

One thing have I desired of the Lord (Quality: Average)

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Preacher: Buss, Charles (1913-1997)

[0 : 0 0] as the lord may be pleased to help me this morning i'll direct you to a word in the psalm 27 psalm 27 we read verse 4 one thing have i desired of the lord that when 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 psalm 27 the fourth verse one thing have i desired of the lord that when 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 this as you know is one of the psalms of david he was declared in the scriptures to be the sweet psalmist of israel and what a precious part of god's word the psalms of david do for and uh surely he made a great blessing to many of god's dear people down through the generations and uh how often in the psalms of david we have an unfolding as it were of the uh spiritual exercise that the dear psalmist at times was the subject of his life is recorded in the scripture in quite detail when we come to the psalms which he wrote passing through those various experiences that god led him through we have an unfolding as it were somewhat of his inner exercises in the midst of these things and to the lord's dear people god's dealings and sometimes his dealings in providence are a means of uh sole exercise and this the dear psalmist was the subject of so that as he expresses his desires his exercises uh how at times these things do find a place in the hearts of god's dear people in the hearts of god's dear people and it's a great mercy friends if at times we feel we can as it were uh in spirit stand alongside the psalmist both in his requests his desires and uh in his exercises as he sought to acknowledge god in his mercy we have many uh prayers expressed in the psalms and they have been the language of god's dear people oftentimes i do believe and it may well be as you uh meditate upon the psalms of david and those prayers which are expressed in those psalms you find that your heart at times goes out in desire in the same way you need the same blessings you have the same desires indeed if we are taught by the spirit of god there will be some measure of uniformity in the desires of one another and as the psalmist was inspired by the holy spirit to express these desires in some of the psalms if through god's great mercy and it is through god's great mercy uh we can enter a little into them surely does it not mean that we are being taught by the same spirit not hopefully as i try and bring this very simple word in a sense before you this morning it might have

that effect one thing if i desire to the lord and that will i seek after well there's this one thing that the psalmist had deep down in his heart as a desire as it were above every other thing life is an experience of desires uh natural life brings natural desires it brings natural needs which uh need to be supplied that that life that natural life might be maintained and how true this is with regard to spiritual life of god's great mercy has implanted a spark of divine life in your soul then that we tell us that those desires cannot be satisfied from any source but from god himself from the lord jesus christ he who reigns in zion he who is king in zion placed there by god the father and uh here is the only source of that those desires being fulfilled and supplied there's a great mercy dear friends if you have those desires because if you have those desires there'll be times when you realize no earthly source can meet and supply those desires and it brings you to look above it brings you to look above all earthly things and while god's great mercy uh supplies the uh supplies the daily needs in daily path in your daily pathway and these blessings call for thanksgiving may we never take these things for granted may god grant us a thankful heart for daily blessings but you see they're not grace are they they're not grace they're not uh that which will stand uh for sinner in good stead in a dying hour but now as you come to consider this text this morning surely now those things contained in it which uh uh point that way what i mean is this which the psalmist desires is something which will be a benefit to him uh toward eternity and so may the lord help us then for a little while this morning in a very uh simple way as i always have to be uh to consider this word hoping that god will be pleased to direct it to one heart or another and prove to be perhaps a word of blessing perhaps a word of encouragement a word of confirmation you see surely in one sense the experiences of god's dear people could often be summed up in this word desires you see in natural things as soon as a baby's born it has desires although it cannot of course express those desires not audibly but there are needs and there are desires now so it is in in spiritual things and a great mercy to be in possession at times even of a desire you know though perhaps sometimes you may feel uh tried because uh you cannot you fear not to obtained uh to uh great things and indeed we have to be careful with regard to this because the word of god uh warns us in this way seek us our great things for thyself seek them not but the implication is to seek real things but what i mean is this is that the religion of a child of god seems to be reduced to desires you cannot fear to be in

