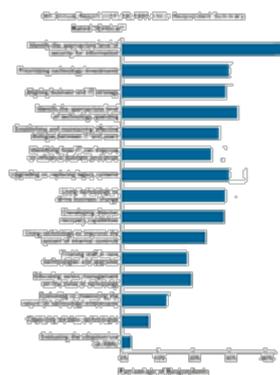


ONE THING IS NEEDFUL

*"Now it came to pass, as they went, that he entered into a certain village; and a certain woman named Martha received him into her house. And she had a sister called Mary, which also sat at Jesus' feet, and heard his word. But Martha was cumbered about (*distracted with) much serving, and came to him, and said, Lord, dost thou not care that my sister hath left me alone? bid her therefore that she help me. And Jesus answered and said unto her, Martha, Martha, thou art careful (*worried) and troubled about many things: But one thing is needful: and Mary hath chosen that good part, which shall not be taken away from her" (Luke 10:38). *Bible margin*

One of the greatest hindrances to our prayer life is the many distractions that make it hard for us to focus our minds on the Lord for any length of time, or even have the time to do so. This is partly because our priorities are often not what they should be. Let's examine some of the possible distractions:

1. Our career.
 2. Our education.
 3. Our material possessions.
 4. Our family.
 5. Our friends.
 6. Our hobbies.
 7. Our Christian service.
- ...and so on...



In the above verses of Scripture we learn that we must not allow anything to rob us of our fellowship with Jesus--not even service to Jesus. Many times people feel that as long as they are busy working for the Lord, it is not so important to pray. This is not true.

Martha was a typical woman who wanted to prepare a tasty meal for Jesus. She just couldn't understand her sister's behavior. Mary had never acted like that before. She had always helped her, whenever they had guests. But then, Jesus was present that day, and He is somebody special!

Jesus told Martha, "You are worried and troubled about many things, but one thing is needful." Cannot we learn this same lesson? For many, prayer is a last resort--but it ought to be the first thing we ever do--if it is the only thing we ever do, because it is needful.

David wrote: *"One thing have I desired 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, and to enquire in his temple"* (Psalm 27:4).

In the secular world, the successful person knows what he wants and goes after it. He does not have 1001 goals. He has one goal, and seeks to reach that goal. Some of us have many spiritual goals: things we want the Lord to do for us, and things we want to do for the Lord. However, we need to have a "priority list," and put that which is most important on the top of the list.

David said, *"One thing have I desired of the LORD, that will I seek after."* That which we desire the most, we will seek after. Our chief goal ought to be to have a close relationship with Jesus. If we have achieved this goal, all other things will take care of themselves. The Lord will lead and guide us into His perfect will, and supply all of our

needs.

The LORD appeared to Solomon in a dream by night, saying, "Ask *what I shall give thee.*" Solomon had the opportunity to ask from the Lord whatever He desired, including riches and honor. He could have asked for one hundred things, but he asked for one, to be wise: "Give therefore thy servant an understanding heart to judge thy people, that I may discern between good and bad: for who is able to judge this thy so great a people."

Solomon was "kingdom-minded." He did not think about his own personal needs. He was concerned that he had the wisdom to be a good leader. God was pleased with his speech, and Solomon became the wisest man that ever lived. Besides that, God gave him that which he did not ask for, riches and honor. (I Kings 3:3-13)

Paul did not say, "These ten things, I do." Instead, he wrote to the church at Philippi:

"...this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press forward toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus" (Philippians 3:13, 14).

His chief goal was to have a closer relationship with Jesus. This comes with much time spent "at the feet of the Master, " talking to Him, and allowing Him to talk to us! Christian service does not take the place of time spent in His presence. Perhaps we need the busy hands of Martha, and the heart of Mary.

We need fellowship with Jesus. We were created to have fellowship with Him (Ephesians 1:4). We need His strength and power. We need the wisdom and guidance He alone can give us. We need to sit at His feet and learn how we can draw closer to Him. We need to stay long enough in His presence so that others will recognize that "we have been with Jesus." ds

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