

One Thing • Psalm 27:4

I. INTRODUCTION

A. *Passion*

1. Ken was a cook at a restaurant I worked at years ago
2. He was very quiet, and during those times when we took breaks together it was always interesting seeing how he interacted with others around the break table
3. While everyone else would be talking about this or that - Ken would sit quietly off to one side and read his bible
4. Occasionally someone would direct a question his way, and he would politely answer, then go back to his reading
5. One day, I asked him what he was doing because it was obvious he was doing more than just reading
6. That's when he told us he was memorizing the entire bible
7. We were all amazed and asked how far he had gone and how he did it
8. For the first time, Ken opened up and really began to talk
 - a. there was a fire in his eyes as he talked about how much he loved God's Word
 - b. up to that point, everyone thought him to be rather dull
 - c. but now, as we saw his passion, it was obvious there was a depth of soul and character none of us knew existed
9. Everyone has something they are deeply committed to, something that gets their juices flowing - some passion that stirs their lives
10. For Charley and Darren - It's the Dallas Cowboys
11. For Dade - It's bible prophecy
12. For me - it's cheeseburgers!
13. What's your passion? What is it that really gets you going?

B. *Today*

1. In our study today, we see what David's passion was
2. And as we do, we get a glimpse of what ours *ought* to be

II. TEXT

A. *Vs. 1-3*

- {1} The LORD is my light and my salvation; Whom shall I fear? The LORD is the strength of my life; Of whom shall I be afraid?
- {2} When the wicked came against me To eat up my flesh, My enemies and foes, They stumbled and fell.
- {3} Though an army may encamp against me, My heart shall not fear; Though war should rise against me, In this I will be confident.
1. This psalm is a song of great faith and confidence in the Lord in spite of opposition and trouble

2. We don't know if this was written while Saul was chasing him around the country or if it was years later when his son Absalom had deposed him and he was again on the run
3. Whether it was earlier or later, it doesn't really matter: the point is, David had his enemies
4. But he knew that it was God who had put him on the throne of Israel, and he would remain king till God removed him
5. So he confesses his faith in the Lord and His covenant grace!

B. Vs. 4-6

{4} One thing I have desired of the LORD, That will I seek: That I may dwell in the house of the LORD All the days of my life, To behold the beauty of the LORD, And to inquire in His temple.

{5} For in the time of trouble He shall hide me in His pavilion; In the secret place of His tabernacle He shall hide me; He shall set me high upon a rock.

{6} And now my head shall be lifted up above my enemies all around me; Therefore I will offer sacrifices of joy in His tabernacle; I will sing, yes, I will sing praises to the LORD.

1. David's enemies may be able to trouble him, but David knows where his help and deliverance lies
2. And he knows that ultimately, all his enemies will be put down
3. It's verse 4 we want to focus on this morning
4. Because it is here we find the basis of David's hope and confidence in life
5. He was not a perfect saint: He was a man who erred, who failed, and whose failures are written LARGE on the pages of history!
6. David was a man of strong emotions - that's why he's the author of 1/2 of the psalms
 - a. he lived life with passion!
 - b. sometimes those passions drove him to great accomplishment
 - 1) we think of his slaying Goliath
 - 2) or his bringing the ark to Jerusalem and the way he danced before it with abandon
 - 3) his fervent passion for God is seen in his determination to build the temple and his acquiring all the materials and plans need for it
 - c. other times, his passion got him into trouble
 - 1) we think of his little adventure as a peeping tom and then adultery with Bathsheba
 - 2) there's the time he impetuously numbered the fighting men of Israel & the plague that came as a result
 - 3) or the time he was going to kill a stupid fool named Nabal
7. It was such intense passion that caused David to live life on such a large stage, on such an immense scale - everything he did, he did, well - - BIG!
8. But of all the passions that drove David's life - of all the emotions and priorities and values that framed his thinking, decisions, and actions, there was ONE that stood head and shoulders above them all - it was this . . .

{4} One thing I have desired of the LORD, That will I seek: That I may dwell in the

house of the LORD All the days of my life, To behold the beauty of the LORD, And to inquire in His temple.