possession of much and yet the desires and that desires which the lord alone can supply so then our text brings us along those that line of thought as it were uh and i would notice this too as we come to consider this word uh in the light of the psalmist's case his life and his and his desires notice how he expresses his desire before the lord at this time and his desire concerning a dwelling place in the house of the lord this was his outstanding desire now if you read the account of david's life and we have a detailed account of it you will notice that uh there were times when the dear man was very concerned about things pertaining to the house of god the house of the lord indeed as grace was given there were times with him we had helped to seek first as it were the kingdom of god it is noticeable that when the dear psalmist at length was uh settled upon the throne of israel according to god's faithful promise to him we read how david was uh immediately almost immediately concerned about the things pertaining to the house of god the worship of god in his day he he sought that there might be a a resting place for the ark there was no settled resting place for the ark in those days indeed uh there have been some very solemn times passing over israel's nation because of their sin they were brought into very uh solemn circumstances uh and uh and there was not indeed not not any settled place for the ark and now david was concerned about this and when he was settled upon the throne how he sought the lord for divine direction with regard to the settlement of the ark and the and where god was to be worshipped and so if you read psalm 132 you notice there how the lord was pleased to reveal to david things concerning the settlement of the ark and the worship of god but the point i wanted to make is this notice how david was concerned about the worship of god god in his great mercy had raised him up to sit upon the throne of israel god has wrought great wonders in this respect but here's david you know concerned about the worship of god and uh it this text uh it shows this in the exercise of the psalmist he does not uh uh express a desire with regard to um uh attainment in things to do with his life alone but rather that he might have a dwelling place in the house of the lord this was his chief desire this time notice he says one thing have i desired of the lord it indicates surely a particular desire desire a desire of all other desires and good it is friends if sometimes your soul is exercising that way to have that those right desires for right things yes for there to be some priority in this right it is to desire daily blessings and

we depend upon the lord for for them every one of them every breath that we draw but other times when there is that desire above all other desires with respect to the worship of god and uh uh your your case in the light of these things because where there is such a desire as this surely it gives evidence uh of uh the spirit's work within the song man by nature does not desire such things as the psalmist speaks on here true there are those who may profess religion and satisfied with some outer profession and in one sense uh uh there is uh perhaps uh something uh with regard to the outward performance of worship and perhaps some even some desire in that way but what is the motive well to dead professor the motive is just this to as it were to maintain an outward profession of religion without a concern with regard to that which is so vital but you see when you consider the matter at right and may the lord help us so to do the psalmist's desire was something far deeper than all this he had a real concern with regard to things pertaining to the house of the lord and the worship of god and his personal interest in it and that is so important isn't it you see we may tend sometimes perhaps to consider matters in a general sense but if the lord is pleased to deal with us we cannot be satisfied with things in a in a general way as it were uh to merely assent to the truth in a general sense is not sufficient all we need a personal experience if we have a personal experience there'll be a personal desire now david had that and surely when he was concerned about the resting place of the ark and the where the lord would uh have the ark be and where his worship was to be sent as it were and surely the underlying concern was uh with other things of course uh the psalmist's case notice he's very personal in this text he says one thing have i desired of the lord that that and that will i seek after and that i may dwell in the house of the lord now this is not to be considered as being something as very restrictive as it were but it does show to us this doesn't it that where there's a a real spiritual desire it will be very personal good it is to seek the wealth of others and may we be helped to do so we are exhorted to pray one for another but you know religion begins at home doesn't it a real prayer begins at home uh if we're the subject of these desires there will be personal desires there'll be this one thing i know there may be times when other things uh uh seem to uh prevail as it were and we may be turned aside sometimes and taken up very much with things of this life and while there are the lawful things of daily life to be attended to uh the word of god does say to us seek ye first the kingdom of god and his righteousness but good it is when there are those desires that rise up in the heart

