

The Amazing Secret

The Christian life holds a unique secret. It is not a secret, however, that has been reserved for the select few. In fact, as paradoxical as it may seem, it could be called an "open secret," for it has been "hidden in plain view" within the Scriptures for anyone with eyes to read. What is this "open secret"?

Discovering the Secret

What makes the Christian life work? This question (in its many forms) has been asked by millions of Christians down through the ages. And depending on your church background, you will get a variety of answers:

- * Faith
- * Grace
- * Prayer
- * Worship
- * Holiness
- * Humility
- * Discipleship
- * Perseverance
- * Church attendance
- * Reading the Bible daily
- * Studying at Bible College
- * The power of the Holy Spirit
- * Believing a particular church doctrine

There are many variations on the above themes, and some of them do play a significant and indispensable role in the Christian life. For example, Hebrews 11:6 tells us ...

"Without faith it is impossible to please God"

and Ephesians 2:8 informs us...

"It is by grace you have been saved..."

Indeed you could say that faith and grace are part of the secret, but are they the secret. As important as they may be, are they the single most important element? The reason you get so many different answers to the question, "What is the secret to the Christian life" is that the question itself is ambiguous. A better question to ask is, "What matters most to God? The Amazing Secret Discovering the Secret ous. A better question to ask is, "What matters most to God?" Does reading the Bible matter most to God? The Jews of Jesus' day read the Bible yet, according to Jesus, they missed the entire

point of Scripture (John 5:39-40). And what about praying? In Luke 18:9-14, Jesus indicated that some of the most elaborate of prayers were not even heard by God (see also Matthew 23:13). And what about worship? The people of God in Isaiah's time worshiped God regularly in the way specifically prescribed by God in the Sinai Covenant, yet God had this to say in Isaiah 29:13:

"The Lord says: 'These people come near to me with their mouth and honor me with their lips, but their hearts are far from me. Their worship of me is made up only of rules taught by men.'"

And here we find our first clue to what really matters to God. It is not the worship itself which he desires, but the heart of the worshiper! This one simple fact, so easily overlooked, is underscored in John 4:23:

"Yet a time is coming and has now come when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and in truth, for they are the kind of worshipers the Father seeks."

Do you notice what Jesus says? The Father isn't seeking worship; he is seeking worshipers! It is not prayer he desires, but the heart of the one praying! It is not the reading of the Bible he desires, but the heart of the person who is reading the Bible!

So what is the answer to the question, "What matters most to God?" The answer is - your heart! It is heart-to-heart relationship with you!