9. I wasn't really all that thrilled by the movie *City Slickers* but there was one scene that I thought was pretty interesting
 - a. it's a story about some city boys who go to a Dude ranch and take part in an old fashioned cattle drive
 - b. these guys are the typical, insecure, materialistic yuppies who find that the romantic idea of the old west cowboy was very far from the reality
 - c. the foreman of the drive was a crusty old cowhand, the last of the breed of old timers
 - d. he took delight in mocking their attempts at roughing it
 - e. and while they were so insecure and uptight about everything, he was at perfect peace no matter what the situation
 - f. one day, as they were riding along, the main character of the movie asked the old cowhand what his secret was; how he could be so confident and assured
 - g. the old cowboy just raised his gloved hand, lifted a finger, and said, "One thing."
 - h. the city slicker asked, "One thing, what do you mean?"
 - i. the cowboy replied, "There's just one thing you need."
 - j. the dude kept pressing to find out what that one thing was, thinking the cowboy had discovered the great secret of life
 - k. finally, after much prodding, the old man said, "That's the point, you have to find out what *your* one thing is. And once you discover it - then you have to make it your One Thing."
10. In this verse, David is telling us what *his* "One Thing" was
 - a. he had discovered what it was he was created for
 - b. and he had set this one thing as the single all-consuming priority of his life
 - c. this was his desire, his chief passion
11. You know, really, everyone has a "one thing"
 - a. it's just that most people never take the time to stop and think about what it is
 - b. for some, it's the desire for *happiness*
 - c. for others, it's the desire to accumulate *things*
 - d. some desire *position* and *power*
 - e. for many today, *pleasure* is the driving passion of their lives
 - f. but you know, really, all these things are only the masks that *SELF* wears
12. All our passions and desires can be summed up under two headings: Self or God
 - a. either we are living for ourselves or Jesus
 - b. for our own glory, or His
13. In 1 Samuel 13, God declares that David was a man after His own heart
 - a. no one else in the entire bible gets that amazing accolade from the Lord
 - b. what was it that made David so different?
 - c. what was it that made him a man after God's heart?
 - d. we find it right here - this is it . . .

{4} One thing I have desired of the LORD, That will I seek: That I may dwell in the house of the LORD All the days of my life, To behold the beauty of the LORD, And to inquire in His temple.

C. One Thing

1. What is it that David wanted? Just what was his desire?
2. He wanted to dwell in the house of the Lord, all the days of his life
 - a. what house is David referring to here?
 - b. he's speaking of the temple - even though it wasn't built yet
3. David wanted to build the temple for a long time; and he would have, had it not been for the word of Nathan the prophet who told him he could not because he had been a man of war
4. Nathan told David that his son Solomon would build the temple
 - a. but this didn't stop David from getting the materials and supplies ready
 - b. and from making the plans and securing the site
5. In his mind's eye, David could see the temple
6. And with every ounce of his being, he longed to enter it's courts and worship the Lord
7. You see, David was not a priest - so he could not enter the inner court and the holy of holies where the ark of the covenant sat
8. Yet this was his *chief* desire - more than anything he wanted to be able to just sit before the presence of the Lord and bask in his glory
9. David knew that the day would come when the way to God's presence would be opened wide
 - a. that's why he says at the end of Psalm 23 - "I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever."
 - b. that day came the day Jesus died on Golgotha
 - 1) at the moment of his death, the veil in the temple that separated the holy place from the most holy place was torn in two from top to bottom
 - 2) this was God's doing - showing the people that the barrier that used to exist between He and man was now removed through the atoning work of Jesus Christ
 - 3) the closed way became a high way!
10. With every ounce of his being, David yearned to be able to just sit in God's manifest presence and gaze upon His beauty
 - a. the psalmist knew that God is the sum total of perfection
 - b. He is complete, lacking nothing; no flaw exists in Him
 - c. on the contrary, He is utterly and thoroughly PERFECT
 - d. and this perfection means He is beautiful!
 - e. really, all other beauty is but a dim reflection of the perfection that is our God
11. When we encounter genuine beauty, it does something profound to our soul and spirit
 - a. we are built up, edified
 - b. there is a lifting of the inner person to a higher place
 - c. this is the inevitable result of beholding true beauty
 - 1) it's why people like spending time gazing at fine art

- 2) or why we pause to watch the sunset
- 3) why do people travel to vacation in Hawaii?
 - a) not only because the weather is so nice
 - b) but because it is so visually pleasing
 - c) [my experience]
- 12. David knew that the sum total of perfection and beauty was God - and he longed to just sit in the Lord's presence and bask in that vision
- 13. He knew the key to his *own* transformation lay in beholding the beauty of the Lord
- 14. Paul echoes precisely this same thought in 2 Cor 3:18 when he writes: "All of us, with unveiled faces, behold as in a mirror the glory of the Lord; we are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory, by the Spirit of the Lord."
- 15. In Luke 10 we read an interesting story about two sisters; Mary & Martha
 - a. Mary was one of those quiet kind of people who are deeply sensitive
 - b. Martha, her sister, was all business
 - c. they had a brother named Lazarus who was a friend of Jesus, and one day Jesus and the disciples were visiting in their home
 - d. now, the rules of hospitality stated that if you had visitors, you had to feed them
 - e. so Martha set about to make up a meal for all of them - and it was quite a little crowd that was there
 - f. Mary, instead of helping in the kitchen, was poised at the feet of Jesus, hanging on every word the Master spoke
 - g. after some time, and Martha's growing frustration with her sister's apparent laziness, she rebuked Jesus for not directing Mary to help her
 - h. Jesus' words put Martha's and Mary's choices in their proper perspective

{Luke 10:41-42} Jesus answered and said to her, "Martha, Martha, you are worried and troubled about many things.

