

# Sermon Study Questions, Key Points & Personal Application

## Sermon – Prioritize! One Thing Is Necessary

### Sermon Series – **Grow Hungry for Jesus: His Habits of the Heart**

Pastor Martin Lifer, Eastminster Church | January 4, 2026

#### Primary Scripture Passages

- **Psalm 27:4** – **One thing I have asked from the LORD, that will I seek:** 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 meditate in His temple.
- **Philippians 3:13-14** – "**One thing I do:** forgetting what lies behind, reaching forward to what is ahead, I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus.
- **Luke 10:38-42** – "Martha, Martha, you are anxious and troubled about many things, **but one thing is necessary, only one.** Mary has chosen the good portion, which will not be taken away from her."

#### Supporting Passages

- 1 Peter 2:2-3 – Like newborn babies, crave pure spiritual milk, so that by it you may grow up in your salvation – if, indeed, you have tasted that the Lord is good.
- John 1:1-3 – In the beginning was the Word; and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things came into being through Him, and apart from Him nothing came into being that has come into being.
- John 5:39-40 – You search scriptures, which all testify about Me, but you won't come to Me to have life.
- Deuteronomy 6:4-5 – Hear, O Israel: the LORD is your God; **the LORD in One.** Love the LORD your God with all your heart, and all your soul, and all your strength.

**The Central Question:** What if only ONE THING is ultimately necessary?

**The Gospel Answer:** Only one thing is necessary. Jesus is calling you to turn away from distractions and come to Him.

**The Essential Discipline:** PRIORITIZE ONE THING — the one that is ultimately and eternally necessary. This must guide all habits of the heart.

#### Three "One Thing" Passages

1. Psalm 27:4 – **David's One Thing:** dwell in the LORD House, to behold His beauty, and to meditate in His temple.
2. Philippians 3:13-14 – **Paul's One Thing:** press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus.
3. Luke 10:38-42 – **Mary's One Thing (affirmed by Jesus):** sit at His feet, listening to His Word.

**Lessons from Baby Phoebe & 1 Peter 2:2** - Like newborn babies, crave pure spiritual milk.

#### What Phoebe teaches us:

- She prioritizes with laser focus: Mom, Mom's Milk & Mom's Loving Care.

*The result is that Phoebe grows without focusing on growth. She becomes beautiful without focusing on herself.*

- She knows real from false: If the milk is watered down, she'd spit it out.
- So she seeks *Adolos* (Unadulterated) Milk:  
1 Peter 2:2 uses a form of the Greek adjective *adolos* (the only time this term is used in the NT) to describe the milk we should crave. *Adolos* was business term meaning "pure stuff, not watered down." The message: We need real nutrition (Word & Spirit) from the real source (Jesus) — not adulterated *hand-me-down* or *with-additions* teaching, "Christianity," or spirituality.

## **The Logos (The Word)**

John 1:1-3 – "In the beginning was the *Logos* (Word)... All things came into being through Him."  
The *Logos*:

- Creates and orders all things
- Creates and orders our "new creation" salvation and how we live a new life

1 Peter 2:2 – *Gk. Logikos* milk = milk from the Logos

We crave milk from the One who orders everything—to leave disorder and enter His peace, life, and light forever.

## **Love-Directed, Word-Directed Discipleship**

1 Peter 1:22-25: "Love one another fervently... born again through the living and abiding Word of God... the grass withers, flowers fall, but the Word of the Lord endures forever."

We're discipled in:

1. The Word (Jesus)
2. His words (Scripture)
3. With other disciples (in the church)

## **What Are We Training For?**

- "Train yourself for godliness" (1 Timothy 4:7)
- "Strive to enter through the narrow door" (Luke 13:24—Jesus is the Door)
- "Seek first the Kingdom of God" (Matthew 6:33)

CRITICAL: You Are NOT Justified By What You Do; Salvation is totally from Jesus Christ.  
Salvation includes:

1. Justification (declared righteous)
2. Sanctification (spiritual growth—disciplines fit here)
3. Glorification (final perfection)

Don't say: "I'll prove I'm a Christian (or justify my salvation) by my disciplines."  
Instead: Look to Jesus, and let Him guide you.

## **The Danger of Spiritual Practices Without Jesus**

Jesus' ministry: Surrounded by people who prayed multiple times daily, memorized the Scriptures – including Torah and the Psalms.

John 5:39-40 – "You diligently search Scriptures thinking they give eternal life... But Scriptures bear witness about Me. You won't come to Me that you may have eternal life."

People quote Bible all day but don't know Jesus.

## **All Practices Must Go Through Jesus**

John 14:6 – "I Am the Way, the Truth, the Life. No one comes to the Father except through Me."

When you pray, read Bible, take Sabbath—the only way to come to the Father is through Jesus.

## **Order Your Loves**

Augustine: "You are what you love." Virtue: Right Ordering of your loves.

Psalm 115:8 – "Those who trust in idols become like them"—dead.

Jesus: "Where your treasure is, there your heart will be."

***The Shema*** - Deuteronomy 6:4-5: "Hear, O Israel: The LORD your God, the LORD is One. Love the LORD with all your heart, all your soul, and all your strength."

The LORD is the one and only—the one priority.

Deuteronomy 7:7; 10:15 – The LORD attached Himself to Israel, set His affections on them. Our response: Attach ourselves to Him, loyal through thick and thin.

## **Mary and Martha: The Example**

Context: NO rabbinic teacher for 1,800 years would accept a woman as disciple.

Mary sits at Jesus' feet—posture of a disciple.

Jesus: "One thing is necessary. What Mary is doing."

What Is Mary Doing?

- Giving herself to Jesus
- Submitting as a disciple
- Loving Him, attaching to Him
- Listening to His word

You don't divorce Jesus from His teaching or gospel.

Mary is empowered as a disciple, but as a baby—totally yielding, attaching like baby to mama & mama's milk.

The Gift IS the Giver. He's the Guide, Goal, Glory—ALL.

**How Is This Given to Us?** Isaiah 53: "Despised, rejected... man of sorrows..." – so disfigured He was unrecognizable... He laid down His life for you!

His beauty and glory are in His total giving of Himself.

When you see Him in eternity, His hands reaching out to receive you? Those hands have nail scars. He became scarred so you could be beautiful in Him and gaze on His beauty forever.

Philippians 2: He emptied Himself, so you could be filled.

## **The Invitation**

- Come to, love, listen to, and attach yourself to Jesus.

- Be with Jesus. Be a disciple with other disciples, learning from Him.

- Abide in His Word, so you will recognize Him as Lord and Savior.

- Christ will be formed in you (Galatians 4).

- As you behold Him, you reflect His glory (2 Corinthians 3:18). Want a goal for 2026? **That's it.**

## **Discussion Questions**

- 1. What Distracts Me?** What pulls me from prioritizing Jesus?
- 2. Baby Phoebe's Focus: What would laser-focus on Jesus look like in my life?**
- 3. Spiritual Practices Without Jesus:** Have I done spiritual things to prove myself rather than come to Jesus?
- 4. Mary's Choice:** Where do I identify—Mary sitting at Jesus' feet as listening to Him, or Martha worried about many things and distracted with much serving?

## **Closing Challenge**

### **Prioritize: One Thing Is Necessary**

**One thing:** Come to Jesus. Attach to Him. Listen to His Word. Be His disciple.  
**He emptied Himself so you could be filled.**