

Obtaining the Lord's presence in His house (Quality: Good)

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Preacher: Message, Charles (1904-1985)

[0 : 00] Looking to the Lord for all needed help, I would direct your attention to a word you are fined in the 27th Psalm.

The 27th Psalm, the 4th and the 5th verses. One thing have I desired of the Lord, that which will I seek after, 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.

For in the time of trouble, he shall hide me in his pavilion, in the secret of his tabernacle shall he hide me, he shall set me up upon a rock.

You'll find these words in the 27th Psalm and the 4th and 5th verses. The psalmist here speaks of one thing, one thing that he desired of the Lord.

And surely we might say that true religion consists in one thing.

[1 : 39] And that one thing is Jesus Christ. To know him and to be found in him.

That is the one thing that matters. The one thing needs. You remember what the Lord Jesus said to Martha.

Although we know that Martha was a gracious person. Because Jesus loved Martha and her sister and Lazarus.

But Martha was concerned about much serving. And she said to the Lord, Dost thou not care that my sister hath left me to serve alone?

Bid her therefore that she help me. And the Lord very tenderly and lovingly reproved Martha.

[2 : 52] And said, Martha, Martha, thou art careful and troubled about many things. But one thing is needful.

And Mary hath chosen that good part. Which will not be taken away from her. And the one thing above all others that matters, my friends.

Is to know the Lord Jesus Christ. Wasn't that the one thing that the psalmist desired?

The apostle Paul desired? In the chapter that we read in Philippians. He said that I might know him.

And the power of his resurrection. And the fellowship of his suffering. Be made conformable unto his death. Christ was the one thing that matters.

[3 : 56] Mattered with Paul. He wasn't always so with him. There was a time when Jesus Christ was nothing to him.

In fact, he hated the name of Jesus. He hated the people who followed him and served him.

But now, by the sovereign grace of God, he is a changed man. So that no longer does he hate Christ.

For Christ is made the one thing needful to him. So that he says, This one thing I do.

Forgetting the things that are behind. And reaching forth unto the things that are before. I press toward the mark.

[4 : 55] For the prize of the high calling of God. In Christ Jesus. Oh, let me ask you this question. Is Christ the one thing needful to you?

How blessed if he is. The poet says, Jesus, engrave it on my heart. That thou the one thing needful are.

And how good it would be if that truth was more deeply, more solemnly engraved upon our heart. That Jesus is the one thing that matters.

The one thing above all others. To know him. And to be found in him. The alternative is solemn.

That is, how solemn it is to lack this one thing which the psalmist sought for.

[6 : 04] There was, you remember, that man who came to Christ who lacked this one thing. He didn't lack earthly riches.

He had plenty of this world's good. He came inquiring what he must do to inherit eternal life.

And the Lord said, keep the law. Thou should love thy neighbor as thyself and so on. But he saw it all these have I kept from my user.

What lack are yet? And the Lord who knew what was in his heart. He said, yet one thing thou lackest.

Go and sell all that thou hast and give to the poor and thou should have treasure in heaven. and come take up thy cross and follow me.

[7 : 12] Did he? Was he willing to part with his riches for Christ? No. We read, he went away sorrowful for he was very rich.

rich. He was rich regarding this world's good but he was not rich toward God. He lacked the true riches.

My friends, if you and I possess Christ, if he is the one thing needful to us, then we have true riches and righteousness which is found alone in here.

But I say again how solemn to lack this one thing and to go down to Jordan's swelling lacking this one thing.

To be without God and without Christ and without hope and yet how many there are in that condition what in the infinite mercy if the grace of God has made us to differ so that no longer we are without God and without Christ and without hope so that we come in with the psalmist and are enabled by the grace of God to use this language.

[8 : 50] One thing if I desire of the Lord that will I seek after. My friends where there is this seeking after this one thing it is the grace of God in exercise.

Man by nature doesn't seek the Lord doesn't seek this one thing they desire him not he is to them as a root out of a dry ground no form nor comeliness and no beauty that they should desire him.