and could we be helped to come out and help us to examine ourselves in the light of this how do we come to the house of prayer how did we come this morning did we come because it was uh the sabbath day the sunday morning did we come because this is the usual course of things to gather in the house of prayer for worship or were there are there are those expressed desires those concerns with regards your soul and god whom you desire to worship good it is if we come within the compass of this text in the light of uh public worship one thing about desire to the lord or are those desires that go up to the lord you see the lord alone can supply this blessing that the psalmist was anxious to be the subject of and to partake it it comes from the lord and if the lord has been pleased to work in our hearts by his spirit then we shall realize at times that it is the lord alone who can meet our needs if the lord has been pleased to convince us of our sin and the most needful experience that is it is the lord alone who can meet that need of a poor convinced sinner feeling to be lost and undone in himself guilty a transgressor of god's holy law depends upon god's mercy that mercy that flows to the lord jesus christ you see spiritual desires can only be satisfied with spiritual source so then this this desire now we notice that uh it was a desire that uh produced an exercise in his heart because the text says one thing of our desire of the lord that will i seek after there was a seeking you see it's a great mercy to have a desire uh but uh it is a great mercy also uh to seek that desire may be granted there's a striking word in the proverbs isn't there the soul of the sluggard desireth nothing he desireth that nothing you see if the lord is pleased to graciously exercise us and that's what we need that we not only the desire supply that desire and so the psalmist puts it before us in this way one thing of our desire of the lord it is to the lord he has to look that when i seek after uh uh in one sense this is a encouraging word for those who are true seekers or do you come within within the compass of those who do seek the lord is it one matter that you're concerned about when you come to the house of prayer do you seek his face do you seek his mercy do you seek that the lord would speak a word to your soul and are there those secret times when you do seek before the lord in prayer yes in a secret place that god would bless your soul that you might know that mercy which uh the lord's people alone come to experience his salvation well here's the psalmist then and he says that will i seek after

[20 : 21] oh what a mercy dear friends to be kept alive to be the subject of these desires and for there to be a seeking a seeking you see if we if these desires sincere then surely those desires cannot be satisfied unless supplied less supplied but notice how these desires do direct the dear psalmist to that wonderful source of supply and things pertaining to the house of the lord for he says that will i seek after that i may dwell in the house of the lord all the days of my life in this desire that psalmist was the subject of he desired to know what it was to realize that he had a dwelling place in the house of the lord i'll mention just now that the psalmist was concerned with regard to where the ark should be the lord would reveal where he would have his resting place where the lord would dwell as it were if you read that psalm 132 the lord speaks there to the psalmist he says here will i dwell for i've desired here will i dwell you see the lord revealed this he would dwell in zion his dwelling place amongst his dear people here below and of course zion on high but he said here will i dwell now here's the psalmist expressing his desire he says that i may dwell in the house of the lord you see there's a coming together as it were that where the lord dwells where the lord is pleased to reveal his mercy it is there a living soul desires to be found and so he says that i may dwell in the house of the lord all the days of my life now how would you understand this of course the dear psalmist could not be as it were in a in a literal sense a resident in the house of the lord all all the days of his life in every sense of the word he reigned upon the throne he had to reign over israel but can we not discern here his foremost his uppermost concern his uppermost desire this dwelling place in the house of the lord as though he would desire this far more than anything else lawful that may be that i may dwell in the house of the lord now how do we understand this then well surely we can think of it like this to dwell there in your desires in your thoughts to put it in a very simple way you may be going about your daily duties or daily call or calling in life but sometimes there's a thought and it goes toward the lord it goes toward his house now in that sense in your thoughts you dwell in the house of the lord yes in your thoughts indeed with regard to your desires with regard to the welfare of god's house of prayer and his worship that i may dwell in the house of the lord

but then in a more particular sense there is a way there's an experience and a great mercy dear friends if we know a little of the secret of it there is such a thing as really knowing what it is to realize that the house of the lord is your soul's dwelling place the psalmist expresses it here by way of desire he says that i may dwell in the house of the lord now what a mercy dear friends if that desire is found in your heart and you seek that it may be experienced even a dwelling place in the house of the lord yes as distinct from just as it were a mere visitor a mere visitor to be one who dwells there to find the house of the lord and is indeed a a spiritual house a spiritual home because there you find there are the provisions which alone the lord can bless to your soul and the desires to your soul go that way you might know those blessings as one who dwells there that i may dwell in the house of the lord yes not just as it were one who is satisfied with a a mere outward attendance of worship no but a dwelling place there and there's a sense in which the worship of god and in the experience of it brings a poor sinner into some realization of this and be thankful for a sinner if sometimes you know something of this that the lord the house of the lord has been and is made a dwelling place to you you find that there is a a source of supply there there's something about the house of the lord and the worship of god and those things pertaining to the worship of god yes his glorious gospel proclaimed you find there's something there where you do desire to dwell yes desire to dwell there yes to know something what is to to abide in these things although of course it is the sabbath day ends you go forth into the coming week but there's something that remains and that something remains it's to do with the house of the lord and a dwelling place there maybe the lord has been pleased to visit you there spoke a word to your heart made the gospel very precious to your soul well all these things add up as it were to a dwelling place in the lord in the house of the lord you see not a casual visitor now but a one who dwells and you see when you think of it it has this meaning doesn't it you belong to those things pertaining to the house of the lord that i may dwell in the house of the lord all the days of my life what was the underlying principle in this well i think you can be answered in this way if you go back into the previous psalm psalm 26 and in the eighth verse we read this lord he says

