linked with things eternal.

### **My Approach.**

I'm in my own space now away from  
the busy demands of striving and stress.  
The door is shut. I am alone.  
Only the Lord of Heaven and earth is here.

In spite of the barriers of my feelings,  
a mixture of doubt, uncertainty and weakness.  
In spite of my complacent state;  
even in spite of this my Lord is here.

### **My Meditation.**

Let all mortal flesh keep silent.  
Ponder nothing earthly minded  
but with fear and trembling  
bow before the Lord your Maker.

(God speaks)

*"My thoughts are not your thoughts.  
I am the Lord of Heaven and Earth,  
the Holy One in your midst.  
Neither are your ways my ways.  
To whom will you liken me and make me equal  
or compare that we may be alike?"*

### **My response**

"I know that you are of purer eyes than to behold evil  
and you cannot look on wrong. No one is like you,  
glorious in majesty, doing wonders."

(God speaks)

*"I am God of Heaven and earth, there is none like me."*

(My Response)

*"Holy, Holy, Holy, is the Lord God of Hosts;  
the whole earth is full of your glory."*

The sight of the glory of the Lord  
was like a devouring fire to Isaiah and in the eyes  
of the Children of Israel. It is a fearful thing  
to fall into the hands of the Living God.

### **My Unrest.**

Who can escape this Hound of Heaven?  
In the searing light of God's Holy glory  
every conscience is roused, disturbed.  
This intense light shines in darkness,  
and upon my self-consciousness  
I am conspicuous, exposed, restless, I feel unclean,  
stained by penetrating deep shame.  
I fall short of God's glory and like a tossing sea  
that cannot keep still; there are past areas to my life  
normally suppressed that niggle and torment  
my conscience and that stir up mire and mud.  
A deep voice persists, "Escape this stirring presence!"  
I feel compelled to prove my worth,  
to bargain, to rush, to hide, to scuttle away.  
Like a bat escaping light, where, where---  
some slight shadow in which to crouch  
would bring relief.

For everyone who does evil hates the light.

(My Response)

*"O Lord you have searched me and known me.  
Even the most secret thought of my heart.  
You are in the full beam of a light  
in which there is no darkness at all."*

Where shall I go from your Spirit?  
Where shall I flee from your presence?  
If I ascend into Heaven or if I make my bed in Hell,  
you are there."

### **My State.**

There is no escape.  
No one is able to re-invent themselves  
or to change a heart that falls short,  
anymore than a leopard can change its spots.  
Out of the heart come impaired, evil thoughts.  
impurity,  
coveting,  
adultery,  
murder,  
wickedness,  
deceit,  
envy,  
slander,  
pride,  
foolishness,  
false witness.

All these traits flow from within  
and they defile a person.

How can my proud heart be changed  
so that my being radiates the glory of God,  
When will I seriously weep over my  
hidden weakness, lost condition. and state?

The heart is deceitful above all things  
and desperately corrupt, who can understand it?  
Every moment of my life then can only be lived  
bound by sin and shame.

I weep easily over myself, and my grief,  
over my disappointments and sorrows.  
Where are my tears of repentance for the offence  
my sin brings God or that I inflict on others.  
With Isaiah who, before the Almighty cried,  
'*Woe is me I am Lost.*'  
I too am lost and unclean  
and I live among people of unclean lips.

### **My Prayer of Confession.**

- (1) My sin is against God my Creator.
- (2) I have denied my calling
- (3) I have by-passed and hurt others.

### **My Redeemer.**

The blood of bulls and goats  
and the best religious practise fails  
With David King of Israel I cry,  
“God be merciful to me,-- a sinner.

(Jesus speaks)  
*“Father, you made ready this moment  
I am the Good Shepherd, the Good Shepherd  
lays down his life for the sheep.”*

(God speaks)  
*“Awake O sword against My Shepherd,  
against the one who stands next to me.”*

(Jesus speaks from the cross)  
*“I am poured out like water  
and all of my bones are out of joint.  
My heart is like wax,  
It is melted within my breast;  
My strength is dried up  
like sun baked clay  
and my tongue cleaves to my jaws;  
who lays me in the dust of death.”*

There was darkness over the whole land  
and at the ninth hour Jesus cried with a loud voice,  
*“My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?”*

By oppression and judgement He was taken away  
He was oppressed and He was afflicted.  
He was cut off out of the land of the living.  
He was despised and rejected by men,  
He had no form or comeliness  
that we should look at him---  
---as one from whom people hide their faces.

