

A Single-Hearted Desire

by Daniel Rudolph

The sermon emphasizes the importance of prioritizing a single-hearted desire for Jesus to simplify our lives and deepen our spiritual connection.

Duration: 1:32:40

Scripture: Psalm 32:7-8, Matthew 6:19-23, Luke 10:42, Hebrews 2:2-3, Hebrews 4:9-10, Hebrews 4:12

Topics: "Simplifying Life", "Wholehearted Devotion"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher emphasizes the importance of simplifying life by focusing on one basic decision. He uses the story of Mary and Martha in Luke chapter 10 to illustrate this point. The preacher suggests that the challenges and distractions of modern society can lead to fragmentation, but by having a single-hearted desire for God, we can overcome these challenges. He also highlights the promise in Psalm 32:8 that God will guide us with His eye if we seek Him wholeheartedly.

Transcript

Hello, this is Brother Denny. Welcome to Charity Ministries. Our desire is that your life would be blessed and changed by this message.

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These messages are offered to all without charge by the free will offerings of God's people. A special thank you to all who support this ministry. Good morning, brothers and sisters.

Praise the Lord. What a blessing to be together. I'd like if we just stand and pray again.

Father in Heaven, we thank you for the prayers that have been prayed and we just trust, Lord, that you're able to do exceedingly abundantly above all that we could ever ask or think. For our brother Ben. But Father, we also come and we realize, Lord, that we also have an enemy of our souls.

And we pray, Father, in Jesus' name that every spirit would be subject to the Lord Jesus Christ and that the Word of the Lord would have free course, Lord. That all indifference and casualness and lethargy that may be in our hearts, Father, would be moved away. That there be a sense of intensity, Father.

There be a sense of awareness of what you would like to say to our hearts here this morning. Father, when you speak, it speaks life. Father, I pray that life would come forth from your Word here this morning.

In Jesus' name, Amen. You may be seated. Praise the Lord.

Oh, praise God for the love of the saints. I just, I have treasured, have treasured the relationship with the brothers and sisters here. And, you know, if we weren't moving out of the country, I believe we'd move to Lancaster County where we could be closer to you.

Those trips down here the last almost three years have been a real blessing. Praise the Lord. This morning, I want to preach a message that I believe that I shared this message here before.

And yet, I felt especially drawn to it. And then as last, yesterday, I saw Irvin putting the verse up on the board here. And then I heard Brother Aaron's message.

I really feel confirmed that this is a message that God wants us to hear again. And how beautiful the living Word of God is when it comes alive over and over again. Just may God bring it into your hearts, into our hearts here today.

As a way of introduction, I believe that one of the challenges in our modern society that we face is fragmentation. We heard our brother last Sunday talking about the duties and the responsibilities and all the distractions and all of the gadgets that we have to learn. And there's some obvious challenges that go along with how the industrial revolution and technology has brought into the lives of people in the last hundred years.

I believe there is definitely some challenges that we face along that line. But I believe here this morning that there's a message that if we get a hold of that, it will take away some of the overwhelmingness of that. It will simplify our lives in a way that it will bring things down to where we have less decisions to make.

How many of you would like that? A few less decisions to make. That sounds good, doesn't it, in our society? Well, I believe that the focus of our message would help us to narrow things down to one basic decision. One basic decision.

The title of my message is, A Single-Hearted Desire. A single-hearted desire. If we could simplify the issues of life down to one thing, would it not make it much more simple? And I want to convince you this morning that this is in fact the will of God.

It is a biblical idea to reduce life down to one basic decision. And that goes along very well with what Brother Aaron was sharing. You may turn with me to Luke chapter 10.

We're going to look at the end of the chapter, at the visit that Jesus had with Mary and Martha. And then we're going to just walk through the Scriptures and look at various places where it brings our sense of focus down to one thing. And if we can keep that sense of one thing in mind in every other aspect of life, it really does simplify life.

It does. Let's look at this. This is going to be the basic spring point of the message here.

Verse 38, One thing is needful, and Mary hath chosen that good part. I want us to live our lives in such a way as to have this idea that if we find that one needful thing in the midst of the circumstances of life, that it will bring a sense of clarity to what we should do next. I believe that I've experienced it in my own life that

it's not hard to hear the voice of God whenever we have shut out the clutter.

When we've pushed aside all the other distractions and say, I have one basic decision to make here. There's one basic decision to make. I remember it was four o'clock in the morning one morning, and I was feeling especially weary.

And I woke up. It was one of those times I had to wake up on a Saturday morning, and I had to leave at four o'clock if I was going to get for the prayer meeting here. And I just didn't feel like it.

And the Lord whispered in my ear. He says, It availeth much. And as soon as I saw the potential, I saw yes.

One thing, you know, there's something that just sort of like, it took away all of the other decisions that I had to make. The reality of the realness of hearing the voice of the Lord and sensing that there's really only one decision to make here in this situation. Now, I believe sometimes it will be God's decision for you to get some rest.

And I have missed some prayer meetings because I felt completely free that the most spiritual thing I could do was to get some sleep. So, I'm not trying to lay a burden on you. All I'm trying to say is at the various different situations in life, if we are able to come to that place of hearing the one needful thing, it simplifies the decisions in life.

Let's look at this passage. It says here that a certain woman named Mary received Jesus. We know Mary and Martha.

They were the brother of Lazarus. It seems like this Mary was also the Mary Magdalene that was delivered. They had a special place in their hearts for Jesus.

And Jesus had a special place in His heart for them, I believe. And this was a normal thing, I believe, for Jesus to show up and have dinner with them. It says Mary received Him into her home.

So, here we see that there's a desire for hospitality. There's a desire to entertain. There's a desire to show kindness.

But there's a condition of heart that we see between Mary and Martha. Every one of us, I believe, here this morning have a fervent desire to be faithful to God. If we had an opportunity to receive Jesus, most of us would.

Most of us would be glad to open up our hearts. Most of us are earnest in our desire. But there's a condition of heart here that I want to draw attention to.

It seems as if Mary, on the other hand, was maybe not as purposeful. It does say that she chose. But it seems as if Mary was captivated in a different way with Jesus.

And Martha is cumbered about serving. It's like somehow I've got to offer something to Jesus. I want to do the best.

