



Welcome to our resource page for the Life-Giving Habit of:



Some of us, most of us, care too much about what other people think. We are constantly comparing, competing, trying to impress, envious of others, and end up captive to what others might think, say, or believe about us.

It always starts with the comparing ourselves and our accomplishments against those of others, never being satisfied. If we are addicted to the praise of others, we embellish, exaggerate, make excuses and justify ourselves with endless explanations of our true motives - we hide our true selves. This exhausting and endless process eventually leads us to resent the very people whose approval we seek. We want to be, need to be noticed for what we do well.

We will also avoid saying what we truly think if it might bring disapproval from those whose opinions we value.

The practice of secrecy is a powerful antidote to all of this. It is the opposite of a constant need for approval and it teaches us to enjoy being anonymous and to actively follow the example of Jesus.

Practicing secrecy deals with both pride and insecurity and it builds humility.



Secrecy has two elements:

First: Abstaining from causing our good deeds or qualities to become known.

This is where we get to be almost gleeful in our enjoyment of hiding our qualities - where living for an audience of one becomes a happy and contented place.

Second: Freeing ourselves from being our own PR agent.

Here we counter our need to self-promote. We temper how much of our conversation is self-absorbed.

So how can we practice secrecy?

Warm-ups...

- Think about whose approval you seek and why. Reflect on this each morning and ask God to be your audience of one.
- Pay attention to your conversations - how much do you talk about yourself? When you are listening, do you value what the other person is saying more than expressing your next opinion?
- Find a way to say or show “you are right” or some other affirmation to your husband, wife, house mate or work colleague without them noticing or without drawing attention to your affirmation of them.
- Put some sweets or chocolates in someone’s bag without them noticing or leave cakes/ flowers in a shared kitchen for no reason.
- Help a stranger (Mum with a pram, carry bags of shopping etc). Pray for them during the rest of the day.
- Read about Jesus’ secrecy habit - Luke 5:16; Mark 6:45-46; Mark 7:24; and Matt 16:20.

A bit more challenging...

- Do something good in secret - leave groceries on a neighbour’s step; pay a bill or give a gift anonymously; leave a gift on a colleague’s desk - as long as no-one knows it’s you;
- Look for an opportunity to honestly disagree with someone you respect, to say something you think that will not be what they want to hear.
- Pray for someone else to be more outstanding, more praised, more useful than you are and be thankful when that person is recognised.
- Bring a practical need to God and tell no-one else about it. NO-ONE. Trust God completely on it.
- Read about your identity in God - 1 John 3:1-3. Meditate and reflect secretly on this wonderful truth. Find other scriptures that define who we are and our purpose.

Going for gleeful...

- At work, promote someone else's work ahead of yours, make them shine.
- Let someone more talented than you take your place in something....could be any context...sport, music, a show, any high profile opportunity....
- Take a break from using social media to update your wall, tweet, or blog with the fascinating details of your life.....do not explain your change in behaviour.
- Volunteer for something completely unseen and unconnected with anyone you know.
- Do any of the earlier challenges on a larger scale....go on, out do yourself and enjoy sharing a gleeful secret with God 😊