

One Thing Is Necessary

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Hearing God's Voice and Becoming His Friend – Part 1

“The Lord and his disciples were traveling along and came to a village. When they got there, a woman named Martha welcomed him into her home. She had a sister named Mary, who sat down in front of the Lord and was listening to what he said. Martha was worried about all that had to be done. Finally, she went to Jesus and said, “Lord, doesn’t it bother you that my sister has left me to do all the work by myself? Tell her to come and help me!” The Lord answered, “Martha, Martha! You are worried and upset about so many things, but only one thing is necessary. Mary has chosen what is best, and it will not be taken away from her.”—Luke 10:38-42 (CEV)

Our relationship with the Lord, spending time with Him, learning from Him, growing closer to Him, that is the most important, the most necessary thing in life. Period. Turning to God is not just something to do when we are in trouble, as Moses told the Israelites:

“He humbled you and allowed you to be hungry and fed you with manna, [a substance] which you did not know, nor did your fathers know, so that He might make you understand [by personal experience] that man does not live by bread alone, but man lives by every word that proceeds out of the mouth of the Lord.”—Deuteronomy 8:3 (AMP)

We may get distracted by many cares in life, as Jesus described in the parable of the Sower, and we may allow those thorns to rise up and choke the growth of God’s Word in our lives. If we allow that to happen, we will never experience the full potential that God’s words have to impact our lives in positive ways. The fruit that we could have experienced in our lives will be lost. This parable of the Sower is so important for us to understand that it is included in three of the four Gospels (Matthew 13; Mark 4; Luke 8).

We may, as Martha, be faced with many responsibilities in life that demand our attention. We may feel that we don’t have time to stop what we’re doing and spend regular, focused time in communion with the Lord.

But why did Jesus tell Martha that this was the only thing necessary when there are so many important things that need to be done?

It is because *everything* else in life springs from this relationship with God. If that relationship is not healthy, nothing else in your life will be as healthy as it could be. Everything else in your life will suffer. Everything else in your life will come up short, not living up to the potential that it had: your personal growth, your family relationships, relationships with friends & others, your health, your work, your ministry, your finances....

If your relationship with God is lacking, everything else will be lacking.

That is why the greatest commandment is not to live a clean, moral life, or to work faithfully at your job, or even to love your family, but the greatest commandment is to love the Lord with all your heart, mind, soul, and strength.

That is why, even though the church in Ephesus could be praised by Jesus Himself as being outstanding in every area, especially when compared to most churches today, Jesus faulted them and warned them of the impending consequence of losing their place in God's kingdom, because they had left their first love (Revelation 2:4).

No matter what your life is like, and no matter how busy you are, you must keep your relationship with God the primary focus of your life, or everything else in your life will suffer.

Everything in your life springs from your relationship with God. *Everything*.

Jesus' First Priority

Jesus spent His days in ministry surrounded by people who were pulling on Him constantly, asking for help for their needs. His life was so busy that sometimes He and His disciples were not even able to take time to meet their own basic needs.

“Jesus entered a house. A crowd gathered again so that it was impossible for him and his followers even to eat.”—Mark 3:20 (CEB)

But with all of His responsibilities, Jesus always set a priority on spending time alone with His Father. His first purpose was to do the will of His Father, and His first love was His relationship with His Father. He never allowed anything to interfere with that. The Gospels record several times when Jesus intentionally went

out to a solitary place to spend time alone with His Father God even while throngs of people were clamoring for Him.

“Early in the morning, well before sunrise, Jesus rose and went to a deserted place where he could be alone in prayer. Simon and those with him tracked him down. When they found him, they told him, ‘Everyone’s looking for you!’”—Mark 1:35-37 (CEB)

Abide in Him

What we must realize is that God is our source of life. He is our source of everything that is good (James 1:17). Neglecting His words and our relationship with Him causes us to wither due to malnourishment.

“For you died [to this world], and your [new, real] life is hidden with Christ in God.”—Colossians 3:3 (AMP)

With all of Heidi Baker’s responsibilities for guiding thousands of churches and feeding thousands of people every day, she writes that God is asking her to pull away and spend more time alone with Him. “If you give me your mornings, I will give you a nation.”¹

It is not enough to just check in with God occasionally. We must *abide* in Him.

“Abide in me, and I will abide in you. Just as the branch cannot produce fruit by itself unless it abides in the vine, neither can you unless you abide in me. I am the vine, you are the branches. The one who abides in me while I abide in him produces much fruit, because apart from me you can do nothing. Unless a person abides in me, he is thrown away like a pruned branch and dries up. People gather such branches, throw them into a fire, and they are burned up.”—John 15:4-6 (ISV)

If we neglect the words of Jesus, and our relationship with Him, we will suffer for it. It is inevitable.

“For everyone who comes to Me and listens to My words [in order to heed their teaching] and does them, I will show you what he is like: He is like a man building a house, who dug and went down deep and laid a foundation upon the rock; and when a flood arose, the torrent broke against that house and could not shake or move it, because it had been securely built or founded on a rock. But he who merely hears and does not practice doing My words is like a man who built a house on the ground without a foundation, against which the torrent

burst, and immediately it collapsed and fell, and the breaking and ruin of that house was great.”—Luke 6:47-49 (AMPC)

If we will give the highest priority in life to seeking and cultivating a deep, intimate relationship with God, everything else will flow from that. Every other aspect of our lives is nourished and strengthened by that. Your personal relationship with God is the lifeblood, the health, the nourishment that feeds every other aspect of your life. George Müller put it this way:

“According to my judgement the most important point to be attended to is this: above all things see to it that your souls are happy in the Lord. Other things may press upon you, the Lord’s work may even have urgent claims upon your attention, but I deliberately repeat, it is of supreme and paramount importance that you should seek above all things to have your souls truly happy in God Himself! Day by day seek to make this the most important business of your life. This has been my firm and settled condition for the last five and thirty years. For the first four years after my conversion I knew not its vast importance, but now after much experience I specially commend this point to the notice of my younger brethren and sisters in Christ: the secret of all true effectual service is joy in God, having experimental acquaintance and fellowship with God Himself.”²

References:

¹ Baker, Heidi. *Living Under Water*. Destiny Image Publishers. Kindle Edition.

² Müller, George. *The George Muller Collection, Volume 2 (Illustrated)*. *Jehovah Magnified, Sermons and Addresses, Ten Years After, Apostle of Faith, Life and Labours*. Kindle Edition.