I want to put on the special situation here. I want to do a little more than what's the normal. And there's absolutely nothing wrong with that in a sense.

And yet, what is Jesus looking for in your life? Whether it's your devotional life. Whether it's your relationship with your family. Your job.

You know, I think about the job. Many a time I've gone to work. And the thing that helped me to get into my job was to say, as unto the Lord and not unto men.

I had to clear away all of the aspirations and all of the ambitions. And you know, I had to get down to the fact that, you know, today I'm going to have a good day if I work for Jesus. If I work for Jesus, I'm going to have a sense of significance.

I'm going to have a sense of acceptance. You know, I'm not here to please just this man. But if I work in such a way that I please Jesus, but I don't please this man, I'll still have my sense of identity.

It'll be anchored in Him. And so many times, you know, the attitude of that sense of relationship brought in things into perspective where we could see them rightly. What does it mean here when it says that Martha was encumbered? Martha was encumbered about much serving.

That word, encumbered, it has the thought of being hindered. She was hindered. There was a condition of heart.

There was a desire there that was actually hindering her from experiencing the fullness of what was possible. There was a mentality that was keeping her from really getting the fullness of what Jesus was about. And it says she was cumbered.

She was maybe weighed down. She was cumbered about much serving. Now, we're conservative Christians.

We order our lives on purpose. We do some things that are different than what most everybody else does. And I'm not saying that those things are wrong.

But sometimes it works like this. Sometimes we get into the mode of performing where we're going through the motions of acting something out and we lose the opportunity for intimacy with Jesus. I'm not saying that you should not live differently, be separated from the world, make practical applications that unfold into acts of obedience and faithfulness.

I'm not saying that you should not do that. But I am saying that there is a very easy mentality that can settle down upon us that in the best of our efforts, we lose sight of an intimate relationship with the Lord. Now, you men that heard the discourse on the first several chapters in the book of Ephesians, and one of the things that's so notable in those first four chapters is the excitement.

Remember, we talked about the excitement that's there. The excitement that was in the heart of Paul. The excitement that the believers should feel.

But more than that, the excitement of God toward the believers. But let's remember that just in a few short years, Jesus is revealing to John the Revelator that the Ephesian church, the ones to whom this letter of deep spiritual reality was conveyed, to these same people, He was saying, I have somewhat against you because you have lost your first love. Now, He did say, you've labored.

You've had patience. You know, there were some good things. They still had some of that zealous desire and effort.

But something was missing. And that something was important enough that Jesus said, repent therefore from where you have fallen. Now, what is repentance? We talked some weeks ago about repentance.

Repentance is about taking our thoughts and lining them up with God's thoughts. It's a change of mind. It's a change of mind about sin or about our own way.

And we take that and we line it up. And so that Ephesian church was exhorted to change their mind. Get back to the love relationship.

Get back to that single-hearted desire where what's fueling everything they do is a love relationship with the Lord. Let's look at Mary. And she had a sister called Mary which also sat at Jesus' feet and heard His Word.

Which also sat at Jesus' feet and heard His Word. Now, I don't know if I get this completely the way it is. Probably I don't see it exactly.

But what I'm going to try to explain I believe does apply to you and I. I'm going to imagine a little bit what it might have been like for Jesus to come in to Mary and Martha's house. And here is the little room and the special table and the special fixings. And Martha was beginning to think about I need to do this.

I need to get these special cakes on. Maybe we need some lamb that's being roasted. Somebody's going to have to tend this while somebody else tends this.

And she was dreaming of how special it was. And maybe there was a special bouquet of flowers that she wanted in the window or on the table. You know, we could go on and just think what somebody who really wants something special what they might do whenever they have a special guest.

And then I kind of get it this way that Mary had this heart also that Jesus was a very special guest. And that Mary, I believe that she if she would have thought about it that she would have been in unity with her sister in preparing all of this. But I get the impression that what Mary's problem was is that she was so taken up with Jesus that she got distracted.

You know, it's just like it's like some people start to do something and they kind of like stop right in the middle. What was that? And then Mary, you know, what was that? Oh, yeah. And because Mary got distracted with Jesus, she lost sight of everything else that needed to be done.

You know, it's somehow Jesus captivated the heart of Mary that Mary, the thought of everything else left. Now, brothers and sisters, wouldn't that make personal devotions personal devotions? Wouldn't it if somehow the sense of who Jesus is the sense of what He has done and the fact that He has something for me He has something to share. He has a word.

And His words are life. And how that there for 20 minutes or a half hour or whatever it may be for you that all of a sudden you just have that sense where you got lost in the wonder of Jesus. I believe that it was more that way with Mary than more it says she chose that good part.

But I just wonder from what we know about Mary and other accounts if it wasn't that Mary just couldn't help herself and that she got distracted and she found the place at Jesus' feet and she lost all sense of what else is happening. Well, that sounds like being so heavenly minded that you're not of any earthly good. You know that statement? I don't know if I really like that statement.

I don't think that that's possible. I'm not talking about being irresponsible. I'm not talking about but that sense that just like we were saying on Friday and yesterday that sense that Jesus is right there at any moment whenever I pull my heart away or you know, what are you pulling your heart away from anyway? It seems almost like we should have to pull our heart away to focus on material things and that when the spring is let go it should go back to Jesus.

You know what I'm saying? Rather than we're attached to earthly things and we're attached to all the duties and we stretch ourselves over to Jesus and then when we let go of Jesus we spring back to earthly things. Somehow it should be the other way around. It should be the other way around that whenever we get a chance to let go of the earthly that automatically when the spring lets loose we're back there at Jesus' feet and that it's just like we've been distracted by Him.

Martha. Martha was careful and troubled about many things it says and when she came to Jesus that question that question that she asked was more than about Mary. He says, Master, dost thou not care dost thou not care that my sister hath left me to serve alone? You know, when we get into the performance mode sometimes the very most natural thing that follows is to wonder whether Jesus really cares.

Do you... Jesus, don't you care? Isn't this important? Don't you feel for me? You know, and she was somehow focusing this on Mary. When we get into the performance mode it's pretty easy for us to look at somebody else and begin to measure their performance by our mentality. We begin to set a mentality that begins to measure them and we say, well, Jesus I've got the good idea here.

I've got the right mentality. I'm the one that's doing what ought to be done. You know, I'm the one that's in order.

