1. **Holy Desire**

The Lord has impressed upon Pastor Jeff and the staff to press into the phrase “Holy Desire” this year.

As Jeff mentioned last week, holy desire is “that longing which draws us near to God and to his purposes.” We heard last week that the primary focus of holy desire is “intimacy with God.”

*“You have made us [O, Lord] for Yourself, and our hearts are restless until they find their rest in You.”* -Augustine

Desire is a longing, a wanting, a yearning, a burning. Desire drives, propels, and searches for more and seeks fulfillment.

**A burning heart of holy desire is gift from God – one that we must ask for, seek, pursue, and cultivate.**

 *“Our best havings are wantings.”* -C.S. Lewis [Letters of C.S. Lewis]

“Indeed, if we consider the unblushing promises of reward and the staggering nature of the rewards promised in the Gospels, it would seem that Our Lord finds our desires, not too strong, but too weak*.”* -C.S. Lewis [The Weight of Glory]

In 2022, with the help of Holy Spirit, we want to fuel holy desire for the Lord. (McGee)

We want to be a people of One Thing.

**(Ps. 27:4)***, One thing I have desired of 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 inquire in His temple.*

Definitions: The word desire means, “to earnestly ask.” The word seek means, “to look for; pursue; investigate; search.”

This psalm is attributed to King David. Although scholars are not in agreement as to when the psalm was written, it is likely that David was at least middle-aged if not even towards the end of his life.

So here we have a great king - a man of unimaginable wealth, a national hero, and a famous warrior – giving insight into what drove him, what preoccupied his mind, what motivated his heart. With all of the king’s responsibilities, decisions, administrative duties, David longed to live in unbroken communion with God.

Let’s look at this verse phrase by phrase.

1. **One Thing**

Notice David said, “one thing...” One thing?! Really?! Isn’t that a bit narrow, David? Surely that’s hyperbolic. There are certainly a number of things that drive you, David. Your family? Your political influence? Your hit songs? Making preparations to build temple?

David said, “no, really, there’s one thing above all that I ask and seek.”

1. **Ask and Seek**

Also notice that David both asks for and seeks this one thing.

David asks. This means that it was his preoccupation in his prayers.

David seeks. This means that it was his preoccupation in his practices.

But what was he asking for and seeking?

1. **To Dwell**

The all-encompassing desire of David’s life was to “dwell in the house of the Lord” all of his days.

In other words, **David longed to walk in awareness of God’s presence and respond in loving obedience to God’s words.** Fame was not his goal. Power was not his ambition. Wealth was not his target. **The great obsession of David’s heart was perpetual interaction and intimacy with the God of unsurpassed beauty.**

To dwell simply means to “take up residence daily.” This daily organic intimacy with God is what David meant by “dwell.”

The New Testament language we might use for this is “abide” (Jn. 15).

Using a grape vine and a vinedresser as an illustration in John 15, Jesus unfolds the glorious transforming power of abiding in Him.

**(Jn. 15:5,16)***, I am the vine, you are the branches. He who abides in Me, and I in him, bears much fruit…I chose you…that your fruit should remain.*

As we abide in Christ our lives are transformed and we bring forth fruit, both inwardly in godly character and outwardly in ministry and service to others.

**The climate that is necessary for this kind of remaining-fruit to flourish is deep, ongoing, intimate interaction and friendship with God.**

What does it look like to dwell with Christ?

Dwelling with Christ involves the following activities:

1. Gazing on God’s beauty by meditating on His character, nature, and personality
2. Regularly talking to God
3. Actively listening to God
4. Intentionally applying God’s promises
5. Deliberately obeying God’s leadership

May we be a people who are preoccupied with God’s presence. May we be a people who earnestly ask and seek for one thing – to dwell in the house of the Lord so that we might experience His glory and interact with Him all the days of our lives.

1. **To Behold**

David says that He longs to live and walk in the awareness of God’s nearness SO THAT he might behold, or gaze up, the beauty of God. David was fixated on God’s beauty.

What does it mean to behold the beauty of God.

The Hebrew word for behold simply means, “to gaze; to look upon; to prophesy”

**The grace of awareness should lead us to the gaze of adoration.**

Consider the creatures around the throne of God in Revelation 4.

God created creatures that were “full of eyes around and within” (Rev. 4:8) to surround His throne forever. These eyeball-creatures are perpetually singing, “Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, Who was and is and is to come!”

Beloved, these **gazing ones never stop singing day or night because they never stop seeing day or night**. What they behold produces a perpetual response of adoration in their hearts and bodies. This is why the beauty of God is so essential to the end-time Church. The singing Church of Isaiah 42:10-12 will be fueled by a revelation of the beauty of the Son from Isaiah 42:1-9.

God is Holy. He is totally “other than.!” He beauty in beyond our ability to fully comprehend.

He wraps Himself in light (Ps. 104:2)

His eyes are like flames of Fire (Rev. 1:14)

He’s like a jasper and sardius stone (Rev.4:3)

He’s surrounded by an emerald rainbow (Rev. 4:3)

Beloved, He’s glorious! Fix your eyes on Jesus!

But gazing at His beauty is not just about seeing His glorious appearance and radiant being. It’s also about encountering His personality, character, nature, and emotions.

One of the primary ways that we encounter God is through meditating on His Word**. We engage with the written Word in order to encounter the Living Word.**

We read, study, meditate, sing, and pray God’s attributes, His emotions, His promises. This is what it looks like to gaze upon God’s beauty.

1. **To Inquire**

The Hebrew word for inquire here means, “to make inquiry; to seek out an answer.”

A word that I like to use to describe this in “interact.”

David is saying that he wants to dwell with God so that he can have his mind blown by God’s beauty AND to interact with Him in that place of intimate communion. David wants to talk with God and wants God to talk with him.

To inquire in His temple (the place of encounter) means to exchange thoughts, emotions, and ideas.

In Psalm 73 we see Asaph interacting with God in the place of encounter and receiving understanding from God’s heart.

**(Ps. 73:16,17)***,* **16** *When I thought how to understand this, it was too painful for me –* **17** *Until I went into the sanctuary of God; then I understood their end.*

God is a speaking God. When we speak God’s words back to Him it’s called intercession.

When we come into agreement with Who God is, we call that worship

When we come into agreement with what God has promised, we call that intercession.

**Passionate worship and fervent prayer are the fruits of a one-thing lifestyle.**

1. **Summary**

So if you’ll allow me, I’d like to give you a Joshua Rushing paraphrase of Psalm 27:4.

**(Ps. 27:4 – JRT)***, God, there is one thing I long for above all other longings: I desperately want to live in the awareness of your presence every single day. Why? Because there’s nothing like getting lost in wonder as I worship, and I really love our heart-to-heart conversations.*

During the First-Love Fast of 2022 let this one-thing reality be the cry of your heart.

When we fast we are entering into voluntary hunger – desire. Fasting positions our hearts to receive the gift of longing from the Holy Spirit.

Keep going. Don’t quit. If you break your fast, just start right back up. Ask the Lord for help and strength.

Let’s contend for a heart like David – to be a people of ONE THING!