i've loved the habitation of thine house and the place where thine honor dwelleth you see here it is what was the moving principle well the dear psalmist there was love in his heart god had put it there yes a love to god a love to his house a love to his house as that habitation yes god's habitation i'll speak reverently and of course sinners habitation i quoted that word to you just now in psalm 132 where the lord said here when i dwell it was god's habitation you see but then this this is the same in a lower sense of course with regard to his dear people they find it a habitation they desire to dwell where the lord dwells they would draw near in that way would seek to worship in that way and that their desires may come up before the lord in this direction that i may dwell in the house of the lord yes it is a place of resort isn't it maybe sometimes you look forward to the sabbath day to be released from the cares and pressures and concerns of daily life and to to enter into his house in that sense to find a dwelling place there you realize there's something there which is to be fired desired above everything else yes a blessing for your soul you see it is there in zion there the lord commands his blessing doesn't he yes he commands his blessing he deals with poor sinners makes them feel their need of his blessing convinces them their sin cause them to desire to know the blessings of his forgiveness the lord has promised to convey those blessings yes and often it is in the public means of grace while god is not confined to ways and means but it's very clear in the word of god and surely god's dear people experience this that the lord is pleased to communicate to his dear people as they seek to dwell in his house there are those provisions yes it is there he makes his gospel to be precious to them he calls them to hear his voice he draws them draws their hearts to him and they come into a little experience what it is to truly worship yes and that with humility you see we do not interpret this word here that david wanted some prominent place in the house of the lord no because in another psalm we read this i'd rather be a doorkeeper in the house of my god than to dwell in the tents of wickedness choose to sit at the threshold the lowest place if but one may be as it were a dwelling within the house be at a low place and good it is when that sphere of humility prevails that i may dwell in the house of the lord all the days of my life but then the psalmist puts it like this to behold the beauty of the lord now here there was some attraction and that was nothing to do with outward things later on of course

solomon david's son was raised up to build the house of the lord that temple and it was a beautiful building a magnificent place but when the psalmist here speaks about the beauty of the lord he's not thinking about a wonderful building in the outward sense of it no but something which is spiritual the beauty of the lord and now to a poor sinner surely there is something with regard to the that which is attractive to a nady sinner and these are things pertaining to the house of the lord it is in worship that sometimes a poor sinner is favored with a glimpse by faith the dear lord jesus christ himself because when we think of the beauty of the lord surely it should and may it direct us to the lord jesus christ himself i know that his psalmist lived in those days those old testament times when the dear son of god had not yet come in the flesh but there were those ways in which the lord was pleased to reveal his beauty his grace his mercy his forgiveness his tender compassion his love and the psalmist knew what it was for these things to be attractive to him he desired them and so he says that i may dwell in the house of the lord all the days of my life to behold the beauty of the lord yes and there's a beauty dear friends which lost will die is there not a beauty the beauty of the lord in the lord jesus christ himself his glorious gospel the things pertaining to his worship solemn though they are yet there's a beauty in them and there's that uh striking word isn't there i worship the lord in the beauty of holiness god grants us reverence in things pertaining to the worship of god when we deliver from those things that are unbecoming in worship but there's a beauty to be known there are blessings to be known there is god's smile his favor not for what we are and how we cannot merit god's favor we do not merit his favor in seeking a dwelling place in his house really what i mean is this we do not realize we're not made to realize that it is what we do what we purpose to do now but it is what god has designed to give all of his mercy and you see it is in the gospel and in the exercise of worship that these things at times are graciously displayed and to a living soul with a living desire these things become attractive there's something that responds in your heart graciously really the psalmist expresses it later on in the same psalm doesn't he when thou said seek ye my face my heart said unto thee thy face lord will i see you see there's a beauty god is it as he's revealed himself in the person his beloved son the lord jesus christ christ there's a beauty there to needy sinners there's a beauty in the person of sin no beauty no no beauty to the ungodly no but indeed a beauty to convince sinners yes you see a wondrous glory in this god in the person of his dear son the lord jesus christ and you see it is in the house of the lord that the lord is pleased at times to reveal himself