And over here is Mary that's not in order. And so often that is the tendency if we're not careful in this regression into performance into all kinds of service and obedience and effort that immediately we begin to measure other people by our sense of what is the right thing that ought to be doing. And there's a flavor in there of feeling as if Jesus didn't care for her.

Martha, Martha. That was his response. Oh, the pleading in that voice.

The desire. Martha, take this thing deeper. You know, there's only one thing that's really important.

Only one thing that's really important. And Mary has chosen that good part. Where else does this truth come up? Where else? Let's turn over to Matthew 6. Remember, this story is to be a reminder of what would greatly simplify our lives.

If we had that focus, that single-hearted focus in every situation in life, if we could just say, Lord, what is the important thing at this moment? And it would sort of like bring a focus that would give us a clear sense of direction. Well, let's find this. Let's find this in another place.

Matthew 6, verse 19. We're going to read verses 19 through 23. Sometimes in our Bible headings, there's a division between 21 and 22.

But I'd like to take away that and bring it together in context here. Verse 19 says, Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt and where thieves break through and steal. But in contrast, lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth doth corrupt and where thieves do not break through nor steal.

For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also. For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also. Now, the Bible says the heart is deceitful above all things and desperately wicked.

Who can know it? Sometimes it's hard for us to honestly evaluate our own hearts. But there are some clear indications. There are some methods that we can use that will help us to understand where our heart is.

It says where your heart is, where your treasure is, there will your heart be also. So, find your treasure and what have you found? You've found your heart. Again, find your treasure.

Let go of the spring. And where does it go? It's going to go back to the thing that is your treasure. The thing that is most important to you is the thing that captivates you.

It's the thing that has the ability to distract you, like we were said before. You know, here we are. We're in a church service.

You're giving my attention. But you know, if something else began to make some kind of disturbance that pulled your attention somewhere else, we say we got distracted for a moment. That had the ability to captivate your heart and your attention and draw it.

But when you let go, where would it come? Hopefully, it would come back here. Otherwise, my ability to communicate to you would be helpless. You know, we get distracted by the things that make the louder bang, that clamor for our attention.

You know, that's the nature of temptation. Temptation, when it starts ringing its bell, it somehow has to distract us and make us believe that what it offers has the potential of bringing satisfaction to us more than any one thing. Now, if we have dampened the Spirit of God, if we have grieved the Spirit of God in some way, and we're not doing too well spiritually, and then we flip over and we start making decisions in the flesh.

And our flesh man likes the ringing of that bell. You know, it's not without design that the city lights, the temptations are flashing. They want to captivate.

They want to somehow answer to something in your heart that will sort of start beating in motion with it and where it pulls you in. That's the nature of temptation. Temptation must overcome something.

And it appeals. But, brothers and sisters, one of the greatest ways for us to effectively resist temptation is to realize, Satan, you have nothing to offer me. You know, every time I have bit upon your bait, there was a hook in it.

Every time you offered me something, and I went down your road, it brought misery. It brought disappointment. It brought pain.

It brought hurt. And so we associate the true reality with the temptation, and it's not a temptation at all. I mean, why would I do something that is going to make me miserable? Why would I do something that's going to cause me pain? But, you see, that becomes more vivid to us if there is a fervent love for Jesus, if there is a strength in the Spirit of God to where the relationship, you know, when all of that pool comes, if you can look up and you can say and you can sense honestly that there's a pool there that's stronger than any other pool, then you have only one decision to make.

It simplifies. It really does simplify our lives. Find for where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.

Now, that takes some honesty. That takes some honesty. And I'm sure that there's some of you probably here to where if not at this moment, there have been times in the very recent past where your treasure was something that was not pleasing to the Lord.

Okay? It does take honesty. But that's where repentance comes in. That's where, hey, you know, the deceitful lust deceived me.

You know, I got deceived. I thought this was where it was at. I thought this was where the enjoyment, the satisfaction was.

I gave myself to that. But wake up to the fact that it was all a lie. It was deceitful.

My flesh was lying to me. True satisfaction and peace. Now, the Bible says the things of the Spirit are foolishness to a flesh man.

If you've not been born of the Spirit, some of this will not make sense to you because you cannot go back to that sense of utter peace, of that sense of cleanness, that sense of freedom, that sense of enjoyment. I mean, if you've never sat at Jesus' feet, you don't know what you're missing. But if you have, and I believe most of you have, God, I believe, intends for us at those moments in life when we have a decision to make to go back there and realize that there's nothing like it.

The wonder of acceptance. The wonder of hearing the voice of the Lord. If you would ask me what I think is more precious in this world than anything else other than the blood of Jesus, I would say the voice of the Lord.

To walk in such a way that any time of the day or night, to stop and to have instant fellowship with heaven. The instant witness. Oh, you're my son.

I love you. You know that voice? I know that voice. There's nothing like it.

There is absolutely positively nothing like it. Oh, you've been a little bit ruffled and you're feeling like, oh, who am I? I mean, oh, wretched me. Oh, son, son.

You're mine. You belong to me. You're special.

To know the voice of the Lord, there's nothing like it. And that brings you back to that one thing. That one thing.

To sit at His feet and to hear His words. Okay, let's read on here in this passage. He's dealing in the first verses, He's dealing with our value system.

Lay not up for yourself treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal, but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven. In life, we make decisions based upon value. The things that we value are the things that hold our attention.

You know, that's very real to our family right now when we're packing up. And just, you know, there's things that we've kind of treasured for many years. You know? I had a little box of coins that I wouldn't have had to, but it just seemed like, you know, it was cumbersome.

We needed to get rid of this. We needed to somehow find, and it's okay. You know, my brother bought them.

But I was just thinking, as I carried those things down, and how many times I laid out and I saw the uniqueness of these Indian head pennies and, you know, some of these things. It was fascinating. There's nothing wrong with it.

But it was an encumbersome. You know, hey, it's not going to work to tote these things along. We may as well get rid of it now and get on because there are things that are more... That's just a simple thing.

I'm not saying you all need to go sell your coins, but if it's standing in the way of accomplishing what God wants, it'll be a sweet thing to do it. It's just a little example. The treasure.

Treasure are things that we value. And here it says, Down here, moth and rust is corrupt. Thieves break through and steal.