Man by nature says we will not have this man to reign over us. Oh how many have said we will not have this religion but how the grace of God has changed them so that like Paul the things that they once hated and despised now they love now they seek after all my friends is the grace of God alone that causes us to seek this one thing and so the psalmist here says one thing have I desired of the Lord he desired this one thing of the Lord that will I seek after are you seeking after this one thing is

Christ more to you than all things else beside would you part with all and I speak to myself would you part with all to follow him you know we can't have Christ and coal can we I remember many years ago going to Dallington chapel one week evening and I heard the late Mr.

Jabez Field and I shall never forget the remark he made he said you can't have Christ and coal and you can't my friend you can't have Christ and the world you can't have Christ and the riches of this world no man can serve two masters either he will hate the one and serve the other you cannot serve God and man oh is it Christ the one thing needful oh if there should be any here tonight to whom Christ is not the one thing needful oh might it please the Lord in mercy to quicken your soul into life and to give you a true concern regarding your soul that you may seek the Lord while he may be found and call upon him while he is near for he is found of those who truly see him did he not say ask and ye shall receive seek and ye shall find knock and it shall be opened unto you for everyone that ask it receive it everyone that seek it find it and to him that knock it it shall be opened oh if there are those seeking souls here knocking at mercy's door

[12 : 57] I would encourage you to knock on to seek on to pray on because to praying souls he always grants more than they can express none will ever seek his face in vain will they now the psalmist here speaks about seeking the face of the Lord oh I feel when the psalmist David penned this psalm he was in a gracious condition of mind his soul was alive in the things of God and he said in the eighth verse when thou saidst seek ye my face my heart said unto thee thy face Lord will I see is that what our heart says if the

Lord says to us seek ye my face does our heart respond thy face Lord will I see that was what the psalmist saw the Lord one thing of our desire of the Lord oh you may not feel to know much in the things of God but do you know this one thing I've often mentioned the case of that man that was born blind you remember and the Lord healed him of his blindness he gave him sight not only did he give him natural sight but I believe he also gave him a spiritual sight and you remember how they asked him how he received his sight because they knew that he had been born blind his parents were there and when they were questioned they said this is our son and he was born blind but how he received his sight we know not but what did he say he said one thing

I know whereas I was blind now I see that's the one thing that matters my friend to see what a blessing sight is natural sight to be able to see oh perhaps we don't think enough about those who are not able to see some are born blind and never do see but what a great blessing it is to see spiritually to have eyes to see and so this man said one thing I know whereas I was blind now I see he knew he was blind but now he saw the Lord had done great things for him whereof he was blind one thing have I desired of the

Lord that will I seek after oh if you are seeking after this one thing my friend you will obtain none will ever seek God's face in vain Jeremiah says in his lamentations it's good that a man should both see hope and patiently wait for the salvation of the Lord again we read seek the Lord and his strength seek his face ever more there are many blessings in the scripture pronounced upon seeking souls upon waiting souls we have no records in the scriptures of any who truly sought the

Lord and never found him he said I'm found of those that seek him one thing of us is out of the Lord that will I seek after and that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my night dwell in the house of the Lord is that our desire to dwell in the house of the Lord oh what a blessed place it is to be brought to dwell in the house of the Lord blessed are they that dwell in thy house said the psalmist they will be still praising thee those who dwell in

[18 : 36] God's house they're those who abide there they find a home there they find a habitation there and they say concerning Zion they're my best friends my kindred dwell their God my saviour reigns and why do they find the courts of the Lord and the house of the Lord so desirable why it's because the Lord is there that's why because Christ is there they dwell in him and he in them do they not as I spoke from last Lord the evening about abiding me and I in you as a fruit branch cannot bear fruit of itself except it abide in the vine nor can ye except he abide in me for without me he can do nothing oh that is what makes the house of

God so desirable so blessed it is because Christ is there God is in the midst of her that is of the church not not necessarily a building but he's in the midst of the church in the midst of the gatherings of his people it is good to meet together in places of worship as we've met tonight is it not it is horrible it's commendable and the psalmist often speaks about the courts of the Lord he said how aimable are thy tabernacles O Lord of hosts my soul longeth yea he even fainteth for the courts of the Lord my heart and my flesh crieth out for the living God and what made the house of God so desirable and so aimable to him was because the

