

## The Ministry of Prayer IV

*“But when you pray, go into your room, close the door and pray to your Father who is unseen...”*  
Matt 6:6

Did you hear what Jesus said? He said, “Close the door!” You and I are always looking for an open door. We need a breakthrough. We need answers. We need help and power. We need to be an effective witness in our generation. We need healing: body, soul and spirit. But before we get an open door we need to close the door.

We need to close the door on other distractions. Our lives are full of things competing for our attention. We’ve got things plugged into our ears. We have TVs glaring and DVDs playing and music blaring. You got noise? How can we hear with all the noise? If you need an answer, you are going to have to close the door on the distractions even if it’s a Christian song.

We need to close the door on the urgent. Don’t you know that every time you go to pray, something is going to happen that needs to be taken care of? You would think we would have learned by now. Stuff happens when Christians pray and I don’t mean good stuff. No, the enemy of your soul is going to make sure some urgent need has to be taken care of before you pray. And what happens when you take care of that need? You’re either out of time or another thing will pop up and away we go, taking care of business. Well, there in one business that cannot wait any longer, prayer. Close the door!

Close the door of stinking thinking. I don’t know how many people I have talked to that say as soon as they start to pray, their mind starts to wander. Well it’s true. But your mind was wandering far before you ever sat down. It’s just when we sit down and try to concentrate that we notice it.

Most people suffer from an unruly mind. But our lives, our bodies and our minds are not our own. We are called to take captive every thought. Conquer those wandering thoughts and you will be much healthier. Your prayer closet is a perfect place to practice focusing in to the Lord, His Word and His presence. Remember this: what you take captive in your prayer closet will be easier to take captive in the world. Man, I can’t believe some of the things my mind wanders onto. It’s time to take back our minds. Close the door!

Close the door and open your heart. God is a touchy feely kinda Person. He loves to love and He loves to be loved. Love, compassion, grace and mercy are strokes from above that can be felt. If you have closed off your heart because of hurt and disappointment, you will have a tough time knowing God. He is not one to fill your brain with more facts. He is relational and funny and serious and real and true and kind. When you hear His word, it stirs you. When you hear the inner voice of His Spirit, it warms you. The Emmaus brothers said, “Were not our hearts burning within us while He talked with us?” (Luke 24:32). Close the door and open your heart. Become alive to the touch of God. Don’t waste another moment on fruitless endeavors. Go into your closet and close the door and pray!