But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven. Okay, the reality of the bank of heaven. The sweetness of treasure in heaven.

The Bible says, We look not at the things which are seen. For the things which are seen are temporal. But the things which are not seen are eternal.

And so the believer, he gets a hold of something. You know, back to Mary and Martha, we had temporal provisions. We had temporal food.

We had the temporal house fixed up nice. And in its place, that may be okay. But what Mary was getting was not temporal.

She was looking not at the things which are seen, but the things which are not seen. So, find your treasure. You find your heart.

Verse 22 says, The light of the body is the eye. If therefore that eye be single, thy whole body shall be full of light. Remember our title? The single hearted desire.

If the light of the body is the eye. Now, light illuminates. Light is how we perceive things.

Light is what tells us, you know, if it was utterly dark, we would not be able to perceive our surroundings. And so the light of God is that which helps us to perceive our surroundings. The Bible says, The path of the just is as a shining light which shineth more and more unto the perfect day.

And so I get the picture, as a pilgrim, I'm on a path. And on this path, the light of God is illuminating it. What does that mean? I become aware of my surroundings in the light of heaven.

And as I go on that path, it shineth more and more and more. The revelation of true reality comes from heaven, not from earth. And that is what's going to help you to choose your path.

The decision you're just about ready to make. Is there light on that path? Does heaven have a thought to give? Would the truth of heaven, the light of God, would it tell you what to do? You see how we can eliminate so many decisions if we just look up. Oh, yeah.

You know, if you walk in that sensitivity, now what happens to us is sometimes, maybe we get tired. Even physically tired. Or weary.

Or distracted. And then a sense of kind of, almost like a fleshly indulgence sort of like creeps in just a little bit. And, you know, there's sort of almost like a numbness and maybe a little cloud starts coming down.

You know, it gets down past our spiritual eyes. And no longer are we able to perceive things the way they really are. And then we start making decisions and all of a sudden, we realize we have gone wrong.

What do we do? Come back to the light. Don't take one step farther. Don't go anywhere else.

Get back to the light and say, okay, you know, God on a side road. Now, what does the light of heaven have to say? How will the reality, how will I determine the things that are around me? The light of the body is the eye. If your eye be single, your whole body shall be full of light.

If your eye be single, if you only have one thing that you really need to look at, and that's Jesus. Your whole body, every other decision in life comes into perspective immediately because there's only one decision to make. And God is not stingy with speaking to His children.

I mean, He would just love... You know, I like to think of God that He's always talking, but we're not always hearing because we haven't been captivated by Him. We haven't given Him our attention. Our attention is still flagged over here on something else.

There's something else still pulling our attention. Oh, it'll give you liberty. It'll give you freedom.

You know, the Christian life is miserable, plain down miserable, if your affection is always being drawn over to something else. I mean, you can never, you can never really sense the glorious liberty and the sense of freedom and the wonder of the Christian life if somehow there's an appetite over here that's all the time troubling you and somehow, you know, it's just like, oh, do I have to do this for Jesus? That's not where it's at. It's whenever we are set free.

We are liberated from those things. That single-hearted desire that illuminates our whole life. Our whole life.

Now, He says here in verse 23, But if thine eye be evil, thy whole body shall be full of darkness. If therefore the light that is in thee be darkness, how great is that darkness. Now, I'd like to just talk about deception a little bit here.

Okay, we talked about illumination. Illumination is that which shows us how things really are. The light of God brings us into truth.

It shows us truth. The tendency sometimes, especially for religious people, for us, we believe that it's right for us to do some things for God. That's fine.

But the tendency is for us to begin to evaluate our Christian life according to the things that we do. Now, in the context of that, if our real heart's attention is over here, you know, this is really what's motivating me, but I maintain all my religiousness. That's the greatest form of deception that there is.

It says, If the light that is in thee be darkness, how great is that darkness. So now we've created a sense of self-satisfaction. We have created something somehow that we feel good about ourselves.

We are able to sort of pat ourselves on the back and say I'm a spiritual man because I do this and I do this and I do this. And how that, in that place, the deception of the true nature of our heart begins to, you know, how great, how great is that darkness. So what's the answer? What's the answer to that? A single-hearted desire.

Now, in John chapter 3, it says, This is the condemnation, that light is come into the world and men love darkness rather than light. Now why do they love darkness rather than light? Lest their deeds be reprov'd. The hard thing about light is that it shows up the true nature of our hearts.

And the hard part about showing up the true nature of our hearts is that it destroys our hiding place. And now, we have to face the reality and maybe we get exposed to others. And that's not fun because we like to have a sense of self-worth.

The light brings the awareness. And here's where do we want to know the truth about ourselves? Do we? Would it have been a fun to be Martha for Jesus to scold you about the good dinner? I mean, ladies, if I come to your house, I think we're going to the Kaufman's. If I come to your house and scold you about all the preparations that you've made, would that feel good? All I'm saying is that for us to really want the light, we have to be honest.

We have to be honest. When the light shines, the lights in this room have nothing to do with what's here. It only exposes what's here.

And, he says, this is the condemnation that light has come into the world and men love darkness rather than light because their deeds are evil. But whosoever doeth truth cometh to the light that his deeds might be made manifest. That word manifest means shown that they are wrought in God.

Alright, we want God's perspective on every single aspect of our lives. Don't we? That will bring things into perspective. It'll bring life into almost every aspect of your life.

Your devotional life, your family worship, your relationship with other people, your relationship on the job, how faithful you are. It'll just bring across the board this sense of a single-hearted focus if we walk in the light. The very nature of darkness is to obscure, to cloud.

The Bible says that the wicked man, he walketh in darkness and knoweth not at what he stumbleth. You know, here the other night, I went, we got some pizza and I thought, oh, I'd just love to carry these down. I want to get them down to my parents just as soon as possible while they're still hot.

And I ran out and the dog had set its dish right in the plate in the pan. And I knew not at what I stumbled. You know, I was going down that path and I'm just flat out in the wet ground.

Well, that's how the wicked man is. You know, he has all of these aspirations and all of these good feelings and he's just, you know, I'm going to get it, I'm going to do it and he's doing it with all, and just like that, ploop. That's the nature of darkness, to obscure, he knoweth not at what he stumbleth.