Lord was there the Lord was there that's the one thing needful isn't it in our assembly together to have the Lord's presence what would it be if this chapel was filled to its capacity and the Lord was not here it wouldn't be anything would it but my friends when he come that's the one thing needful in our assembly together even if there may only be a few as in many places there's only but a few gathered yet if the Lord is there how blessed it's the one thing needful when you come up to the house of God as some of you have come up to worship and others have gone to other places during the day and have come up now for the evening oh do you come with that desire in your heart this one thing of our desire of the Lord is that the Lord's presence the one thing you desire as you enter his course do you sometimes say with a hymn writer what is all the house to me unless the master I can see the place is nothing if the

Lord isn't there there may be a big congregation wonderful singing and so on as there are in many places no doubt but if the Lord is not there what is it it's nothing but all if he can't that's the one thing that matters the one thing that matters one thing about his heart of the Lord that will I seek after and that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life not one day but all the days of my life the psalmist didn't want to be just one who occasionally comes but one like a child at home no longer a stranger or a guest but like a child at home oh how good it is to feel that the house of

God the church of God is our home our dwelling place yes our dwelling place and to feel like Ruth did you remember how she expressed it when Naomi told her to go back with her sister in law ah she said entreat me not to leave thee I can't go back but where thou goest I will go where thou lodgest I will not thy people shall be my people and thy God my God oh dear Ruth she wanted to dwell in Zion didn't she she wanted to dwell in the courts of the Lord she wanted this one thing that mattered did she not and I believe she found it I know she did because she was indeed a true handmaiden of the Lord brought out of Moab made manifest as a true

[24 : 39] Israelite indeed the Lord blessed that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life the words in the close of the 23rd psalm come to my mind and you're all well acquainted with that blessed psalm that psalm when the psalmist was so full of the goodness and mercy of God he speaks about the Lord being his shepherd and about the Lord leading him by the still waters and by the green pastures he leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake yea though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death I fear no evil thou art with me he said thou maintainest my love my cup my cup running over he said he was so full that his cup was running over and he finishes saying surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life and I would dwell in the house of the

Lord forever and wasn't that the desire of the psalmist here that I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever and I believe that goes farther than his earthly course because if you are one of those who dwell in his courts below you will dwell in his courts above when your earthly course is finished and your race is run you will enter heaven that holy happy place where sin no more defiles and where congregation no break up and sabbaths have no age this congregation will soon break up will it not we shall soon come to the end of the services this day but my friends there will be no breaking up of congregations in heaven it's one eternal dwelling place yes they serve him the day and night in his temple they praise him with unsinning hearts they worship him with pure worship but he said to behold one thing of my desire of the

Lord that will I seek after that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life to behold the beauty of the Lord that was what the psalmist desired to behold the beauty of the Lord and where do we see the beauty of the Lord why in Jesus Christ in him the world no beauty sees no form nor comeliness man it's very true what Isaiah says when we shall see him there is no beauty that we should desire he despised and rejected as men he is a root of the dry ground but my friends there are people taught of God taught of the spirit who see a beauty in the Lord in Jesus Christ that word in the 90th psalm is wonderful that psalm of Moses you remember how it concludes let the beauty of the

Lord be upon us and establish thou the work of our hands upon us yea the work of our hands establish thou thou it and to behold the beauty of the Lord is to behold Jesus Christ where God's beauty is seen in Emmanuel's faith in Jesus Christ that's where God's greatest glory shines in Jesus Christ God out of Christ is a consuming fire but in and through his dear son the Lord Jesus Christ his glory is revealed his beauty shines shall I say for out of Zion the perfection of beauty God has shined the church is the perfection of beauty and where does the church derive her beauty why in her glorious head in her glorious