{42} "But one thing is needed, and Mary has chosen that good part, which will not be taken away from her."

- 16. Oh how we need to hear these words today!
 - a. in an age that is fraught with so much hustle and bustle
 - b. when we need day planners and computer scheduling just to keep our calendars straight
 - c. when cellular phones and pagers remind us that we forgot this or that appointment
 - d. when there are an abundance of classes you can take in how to organize your time and prioritize your life
 - e. the tyranny of the urgent has become the norm for many of us
 - f. we are like Martha - running to and fro - doing this and that
 - g. and so much of what we do we do with the intent of serving the Lord
 - h. whether we're in the kitchen or the nursery - the hospital or the orphanage
 - i. we're running here and there, all for the Lord
 - j. but we get resentful because it seems there aren't enough people to help

- 1) "Where's Mary? Why isn't she in here helping me?"
 - 2) "Where's John? He said he'd be here today."
 - 3) "Why did the Smiths show up to help? They never do anything."
17. Notice carefully what Jesus said to Martha.

One thing is needed, and Mary has chosen that good part

- a. the one thing that was needed, the good part of life, was sitting at Jesus feet and listening intently to Him
 - b. now, does that mean that Mary would sit there forever - for the rest of her life as though that's all she ever did - neglecting her other duties and responsibilities?
 - c. certainly not!
 - d. the point is this:
 - 1) picture it - Jesus and the disciples entered their home
 - 2) Jesus sat down and began to teach them
 - 3) it was a special time between the Savior and His *closest* followers
 - 4) no doubt the things He shared with them were more intimate in nature than the things He taught the multitudes
 - 5) why? Because these were the ones who had shown their whole-hearted devotion to Him, and so He was freer to share with them the deeper things
 - 6) Mary & Martha were *both* confronted with the choice of sitting at Jesus' feet or going to the kitchen to follow the customs of hospitality
 - a) Mary, being more spiritually sensitive, realized the intimate nature of the moment and took her seat as close to Jesus as possible
 - b) Martha, being more "practical", went to the kitchen
 - c) but being practical doesn't always mean being wise as Jesus' response to Martha reveals
 - 7) the time would come when Mary would rise to fill her place of service
 - 8) but she knew it had to begin at the feet of the Master; gazing on His face, and hanging on His every word
 - 9) letting the beauty of His life and presence fill her soul, so that her service might be but the *overflow* of His beauty
18. Don't take me wrong - The Christian life is a life of service; But that service begins in a position of humble adoration before the throne of God
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19. Besides beholding the Lord's beauty, David wanted to inquire in His temple
- a. this word "inquire" is an interesting one
 - b. it means to seek out with the sure confidence of knowing that you will find what it is you are looking for
 - c. however - if I go to Home depot looking for nails, or Sears, looking for a hammer, I am reasonably confident I am going to find what I am looking for
 - d. that's the idea of inquiring David means here
- 20 His desire was to behold the Lord's beauty and to seek for the answers to life's questions in the Lord's temple because he knew that is where the answers lay
21. Jesus said, "Seek first the kingdom of God, and His righteousness, and everything else in life will be taken care of."

III. CONCLUSION

A. *What's Your One Thing?*

1. What's your one thing? Your chief passion?
2. What is your highest value - the Number One priority that directs your life?
3. I know most of us this morning would say that it is the Lord
4. But the challenge I want to leave you with is this:
5. If the One Thing of our lives is really Jesus, how much of our time does He really command?
 - a. how much TIME do we spend in Mary's place at Jesus' feet?
 - b. how much TIME are we *investing* in seeking the Lord and beholding His beauty?

B. *Investing Time With Jesus*

1. Imagine there is a bank that credits your account each morning with \$86,400
2. But it carries no balance from day to day.
3. Every evening it deletes whatever part of the balance you failed to use that day.
4. What would you do? You'd draw out every cent, of course!!!
5. Each of us has such a bank account - it's called *time*
6. Every morning, it credits you with 86,400 seconds - and every night it writes off, as lost whatever of this you have failed to invest to good purpose.
7. It carries no balance - and it allows no overdraft
8. There is no going back, and no drawing against tomorrow
9. You must live in the present on today's deposit
10. Invest it so as to get from it the best - the clock is running, so make the most of the day!
11. To realize the value of ONE YEAR, ask a student who failed a grade
12. To realize the value of ONE MONTH, ask the mother who gave birth to a premature baby
13. To realize the value of ONE WEEK, ask our general contractor - Arden Taylor
14. To realize the value of ONE HOUR, ask the lovers who are waiting to meet after a long separation
15. To realize the value of ONE MINUTE, ask a person who just missed their flight
16. To realize the value of ONE SECOND, ask a person who just avoided an accident
17. To realize the value of ONE MILLISECOND, ask the person who won a silver medal in the Olympics
18. Translate your ONE THING into time - time spent with Jesus
19. Today is God's *gift* to you - that's why it's called the "present"
20. Don't put off till tomorrow what the Lord is telling you to do today