

## One Thing

I've always liked simple instructions. I don't mind a list of things to do as long as I can see the end result coming as I complete the tasks necessary to achieve a successful result. I love getting to that one, last thing that I have to do to accomplish my goal.

Jesus was a person who expected results. As the Son of God, it was His purpose in life to see to it that God's will would be done in all of the lives He touched. Quite often, accomplishing that result came down to one last thing that needed to be done. It seems that from a couple of events in Jesus' life, doing that "one thing" was difficult to complete.

The first is the story of the person we often refer to as the "rich young ruler" in **Mark 10**. His desire was to inherit eternal life. As a good Jew, he had carried out the commandments, but he knew there was something more he needed to do. Jesus told him in **Mark 10:21**:

***"One thing you lack," he said. "Go, sell everything you have and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven. Then come, follow me."***

Jesus gave the young man one thing to do—give his life to the service of God. It called for concentrated effort. He couldn't continue to keep the letter of the Law, he had to live by the spirit of it. It was not enough NOT to do something bad or evil, the one thing that was needed for him was to DO the ultimate good.

In **Luke 10**, Jesus was at the home of Mary and Martha. Martha was going about the business of being the perfect hostess, while Mary sat and listened to the words of Jesus. Martha gets a bit perturbed and asks Jesus to tell Mary to help her. Jesus' response?

***"Martha, Martha, the Lord answered, 'you are worried and upset about many things, but few things are needed—or indeed only one. Mary has chosen what is better, and it will not be taken away from her.'"***(Luke 10:41-42)

Instead of worrying about everyday things that dealt with things temporary, Jesus gave prominence to only one thing—listening to His words and learning to live by them. What Mary was doing had eternal implications.

Paul had spent the early part of his life learning the Law. His zeal caused him to persecute Christians, people he believed to be blasphemers. He could have allowed his mind to dwell on them and it would have had an effect on his life of service to Jesus Christ. Here's how he put it in **Philippians 3:13-14**:

***"Brothers, I do not consider myself yet to have taken hold of it. (his eternal reward) But one thing I do: Forgetting what is behind and straining toward what is ahead, I press on toward the goal to win the prize for which God has called me heavenward in Christ Jesus."***

Paul didn't dwell on his past or rest on his laurels. He had accomplished many good things, but there was more to do. He gave prominence to one thing—continuing to do God's will until he received the prize he served others to obtain.

Really all these "one things" are the same. The most important thing we are to do in this life is to concentrate our efforts on Jesus Christ—His words, His example, the service we are to give to others in response to His words and example, living a life of dedicated service to God. One thing I know—if we can accomplish this "one thing: God will reward us.

