

## February 17

**Matthew 6:6 (NIV)** [Jesus said,] **‘But when you pray, go into your room, close the door and pray to your Father, who is unseen. Then your Father, who sees what is done in secret, will reward you.**

I had a very strange dream a few nights ago. Carol and I sold our home, and I quit working at Coalgate Public Schools. A friend told us of a house for sale in another community, so we bought it – sight unseen. I took a job at another school. Carol remained in Coalgate to finish some business while I went to our new home. It was very small. The walls had holes in them. I almost cried when I saw the kitchen because it was so small. I said, “Carol will not like this kitchen. It does not have enough room.” Part of the floor was sunken in. The dream moved to my new job, where I was teaching younger kids. My classroom was a mess, and I had no materials. Someone I assume who was the principal was going to sit through my class to see if I knew what I was doing. It was too much. I took my phone, excused myself, found a quiet place outside, and called Carol. I was crying as I said, “I want to come home.”

The dream did not mean much to me at the time, but, when I read today’s verse, something clicked. Throughout that dream, I was so conflicted and upset, but I had no one to whom I could talk. One situation piled up on top of another, and despite my best efforts, they were not getting better. This can often describe the hectic activity in our lives. Despite the advancement in technology that was supposed to make our lives easier, I believe we have become busier than ever. In the midst of these demands, we may feel the pressure I felt in that dream. Just as I knew that when things reached a certain point I could go to Carol, we should know that we can always go to our Father. I pray throughout the day, at school, in the car, while working in the yard, at church, etc. However, Jesus tells us that we should reserve a time and place where we can be alone with our Father. We are to find a place where no one else is listening or influencing us. In that dream, when I found that place, I could open up to Carol. I was not ashamed to cry, nor was I concerned what others might think. When we are alone with our Father, we do not try to shape our prayers to fit others’ expectations. We do not hide our emotions out of embarrassment. We do not search for the right words; instead, we use the words that flow from our hearts. My plea to Carol was simple, honest, and heartfelt. Being alone with God is not a recommendation from Jesus. It is a word of truth meant to enhance the life we have through Him.