If you're stumbling, if you're stumbling, what do you really need to do? You need to come back to the light. Now, why don't people come back to the light? Because the light reveals. The light is going to show it up for just what it is.

Now, the beauty of that is that if we walk in the light as He is in the light, we have fellowship, one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ, His Son, cleanseth and keeps on cleansing and keeps on cleansing and keeps on cleansing from all sin. The blood of Jesus Christ, His Son, cleanseth us from all sin. Now, today, as an individual, I'm here before God.

My conscience is clear. I don't know. Now, it's almost scary to do this, but I do this continually.

I come on and say, Lord, is there anything, you know, I just, sometimes, right now I feel free. Does that mean that I don't need the blood of Jesus? No, in my humanity, I know for sure, I know for sure that my only hope is the blood of Jesus. And if it's like it has been in the past, very shortly down the road, the Spirit of the living God will speak to me and say, you know that back there, that wasn't right.

Well, what do I do with it then? Well, I say, thank You, Lord. Oh, I'm just so glad. I'm so glad that You showed that area in my life.

I ask, would You just cleanse me in the blood of Jesus? Oh, yes, Son. Yes, Son. Yeah, let's just keep... God didn't even put it on the record.

You know, God didn't even put... He that, if any man, sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous. You know, we have a propitiation for our sin. There's been a payment made.

It's a fitting payment. It's enough. And when we come to that place of the exposure of our need, the beauty.

Now, this should go along with maturity. This should go along with maturity here. Sometimes when something is really, you know, sort of like a surprise, something that's there that I didn't think was there, it is a little hard to own it.

But many of the times, because I have formed a pattern in my life to acknowledge that when God shows me my sinfulness, when He shows any area in my life, I have come this path long enough to experience the joy and the refreshment and almost an anticipation comes into my, wow, this is going to be great. We're going to deal with this God's way. We're going to get the peace and the joy.

And the joy bells are going to ring. There's going to be intimate fellowship. There's going to be power.

I'm going to be able to come into God's presence in a new and a fuller way than I have in the past. And so the anticipation of being honest with those things that God illuminates in our life is such a blessing. It's such a blessing.

Let's look at another scripture that gives us this single-hearted desire thing. Let's go to Psalm 27. Oh, praise God for the saints of the past.

There it is. It's interesting that verse 1 of Psalm 27 starts out, the Lord is my light. The Lord is the one that illuminates everything in my life.

The Lord is my light and my salvation. Whom shall I fear? The Lord is the strength of my life. Of whom shall I be afraid? When my enemy, when the wicked, even my enemy and my foe came upon me to eat up my flesh, they stumbled and fell.

There it is. They stumbled. Though an host should encamp against me, my heart shall not fear.

Though wars should rise against me, in this will I be confident. Do you ever feel that way? Do you ever feel like there's a wicked host against you? Do you ever become aware that Satan would have a plan to remodel and redirect your life? Friend, today, though an host should encamp against me, my heart will not fear. Why? Because I'm walking in the light.

Because I'm walking in that place where I desire the illuminating work of God's Spirit and the Word of God to speak to me. And whenever He speaks to me, just as quickly as I can, I come running back to Him. And in that place, you know, God reveals.

In Hebrews 4, 3 and 4, it talks about the Christian's rest. The spiritual rest. And then it says, toward the end there, it says, there remaineth therefore a rest unto the people of God.

You know, those glorious verses where it says that He that hath entered into rest hath ceased from His own works as God did from His. You know, that's like you stop working and you stop and you start trusting. In the context of rest, it says, for the Word of God is quick and powerful and sharper than any two-edged sword.

Now, does God speak to you when your heart is in turmoil? Do you really understand the Word of God whenever there's confusion and unrest and turmoil in your heart? No. But if you would just come to that place of fully trusting in the provision of Christ, He will begin to show you the thought and the intent of your heart. He'll begin to come down there and it says, it divided the thunder between soul and spirit.

What's the significance of that? Soul is the seed of our affections and our emotions and our intellect and you know, the things we want. Spirit. What's spirit? Spirit is that ability to connect with God.

And so, in a spirit of rest, the Word of God cuts down between soul and spirit. Do you know a lot of temptations in our lives become simple whenever we understand soul and spirit? Where is this coming from? How am I going to know? We know when we come to that place of simple, absolute trust in Christ. And in that place of absolute trust, God has a provision to take care of all of my past sins.

I am trusting in Him. I am resting in the finished work of Christ. What He has done for me is enough.

And it's a big mountain that's been washed, but you know, the Bible says that justification is of many offenses unto justification of life. And in that place of trusting, then the illuminating work of the Holy Spirit comes in and you discern between soul and spirit and the joints and the marrow. I just sense that joints and marrow.

That's the inner part, inner being. You know, those inner issues. And it's a discerner of the thought and intent of the heart.

And then the next verse says, neither is there any creature. Creature. Well, is that animals? No, it's not.

Neither is there any creature that is not manifest in His sight. I think of that, when I think of that, I think of the hosts of darkness and all the demons of the principalities and powers. The creatures that come along and say, you know, we've got a plan.

We were sent on a mission here. We're going to be looking for a place to get in here. Well, in the context of absolute spiritual rest, the Word of God begins to illuminate and neither is there any creature that is not manifest in His sight.

He'll show up the creature of indifference. He'll show up the creature of the casualness. He'll show up the creature of the spirit of false comfort.

He'll show up the creature of that sense of control. You name it. If we walk in the light, if we are resting in Him, if we are connected and fully trusting in the work and the blood of Jesus, then the illuminating Word of God will show up that enemy that's posed against you just ready to shoot.

He'll expose it. And you can see it. It brings things back into focus.

Well, back to Psalm 27. In verse 4, it says, One thing have I desired of the Lord, and 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 inquire in His temple. Now, just remember, the psalmist in just the verses before, what was he talking about? He was talking about God being His light and His salvation, but what else? He's talking about war.

He's talking about David was a man that was out on the battlefield. And now, this man that's out on the battlefield marching out to face the enemy, he says, One thing have I desired of the Lord, and that will I seek after, that I may dwell. Dwell.

Where do you dwell? It's your house. It's the place that you live. I believe what the psalmist is saying.

