

Is There Such a Thing as a Private Relationship With God?

I've run into a lot of people in my life who seem to think that their relationship with God is for them to know and for others not to worry about. And while I agree with them to a certain extent, the biblical text is clear that our relationships with God are called to be anything but private.

Personal, yes—private, no.

One group of passages that I frequently refer to in regards to one's call to a life of public faith is Matthew 5:14-16, which states the following,

"You are the light of the world. A city that is set on a hill cannot be hidden. Neither do men light a candle and put it under a basket, but on a candlestick. And it gives light to all who are in the house. Let your light so shine before men that they may see your good works and glorify your Father who is in heaven" (MEV).

The core message in these verses are quite clear: that in the same way one wouldn't light a lamp and then cover it to dilute its sole purpose, a Christian isn't to discover the hope of Jesus and never share nor keep it hidden from the public eye. The life and deeds of a Christ-follower should exude out of you.

This would completely contradict the calling of the Great Commission: *"Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit" (Matt. 28:19, MEV).*

It just doesn't make any sense to stay quiet in a world that

parades darkness and deceit. Our faith was made to be public, to be shared and to be discussed to those we come across. So what does this mean? It means that you're called to be a shining example of a Christ-follower in all that you do, no matter what you do, no matter where you are, no matter who you come into contact with.

I guess I just have a hard time grasping the idea that someone can be fully devoted to Christ yet hidden as it pertains to the public knowledge of that faith. I understand *strategic evangelism* as it pertains to countries where Christianity is illegal, but we as Americans really have no excuse to be silent when it comes to the existence of our relationships with God.

I'm not saying you need to be on the street corner with a banner that says *I Love Jesus!*, but I am saying you should have no issue letting people know who you've given your life to. We're called to live unashamed to the fullest extent.

"For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ. For it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes, to the Jew first, and also to the Greek" (Rom. 1:16, MEV).

When our lives get caught up in the beauty of the gospel, we realize our existence is no longer about us but instead the many facets that make up the person of Christ. Our vocation as Christ-followers is to share the gospel; the alluring and jaw-dropping beauty of the gospel.

Let your faith be known and be strong. Don't keep your relationship with God private, but instead make it outspoken and grace-filled. {eoa}

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