there's a striking expression in the song of solomon isn't there with respect to uh looking through the lattice as it were and you can think of this with regard to worship and how the lord is pleased sometimes to unfound his glory in a measure and it is as it were to the lattice of his worship to the lattice of his word in the exercise of worship the lord reveals himself and you see the desire is that way isn't it one as well said in the hymn what is the house to me unless the master i can see oh here is the beauty yes and the dear lord jesus christ his wondrous person yes his law fulfilling righteousness his atoning sacrifice there's a beauty in it it becomes attractive to a poor guilty sinner yes to behold the beauty of the lord and you see to know this in some degree we do need the lord to exercise in us the faith faith in him for there to be as it were the eye of faith to behold those things are not seen with the natural eye yet made very real to faith a glimpse yes of his face to realize his smile these are things that a living soul desires to enter into to experience 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 one more expression here in this text isn't there to inquire in his temple he does direct our thoughts does it not to that provision the lord has made with regard to his worship and his house there is the mercy seat there is the throne of grace yes where long years ago as god spoke to mooses and directed him with regard to the things pertaining to worship in those days and the construction of the temple and the ark the mercy seat the lord said there will i meet thee there will i meet thee you see it is a meeting place and a meeting place to inquiring souls to inquire in his temple or other those inquiries others desires expressed those needs uh expressed before the lord as it were do you know what it is to seek a dwelling place in the house of the lord and to know what it is to come before him yes with your desires and in spirit to express them before him to inquire in his temple it does bring before us that it's something of the condescending mercy of god to his dear people oh he comes he comes to their need there is a meeting place yes he hears prayer these inquiries very much points doesn't it to the exercise of prayer yes inquiries temple there's that place you see the throne of grace is mercy seat he has promised to meet with and to bless his people all this wondrous throne of grace the lord jesus christ reigns there he rules there

[40 : 37] and there are those exceeding great and precious promises to encourage these inquiring ones and if you're a true seeker then you will you will inquire yes and those inquiries will be to do with things pertaining to your never dying soul you notice the psalmist expressed his desires in him one place and another not only in this text before us but in other places in the psalms we read it and it may be sometimes your desire as uh coincided with the psalmist in what he expressed i think of one inquiry what did david say say to my soul i am thy salvation oh that is a desire above all other many other desires to realize an interest in god's salvation and that he who is worshipped in zion he who has his dwelling place in zion is your god that you're his that you have an interest in his mercy in his great salvation and the inquiry will be this at times the lord will say this oh you want to come and speak into your heart don't you get to hear that voice yes that's a voice of pardon that voice that brings peace that voice which may be sometimes a voice of direction to you in the way in which you go but it's the voice of the lord and it is a gracious voice it is a powerful voice although at times a still small voice well this text then brings before us this desire this expressed desire of the psalmist what he desired now god regarded the dear psalmist in this there might be a word of encouragement to a true seeker perhaps one who feels he cannot attain to great things but there's a seeking in his heart or there's encouragement in god's word to seek his face yes the lord has said i love them that love me and those that seek me early shall find me and how the dear psalmist proved the truth of this didn't he and you can pursue it right to the end of his journey that i may dwell in the house of the lord yes god granted him that and sometimes the dear man had some sweet intimation of this and i would just draw your attention to the 23rd psalm and the latter part of it i know a psalm well known to each one of us but what did the dear psalmist express there he said this surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life and i will dwell in the house of the lord forever or the dear man's thoughts were directed heavenward you see yes and that was a prospect and that was the promised blessing and it is the promised blessing to all god's dear people that they shall know that dwelling place in heaven above where there's nothing to come between where there's no sorrow no pain no sickness no death god grants that mercy amen