Even when I go out against the hosts of darkness, I want my dwelling place to be the tabernacle. I want that place where it says, One thing that I may dwell in the house of the Lord, to behold the beauty of the Lord and to inquire in His temple. I don't believe that David, though David said, A day in thy court is better than a thousand.

He's always longing for the temple. He's always longing for fellowship. And maybe it was different in the Old Testament.

But for you and I, we need to go out to face the duties and responsibilities and temptations and issues of life dwelling in the tabernacle of the Most High. And when we do it, it gives that single-hearted focus. It gives that sense of clarity.

It gives us a safe measuring stick by which we can evaluate every issue in our lives. He says, I want to do this and I want to do it all the days of my life. I want to do it the rest, from here on out.

Let's just settle it. Brothers and sisters, let's just settle it. There's only one thing worth going for.

There's only one thing worth going for. Oh, taste and see that the Lord is good. Blessed is the man that putteth his trust in Him.

Oh, the delight of knowing Jesus. Come and taste it if you haven't. Let's turn over to another passage.

Psalm 32. Where do we start? Praise the Lord for these good words. Verse 7, Thou art my hiding place.

Thou shalt preserve me from trouble. Thou shalt compass me with songs of deliverance. Selah.

I will instruct thee and teach thee in the way that thou shalt go. I will guide thee with mine eye. Now, I'd like to just stop there a minute.

I will guide thee with mine eye. The beauty of this single-hearted desire, the beauty of coming into this sweet union with Christ, is that it only takes a glance. It only takes a look.

You know, if you're walking with Him... I try to help young Christians sometimes. We kind of like rush on in life so fast that then all of a sudden, we found ourselves in a booby trap. And things got bad, you know? And it didn't turn out very good.

But, you know, that's not where the problem was. The problem was back here. So, you know, we went running down here.

We crossed over that line. You know, that line, and I like to think of that line as where we violate the sensitivity with God. You know, I'm not saying we lost our salvation, but in this circumstances, somehow I lost that sensitivity.

That sensitivity, that singleness of eye, that singleness of purpose, that intimacy of relationship. I lost it, and then I went on. And, you know, we keep trying to dig up the booby traps over here, but really it happened back here in this place when we lost that sense of single-hearted desire and the willingness to let just a glance, just a glance from our Heavenly Father.

I will guide thee with mine eye. Now, children, you know, I don't profess to have done this, but I have some. You know, there's children, there's little children sitting on the bench that probably can relate to this right now.

You know, sometimes you get fidgety in church and you're just kind of like, oh, you know, you're not kind of connected and, you know, Mama or Daddy just look over and... That's enough. I will guide thee with mine eye. Just a look from Mama, a look from Papa, says something, doesn't it? Something about that look says, you know, it would be good just to reframe here and sit quietly.

Yeah, that's a reminder. Let's do it right. God bless you, children.

God bless you with the ability to see the look in your mother's eye, to see the look in your father's eye and respond. But us big children, do you know that that's what God wants for us too? He wants our relationship to be so sensitive to Him that all it takes is just, oh, yeah, thank you. It sets the course.

But if we don't understand this, you know, if we let unrest, if we let unrest and confusion and frustration and the lust of our flesh and all those things that come in, that begins to cloud and now something else has our attention. And as long as I'm looking over here, I'm not going to see my father's face. And so learning, learning to sense how to stay in eye contact, as it were.

The Bible says, blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God. That's not just in heaven. That's here.

Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God. The thing of keeping your conscience clear and being sensitive, you know, yielding that sense of self-will over to Jesus and say, it's God's will. It's sweet will of God.

Still fold me closer till I am wholly lost in Thee. That's what it is. In that place, it only takes a glance from the Lord.

It says here, be not as the horse or as the mule which have no understanding, whose mouth must be held in with bit and bridle lest they come nigh unto Thee. Many sorrows shall be to the wicked, but he that trusteth in the Lord, mercy shall come past him about. Be glad in the Lord and rejoice, ye righteous, and

shout for joy, all ye upright in heart.

See the comparison? Be not as the horse and the mule. OK, I don't know much about harness. Some of you here know about harness.

Harness is like, OK, you take this animal that's in the pasture or in the barn or whatever and you say, I'm going to choose where this animal is going to go and what he's going to do. You know? I'm going to hook him up to the wagon or the cart and we're going to go down the road and I'm going to pull this way, he'll go that way. He says, be not like that.

Be not as the horse and the mule. Do you need a harness to somehow tie you fast to the Word of God and devotional life and prayer? Do you need somehow that, well, praise God, if you need a harness, maybe you need a harness, but God's perfect will is to say, be not as the horse or the mule, which must be kept in with bit and bridle. Don't be somebody that somehow, I mean, what makes a bit work? Is it pain? Pain? And so, it's more advantageous to listen to what? Than what is not? God will do that for you sometimes.

God will put a bit in your mouth and pull on the reins if that's what it takes. But, you know, they talk about being rainbroken. Where the will is given over.

Oh, let's do it that way. Be not as the horse and the mule. Have that desire to be guided with the single-hearted desire after God.

This relationship of a single-hearted desire after God, it brings a sense of security. It brings a sense that I have the safety of home. I'm dwelling in the house of the Lord all the days of my life.

I'm beholding the beauty of the Lord. I'm inquiring at His temple. I have a means of finding out how to order my life.

I'm not out to sea without a rudder and a map or a compass. I've got something that's given me direction in life. The Bible says, the wicked are like the troubled sea which cannot rest, which casts up mire and dirt.

It's just continual turmoil, continual unrest, where the child of God, peace, perfect peace, in this dark world of sin, the blood of Jesus whispers peace within. That song that we sing, peace, perfect peace. In this situation, what will bring a calm? What will bring things back into order? A single-hearted desire over in Philippians.

Let's look at Philippians. Let's look at the life of Paul. Philippians 3, verses 12 and 14.

Paul is saying, not as though I had already attained, neither were already perfect. Okay, at that moment, how many of us could agree with that? Not as though I have already attained. That's all of us, isn't it? Neither were already perfect.

That's a good description of who we are and where we're at. But, there's that contrast linking word again, but I follow after that I may apprehend that for which also I am apprehended of Christ Jesus. Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended, but this one thing I do, this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind and reaching forth unto those things which are before, for I press toward the mark for the prize of a high calling of God in Christ Jesus.