### **My Realisation.**

He was made to be sin who knew no sin  
So that in Him we might become  
the righteousness of God.

Christ offered himself without blemish to God,  
yet he embraced human depravity in its totality;  
even my human flaws; the bondage of my guilt  
and shame bound him to the cross.  
The thunderbolt of God’s judgement.  
spent itself on Him until he cried,  
***“It is finished.”***

Every power that kept me captive was totally spent.  
The very powers of darkness were disarmed.  
They died with Jesus.  
This he did for me,  
and for the sin of many, once and for all.

Christ will never die again  
but being raised from the dead it is seen  
that sin, death and the powers of darkness  
no longer have dominion over me.

### **My Assurance.**

It was foretold by the prophet.  
*"Though your sins are like scarlet  
they shall be like snow.  
Though they are red like crimson  
they shall be as wool."*

Paul the apostle knew about it when he wrote,  
*"There is no condemnation  
to those who belong to Christ Jesus"*

I'd be a fool then to condemn myself,  
so in full assurance of faith I draw near  
with a true heart without self-accusation,  
with a clean mind; with a free conscience;  
and with a peace that passes understanding.

The testimony of scripture says,  
*"God made you alive together with Him."*  
As Christ dwells in that Holy presence  
so I'm alive, sharing that marvellous light.

It was Jesus who said:  
"I overcame and sat down with my Father  
on his throne." So with Wesley I sing,  
*"Bold I approach the eternal throne  
and claim the crown through Christ my own."*

I'll hold fast now to that confession  
of my hope without wavering,  
for He who promised is faithful.

### **My Prayer of Thanksgiving.**

Bless the Lord, O my soul,  
and all that is within me, bless His Holy name.  
I will not forget all His benefits. Who forgives all my iniquity,  
who heals all my diseases, who redeems my life from the pit.

I will sing unto the Lord a new song

for he has triumphed gloriously—  
The Lord is my strength and song.  
He has become my salvation  
and I will praise Him, I will exalt Him.  
*“O for a thousand tongues to sing  
my great redeemer’s praise.”*

### **My Calling.**

(God speaks)  
*“You are not your own,  
you are bought with a price.”*

(Jesus speaks)  
*“You did not choose me, but I chose you  
and appointed you that you should bear fruit  
and that your fruit should abide.”*

### **My Prayer of Intercession.**

Pray much for others  
and plead for God’s mercy upon them.  
Give thanks for all He is going to do for them.  
(1) The family.  
(2) The ministry.  
(3) The wider world.

### **My Listening.**

(Use a calendar of Daily Readings).

### **My Prayer of Petition**

And this is the confidence which I have in Him,  
I can ask anything according to His will.  
(1) I commit myself to seeking His will  
(2) The Holy Spirit’s Strength.  
(3) The issues of the day.

### **My Privilege**

(God speaks)  
Once you were no people—  
but now you have received mercy  
that you may declare the wonderful deeds  
of Him who called you out of darkness  
into His marvellous light.

(My Response)  
“In sharing this marvellous light  
I know I am part of the living church.  
I am an agent of your purpose Lord,  
a servant of the mysteries of God.”

### **My Perspective.**

I will remind myself continually  
That in sharing this marvellous light;  
in proclaiming the mysteries of God  
I can expect to meet opposition and darkness.  
In fact people will revile me, persecute me;  
say all manner of things against me falsely because of Christ

The sting of opposition, frustration and the hurt  
of misunderstanding will seek to depress,  
even cripple and draw me into despondency.  
Satan is that prowling lion in every day conflict  
who seeks to devour and destroy.  
I contend not against flesh and blood  
but against the powers of this present darkness.  
I will need to be alert and sure that the  
weapons of my warfare are not worldly but have  
Divine Power to destroy strongholds.

### **My Gift**

The risen Lord waits and longs to work in my life  
by the power at work in me.  
Through the gift of an implicit trust in Him  
The Lord is able to do far more abundantly  
than all that I can ask or think.  
So I will rekindle the gift of God that is within me.

### **My Ministry.**

I will step out with faith alone so that there is faith.  
I will openly embrace and move towards others  
so that there is agape love.

I will open my mouth and work the key board so that  
there is prophecy, the message pressing home.  
I will evoke the power of God, lay hands  
upon the sick so that there is healing and miracle.

### **My Move.**

I am ready now,  
the door of this secret place is open.  
I am among people in a groping world,  
people seeking life's answer,  
people aching, desperately needing the Almighty  
who still comes in Jesus through the lives  
of common people---even through me,  
and not tomorrow but even through me now, now!