

It Is Written

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“One Thing Is Needful”

By David A. Cox

If the question was asked, “What is the most needed thing in your life?” the responses would most likely be varied. In Luke 10:38-42, we read of an incident that occurred in the life of Christ, when He visited some of His dear friends in Bethany. The friends were Mary, Martha and Lazarus. During the visit of Jesus, Martha was doing everything to make Jesus’ visit enjoyable. But as Martha was busy, her sister Mary was sitting at Jesus’ feet and hearing the things He taught. In a moment of frustration at her sister’s apparent lack of concern, Martha asked Jesus to tell Mary to help her in the serving she was doing. Jesus responded, “Martha, Martha, thou art careful 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 10:41-42). The purpose of this article is to focus on the statement here that Jesus made, “One thing is needful.”

In life there are so many things that demand our attention. It may even seem that these things are of great importance and may well be. In Martha’s case, the serving of her company was important. But she failed to realize that something else was of even greater importance. It may be that even in our own daily affairs of life that things such as work, school, etc. cloud out what is truly the most important thing. Jesus made it clear to Martha what the proper priority should be. It was the very thing that Mary had chosen. It was that “good part” Mary chose that Jesus compared to the “many things” that troubled Martha.

The “many things” in this passage refers to the temporal or physical things of this life and the “good part” deals with the heavenly or the eternal things which “shall not be taken away.” While we must attend to physical things, let us not become preoccupied and lose sight of the one thing that is needful; the things that will help us get to heaven. Mary in choosing the “good part” had not lost sight of her priorities. She was absorbed with the spiritual and eternal things of God. Jesus said, “Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth from the mouth of God” (Matthew 4:4). Mary understood this and was not sidetracked by the physical things around her.

Let’s remember this great lesson that Mary teaches us and not neglect the things that will help us to build

a spiritual and a close relationship with God. Let’s read and study our Bibles; feeding on the word of God daily. Let us be faithful in our attendance with the saints on every occasion possible. Pray and communicate with our Father in heaven. Remember our close relationship with God is the key to our enjoying the abundant life now (John 10:10) and the joys of heaven for eternity (John 14:1-3).

May we ever be aware that even though there are many good things that we may spend our time doing, we must put first the “one thing that is needful” if we are going to form an abiding relationship with our heavenly Father and His Son, Jesus Christ. Let us give strict attention to hearing and heeding what the scriptures teach which will help us to grow in our relationship with Him.

Careful To Answer

By Robert F. Turner

When Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego were called before the king and faced charges of refusing to worship the golden image he had erected, Nebuchadnezzar asked, "Who is that god that shall deliver you out of my hands?" Things looked pretty dark.

But they replied, "We have no need to answer thee in this matter" (AS). The King James version reads, "We are not careful to answer thee in this matter" (Daniel 3:15-16). The thought seems to be, we will not choose our words carefully - concerned lest we offend; we will not try to "talk our way out of" this situation. And they added, "Our God is able to deliver us" (if it suits His purposes to do so) "but if not, be it known unto thee, O king, that we will not serve thy gods, nor worship the golden image which thou hast set up."

Several years back a preacher said John (the Immerser) "lost his head" because he "lost his head" – he was not tactful in his criticism of Herod. John had said, of Herod's marriage to his brother Phillip's wife, "It is not lawful for thee to have her" (Matthew 14).

John was not "careful to answer," someone might say. Well, he certainly was not trying to "butter up" the king. On the other hand, John and the captive Jews of Daniel 3, were very careful to maintain their faith in God and to court His approval. John lost his head, and the three Hebrews were thrown into the fiery furnace, but each gained more than he lost. We "have no need" for any man's approval as we have need for God's approval.

Jesus said, "Fear not those who kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul, but rather fear him who is able to destroy both soul and body in Hell" (Matthew 10:28).

We are not advocating crudeness? Daniel's brethren were respectful to the king; and love for souls will forbid our becoming a bully with the truth. Shouting, stomping pronouncements of damnation are often signs of weakness, while genuine strength is accompanied by humility. But genuine strength speaks truthfully, directly and clearly, regardless of temporal consequences – and because of inevitable eternal consequences.

Anxiety

By Kyle Campbell

Don't be anxious! Paul wrote, "Be careful for nothing; but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God" (Philippians 4:6). There is nothing that should cause a child of God to worry. He was well aware of what causes anxiety. His nation was occupied by a foreign army and ruled by corrupt leaders. He was writing from prison, where he was being held as a result of false accusations. He was separated from those he loved; his motives had been questioned; and he had been misrepresented. Some were trying to undermine all that he had accomplished in starting churches. He suffered physically (2 Corinthians 11:23-29). Yet Paul said there would never be a crisis so troubling that God could not bring peace in the midst of it!

God will not necessarily take your problems away, but He will carry the load for you. He wants you to experience His peace, which is beyond human comprehension (Philippians 4:7). You will never fully understand how God could give you peace in some of the situations you face, but you do not have to understand it in order to experience it. You may know that God wants you to experience peace but wonder how this is possible, given what you are presently facing. Yet, scripture says to be anxious for nothing. God's word clearly indicates that there is nothing you can face that is too difficult, too troubling, or too fearful for God. No matter what your circumstances are, turn your anxiety over to God and let His perfect peace guard your heart.