Paul was one who had a single-hearted desire. And that single-hearted desire enabled him to forget about what's behind him. Many times we cannot enter into the fullness of the relationship and the intimacy that's

intended because we are living in the past.

You know, we're always back there wallowing in the past. What was the blood of Jesus for? Sometimes I get angry at the devil. He comes and he reminds me about his past.

And you know what I've learned to do? I've learned to say thank you. Thank you for reminding me of the cleansing power of the blood of Jesus. There's nothing like it.

I always want to keep in mind that I only stand upon the merits of the blood of Jesus, and Jesus did not go through all that He went through for nothing, and it's sufficient for me. And so I thank you for that reminder, and I forget those things which are behind, and I look forward to those things that are before. And so every reminder of the wretchedness of your past can be a deliberate choice to remember the wonder of the blood of Jesus and the grace of God.

It can be the source of worship and adoration to our Savior for all that He's done. We can't live this single-hearted desire very well by turning around. We have to keep our eyes on Jesus.

Paul said, this one thing I do, we will not have a clear vision for our future. We will not be making right decisions about our future as long as we have our eye in the past. We need to look ahead.

We need to see the possibilities that are out there. A single-hearted desire puts the past in right perspective which is behind us. And then we look unto Jesus, the Author and the Finisher of our faith.

Turn over with me to John 9. John 9, verse 25. This story is about the blind man. The blind man.

And we know the story how Jesus healed the blind man and then the Pharisees were upset and said, who healed you? And it was this Jesus. And they called in the parents and the parents said, well, yeah, we know this is the man. He was born blind.

We don't know how he got sight. And in the midst of that discussion, the blind man says in verse 25, and he answered and said, whether he be a sinner or no, I know not. One thing I know, that where I was blind, now I see.

This single-hearted desire delivers us from trying to understand all of the things that are beyond us. You know, there's a lot of things in life that after being a Christian for 30 years I can't understand. I can't explain them.

But you know, I'm not going to get taken up with the things I can't explain because I see something that I can't explain. And that is that I have a Savior that loves me and saved my soul and washed my conscience clear and received me into the family of God. And the reality of that has the ability to control my life in such a way that, yes, if He wants to teach me some more things, I'm glad to learn some of those things.

But a single-hearted desire delivers me from needing to pass judgment on everything that's out there. Because I've got a sense of purpose. This is where I'm at.

This is where I'm headed. And if this is your issue and God is healing and He's shining your light here, that's fine. But I'm not going to get distracted with that.

Walking, in a sense, I call this the spiritual parallel. The spiritual parallel of once having been blind but now seeing. I didn't perceive reality in the past.

I didn't see things the way they really were. You know, I wasn't able to assess my surroundings. I wasn't able to interpret my life before.

But now I see. Now I see. Now I have a perspective.

Now I have a sense of vision that sets things in clear perspective. One of the things that will happen with this single-hearted desire is that it will begin to bring us into a clear focus. And when we become into a clear focus, we're going to be like the disciples when they said, whether to serve you, to obey you, or to obey God, you judge.

But we cannot but speak the things which we have seen and heard. You know, the problem with many Christians is they haven't seen much. You know, they don't have much to say because they haven't seen much.

But it's not God's fault. If you haven't seen much, it's because you haven't been looking. You haven't had that single-hearted purpose, that guiding influence of the love of Jesus, of sitting at the feet of Jesus, of being clearly directed and compelled by a fervent love and a commitment that says this is all that it's about.

Whenever that becomes the central truth in your life, something begins to happen to where the Christian life just starts working. It starts working in a way that it will not work up to that point. It will be turmoil.

It will be frustration. It will be confusion. It will be distraction.

It will be fruitlessness. But once you get something that says there's only one thing left, there's only one thing left, like Paul said, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus. He could say this light affliction is but for a moment, but it worketh for us a far more and exceeding weight of glory.

He could look ahead and say, it's out of this world. And that's where the single-hearted desire takes you. It takes you out of this world.

It takes you up there to heavenly places in Christ Jesus. It takes you into the glorious possibilities of being seated, to being a servant of the living God, to be an agent of the King of Kings and the Lord of Lords. It's where the believer's authority is established.

I'd like to just think of it this way. If this was the throne and we had a ruling king, and here we're like in Africa. You have Nehemiah, the cupbearer.

Just get the atmosphere, the attitude of a king's court. Everything that's happening in the king's court is what? It's for the king's purpose. If you have two men that are the gatekeepers, like in Haman's day, and Mordecai overhears the plot on the king, it's treason.

Anything other, anything other than giving our hearts fully and completely to the purpose of the king. You know, how would it be if I was a page? If I was carrying messages in the castle? You know, I've been trusted. I come into the king's court.

The decision's made. Take this now. Prepare.

You know, this is what I want. This is what I want. What would happen if that page would begin to carry messages with ulterior motives? And now the will of that page is guiding him rather than the will of the king.

That's the picture that's there whenever we do not have a single heart of desire. We are actually getting messages from the wrong head. You know? And it creates havoc.

Well, I want to close with one verse in Philippians. I'm adding this because this is probably the last message that I get to preach for a while here. Verse 27 of Philippians 1. Only let your conversation, your way of life, be as becometh the Gospel of Christ.

Everything you do. Everything you say. Everywhere you go.

All of your relationships. Does it fit in with the Gospel? Does it go in harmony? Is it part of the beautiful song that God is singing? Or is it a discord? Does it fit in with God's purposes? Or somehow is it a clash in the music? Let your conversation, let your way of life, be as becometh. Becometh.

We don't quite say it that way. We might say it today. Does it fit? Make sure it fits.

It's suitable. It goes along with the Gospel of Christ. That whether I come and see you or else be absent, I may hear of your affairs.

Now here Paul is saying, you know, I'm out here. I'm in a distant land somewhere. I get these words back, and I want to hear that everything that you're doing is in conformity to the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Oh, wouldn't that be a blessing if we get little messages that come back that come over there that everything that's going on at charity is still in tune with the Gospel. You know, it's still in harmony that whether I'm here or whether I'm there, that we can rejoice in that sense of focus, that sense of purpose. Yes, the Gospel message.