Lord it's not what she is in herself in herself she is black but in him she is comely the church in the canticle says I am black but comely oh ye daughters of Zion Jerusalem in herself she is defiled and black but in her glorious head she is comely she is made beautiful in his beauty oh my friends this is where the beauty of God is seen in the Lord Jesus Christ to behold the beauty of the Lord have you beheld the beauty of the Lord in Jesus Christ do you desire him my friends I say again is he the one thing needful to you if he isn't it's very solemn indeed to die without him is a sink to that place where hope and mercy can never come think of it you dear young people oh but some word and it might be the means of causing you to think about these things it will be a mercy indeed if the Lord should awaken and son to see the danger there is so that they are brought to cry for mercy and to flee from the wrath to come to flee to Christ the only refuge the hope set before us in the gospel oh there's no other refuge for sinners but in

[31 : 52] Jesus Christ no other hope but Christ he is a sure and certain hope let the beauty to behold the beauty of the Lord and to inquire are you an inquiring soul inquire in his temple God's people they are an inquiring they are inquiring souls they are praying souls do we inquire it's well when people seek the Lord and inquire their way to Zion with their faces visible oh I would faint hope among some of you dear younger people there are some inquiring souls some seeking souls so that as you come to the house of God you come seeking him praying for a blessing oh if you come thus you won't come in vain you won't

I'm sure of it those who seek the Lord as I said just now they shall find and then just a brief word in closing the psalmist speaks about for in the time of trouble he shall hide the psalmist David had many troubles but he proved in his troubles that the Lord was his hiding place the Lord was his refuge oh and I do hope that those of you who are in trouble may prove things those of you dear friends who have suffered a sad pareem that you may be enabled as we said this morning to fall into the hand of the Lord and to feel the truth which

Eli expressed it is the Lord let him do what seemeth him good oh the Lord is a hiding place to his people it's a reality my friends God is our refuge and strength a very present help in trouble yes he's a very present help in trouble and I believe he is so to you in that he has sustained and upheld you thus far and may you prove so and each of us as we journey on for we know not what troubles may await us for in the time of trouble he said he shall hide me in his pavilion all this pavilion this refuge in the secret of his tabernacle shall he hide me we read about the secret place of the most high he that dwelleth in the secret place of the most high shall abide under the shadow of the almighty and David said I will say of the

Lord he is my refuge and my portion in the land of the living can you say it or do you desire to say it let me come a little lower do you desire to say that the Lord is your refuge and your strength he will never forsake those who trust in him the soul that on Jesus has leaned for repose he'll never no never desert to his foes that soul though all hell may endeavor to shake he'll never no never no never forsake in the secret of his tabernacle shall he hide me and then he says he shall set me up upon a rock what is this rock my friend it's Christ oh how blessedly the Lord

Jesus Christ is set forth in these words that we have tried to speak from this evening he's the one thing isn't he he's the one thing that matters and he he is the beauty of the Lord and he is the hiding place of his people and he shall set me up upon a rock a rock which is stable abiding my friends do we know what it is to be found upon this rock set me up upon a rock rock of ages cleft for me because this is the rock that the psalmist speaks of here the rock of ages the smitten rock the cleft rock oh what safety there is in the rock everything is sinking sand but the rock the poet says and it's blessed language if we can truly feel it on Christ the solid rock

[37 : 49] I stand all other ground is sinking sand I will leave it as the other the other surveys to attend the Lord follow with his blessing amen god willing mr.

crater will preach thursday evening and mr. stanley dabb's next lord's day evening reading in the morning prayer meeting tomorrow evening we thank the friends for their kind help and for the collection of 112 pounds 28 for our last monday services after this evening's service the ordinance of the lord's supper will be attended to when members of other churches of the same faith and order are welcome to commune with us by giving their names to the demons let us now close with him 934 934 tunes 4 240 Jerusalem my happy home name ever dear to me when shall my labors have an end in joy and peace and thee when shall these eyes thy heaven built walls and pearly gates be old thy bulwarks and salvation strong and streets of shining gold 934 word hand million times to

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The End O Lord, do dismiss us with thy blessing, and do pardon all thy pure eyes have seen a myth in the services this day, and bless what has been consistent with thy truth, crown thy gospel with success.

[43 : 57] Give us journeyed, be with us as we meet around thy table. And now may the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ and the communion of the Holy Spirit abide with us. Amen.