Everything that charity Christian fellowship is about is for the furtherance of the Gospel. It's for the purpose of the establishment of a witness. It's so that people will think a great deal of our Lord Jesus Christ.

It's so that people will honor and glorify the King of Heaven. It fits with the Gospel. That I may hear of your affairs that ye stand fast in one Spirit.

That ye stand single-hearted desire. That ye stand fast in one Spirit with one mind, striving together for the faith of the Gospel. Striving together.

Yes, we're on a battlefield. We're in a wrestle. Let's keep the issues clear.

Let's keep Jesus as the one that's exalted. And let's maintain the kind of relationship that would allow Him to direct us. You know, the Bible says, if any man will do his will, he shall know.

One of the first aspects of clearly getting a word from God is being faithful to the Word of God that He has already given. If you're hearing from God, if your heart is in submission, if you have a desire, it's just going to expand greater and greater and greater. God bless you.

Thanks be unto God for His Word to our hearts this morning. To be single-eyed, I can say amen to that message. I think back of times when I think I've preached or shared about consecration or something like

that, and how that once we're consecrated, decisions are made.

The decision is made back there at that point of consecration. And everything you do from here out, you know what the decision is to be. You know the answer.

And when you come up to something that a decision needs to be made, you know the answer ahead of time. It's settled. You don't need to do this.

And it makes life a joy, a blessing, freedom. Thank you, Brother Daniel, for preaching to us your heart. We value that very much.

My mind goes back to the Ephesians as Paul was leaving them on his last time. He preached to them his heart one more time. While we hope that Daniels will be back sometime, but we're going to let them go.

Alright, we'll have the mics and give opportunities for you to share. Maybe you have something you want to talk about or testify about in the first message that Brother Aaron shared here. Or something in the second message here.

Let's get your hands up. I was very blessed by the opening message, especially the thought that Brother Aaron shared about seeing Christ in our brothers and sisters. And it just reminded me afresh of what that experience has done in my own life when other people have seen Christ in me instead of focusing on my faults, my needs.

And I guess especially even since I've moved out here and have been closely relating with Brother Manuel, Sister Marianne, and just being under their authority and allowing them to share into my life. To be able to experience them being willing to take a chance on me and to invest time in me and to believe in me. Being willing to see Christ in me and to trust that I do want to follow the Lord and seeing what that has done in my own heart and pushing me forward and encouraging me, making me intensify my desire to serve the Lord.

And not only with them, but with many of the brothers and sisters here investing in my life like that. It just really encouraged me again to do that. I feel the need to be able to avail myself to God's grace to give that to others.

And I do desire that you would pray for me in that area. Especially I've been really feeling the need for that. To be able to walk that out, to freely give what I have been given.

And then also in the message that Brother Daniel shared, the thought that he brought out about just at any moment of the day to just be able to look up and to hear God say, You're my child. I love you. To be able to know that I am priceless in His sight.

I don't have to perform for others to be accepted. I am accepted of God because I'm His child. I had a question in the back of my mind the past few months with my relationship with God.

Just being able to at any moment of the day or night waking up at 3 o'clock in the morning and my thoughts going to God and immediately sense that presence and His care. I began to wonder, how long can this last? Is God just allowing me a special experience to encourage me right now and then later it will be a thing again. In the back of my mind, I just wasn't sure how long this heaven in my soul could last.

Just to hear Brother Daniel share that and I know that Brother Daniel isn't a man that's just given to a lot of emotion. My spirit just breathed a sigh of relief. I was just encouraged with that.

I just wanted to also just publicly thank the Lord in the past few months, different other things that God has been speaking to my heart. Certain areas of struggle or temptation that I've had through the years from little on up that would come back again and again and I'd have to face them and resist it. Things that I used to would have considered small things, I guess.

God began to show me that they're not really that small and began to just open my eyes to show where I had a wrong concept, wrong thinking patterns and just disconnecting that power source of those areas and setting me free to just to walk deeper, to walk in my relationship with Him. I was just very encouraged by the messages today and my heart was just shouting for joy. Amen.

As we walk in the light, then He illuminates those things which we didn't think were very big or which we weren't convicted about before. I praise God for the message today. As Daniel was going through the message and I started thinking of all my shortcomings in the past and how I failed in my spiritual life at times and I was just thinking about these things and then he brought those verses about how we pressed for the mark of the prize of the high calling in Christ Jesus and I was just so grateful and so relieved that if I keep my focus on Christ, then I don't have to worry about that.

I just am so blessed that Christ is in control and I can trust Him. I can't trust myself, only Christ. Praise God.

Thank you, sister. I really want to thank God for this weekend. It's been a good time of fellowship with the brethren and I feel like God has done a special work.

I found that I had gotten into the performance mode and also was listening at the same time to the condemnation from the devil and just had a sense of heaviness. That cloud was over me and I felt like this morning as I spent time with the Lord and just recognized that and acknowledged that that cloud was lifted and the joy of the Lord is there again and I'm just so thankful for that and I want to praise Him for that. Amen.

Victories are being won. I was very blessed with the message and with our coming together as brethren here on yesterday and the evening before. I was just feeling in my own life that I'm attracted too much to these earthly things.

I have too much to do with them. Not enough. Maybe I'm Martha.

I'm cumbered too much with serving and I had to think of these verses here in Hebrews. It came to my mind last night as I was meditating over these things. It starts in there in 2 Corinthians.

No, 2 Hebrews. It says, Therefore, we ought to give the more earnest heed to the things which we have heard, lest at any time we should let them slip. The second verse goes on talking about for if the word spoken by angels was steadfast then every transgression and disobedience received a just recompense of reward.

And then he asks a question that we should all ask ourselves in the third verse. How shall we escape if we neglect so great a salvation? That just really spoke to me as I was meditating over that. It's not that maybe we don't have salvation, but we're neglecting it.

We're letting other things crowd in and we can escape if we neglect it. I just praise God for speaking to me that way. Anyone else? I'm not going to take too much time here.

I just want to say amen to a comment you made, Emmanuel, about how the Amish people are not our enemies. I guess I was a little timid when you asked if anyone had a word of encouragement at that time, but that's something the Lord's been working in my heart, just allowing me to see that even though the things that they do may trouble us, that they are not the enemy. And if that's not clearly out of me, they will see that as I interact with them.

So I just want to bless you for that. Thank you, brother.

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