

ONE Thing

Group Reading Plan

How to Use this Guide

For each sermon series, we want to provide questions you can use in small groups, family discussions, or as you are hanging out with your friends. Here are some steps for getting the most out of each series...

- 1) Spend time reflecting on the Get the Big Picture of the Sermon Series to see the overall purpose of the series and to understand the direction. Read the Overarching Message to see how the series is woven through each week's sermon as well as the scripture that we are discussing.
- 2) Read the Main Idea of each sermon to help you plan your study.
- 3) Use the GROW method to help you and your group engage the scripture together.
 - (G) God's Message-Spend time together doing a deeper dive into the passage through questions, personal reflection, and application.
 - (R) Respond in Prayer-Ask for God to work in your life and the world around you.
 - (O) One to Share-This will help each person not just think about a passage personally but how it can help someone else in their faith.
 - (W) Walk it Out-As with any group, it is good to have each person share one thing they want to remember as they apply the passage in their everyday lives. Feel free to read some of the Main Idea to summarize the study together.

Get the Big Picture of the Sermon Series

One of the most common misconceptions about Christianity is that it's a works-based religion where you do good things in hopes that God will let you into heaven when you die. But that's not what Jesus shows us at all! Christianity, from start to finish, isn't based on what you do, but on what Jesus did. The "one thing" that Jesus wants most from us is not work, but a relationship with him that reshapes our lives from the inside out. Over the next five weeks, we'll look more closely at five places in Scripture that show us "ONE THING" that will help us know Jesus more and become more like him.

Overarching Message

The primary goal of the Christian life is not wrapped up in activity, but identity. While Christian activity is important, finding our identity in Christ is the foundation for all that follows. In other words, Christianity isn't primarily about what we are doing, but about who we are becoming in Christ Jesus.

Week 1: Luke 9:1-25

Main Idea:

From beginning to end, salvation is a mysterious work of God, offered freely by His love and grace, through the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ. While no one can fully articulate the supernatural nature of this process, there's one thing that's beyond question—the transformative difference that Jesus makes in a person's life. This sermon will focus on the personal testimony/story of all who have been redeemed by Jesus.

GROW:

Talk through these questions with your Life Group, your family and friends or others who are growing with you in knowing Jesus more.

God's Message

1. Read John 9:1-25 about a man born blind. Make a short list of the people in this story and how they connect to the blind man. Re-read verses 1-8. What details do you notice about the blind man? What do you think his daily life was like?

2. What question do the disciples ask Jesus about the blind man and how does he reply (John 9:1-5)? What does this reveal about how the disciples viewed the man versus how Jesus viewed him? Look more closely at Jesus' response in verses 4-5. What pronouns do you see? What do you think he means by 'the night is coming'? Now that Jesus is no longer physically in the world (see verse 5), does that mean His light isn't either? Overall, do you think Jesus' response to the disciples about the man seems 'fair'? Can his response help us answer questions people ask about "why bad things happen in the world"? How would you answer this question if a Christian asks you? How would you respond to a non-Christian's question about suffering?

3. Look again at John 9:6-12. What does the man do and why? Who does he encounter? What do they ask him and how does the man respond? Why do you think Jesus had the man go through this process of healing rather than curing his blindness instantly?

4. Who enters the story in John 9:13-23? What new detail do you learn about the man's healing (John 9:14) and why is this important? How do the Pharisees react to the blind man's healing? What do their actions reveal about their beliefs? Why do you think they were so unwilling to believe that the man had been healed?

5. Look back over the entire story from John 9:1-25. What word do you see most often repeated? Why is that word so important in this story? Return to the list of people you made earlier. What different things make each of them unable to see Jesus and the reality of the Kingdom? How are these similar to the things that hinder people today from seeing Jesus clearly?

6. Our 'one thing' statement this week is found in John 9:25: Whether he (Jesus) is a sinner I do not know. One thing I do know, that though I was blind, now I see." Why is this a great response to the Pharisees' questions about Jesus? How does it connect back to John 9:1-7?

7. What is the 'one thing' that displays 'God's works' in your life? Read 1 Peter 3:14-16. How could the story of the blind man in John 9 help you to live out Peter's call to 'give reason for the hope that is in you'?

Respond in Prayer

Spend time in by singing or listening to "[Amazing Grace](#)". (This [Library of Congress article](#)

gives a great history of the famous song.)

One to Share

Who is one person I can share this message with? How could it encourage them and how could it help them know God more?

Walk it Out

What is one practical way I can walk out and obey God's message to me about this scripture?

Week 2: Luke 10:38-42

Main Idea:

There is a common misconception, particularly amongst Christians, that Jesus is intricately involved in the process of salvation but takes a backseat in our lives from that point. In this thought process, working for Jesus takes precedent over being with Jesus. This sermon will focus on the fact that Jesus values our presence with Him more than the work we might do for Him.

GROW:

Talk through these questions with your Life Group, your family and friends or others who are growing with you in knowing Jesus more.

God's Message

1. When you are feeling overwhelmed or stressed, what kind of impact does that have on you? What do you tend to do to try to get your focus back?
2. Read the passage.
3. Who are the people there? What is each person doing?
4. Why is Martha upset and what does she ask Jesus to do?
5. How does Jesus respond to Martha?
6. Mary and Martha are sisters and appear together in other stories in the Bible. Read John 11:17-44 about the story of Lazarus. How would you describe Mary and Martha in this story?
7. Between Mary and Martha, who do you most identify and why?
8. These two stories have differences of both Mary and Martha and how they approach situations. Comparing these stories, how would you describe their strengths and

weaknesses? (Hint: If they are strong in one, they are not as strong in the other).

9. With Jesus in the room, Martha began to lose focus and worry. What are some of your distractions that cause you to lose your sight of God at times?

10. What is the “one thing” Jesus says to Martha she needs as it relates to Mary?

11. To understand Jesus is our “portion”, read Numbers 18:8-29 and Lamentations 3:23-24.

How do these passages help us understand what Jesus is saying about Mary’s choice?

12. As we think about our own lives, what are ways we can keep our focus on God even during the busyness of life?

13. What are times of day for you to help you gain your focus on Christ and what are some resources you use to help you spend time with God?

Respond in Prayer:

It is no coincidence, that Jesus taught the Lord’s Prayer in the following passage in Luke 11:1-4. Have someone read that aloud. Spend some time praying together through the Lord’s Prayer by the following...

- Praise God for His character and for His works.
- Confess silently to God your need for Him.
- Thank God for the ways He has been part of your life.
- Request for God to answer particular needs.

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Week 3: Psalm 27:1-5

Main Idea:

Worship is another commonly misunderstood word in the economy of Christianity. Worship, at its center, means ascribing to God the worth that is due His name. In other words, worship could be defined as “worth ship”. This sermon will focus on the true and unfiltered worship that God requires is not just a segment of time during a church service, but surrender to His majesty, value, and worth every moment of our lives.

GROW: Talk through these questions with your Life Group, your family and friends or others who are growing with you in knowing Jesus more.

God's Message:

1. What is a challenge you faced recently and how did you handle it?
2. Read the passage.
3. As you listen to this passage, what words or phrases stand out to you most and why?
4. Upon reading this, what challenge does David seem to be facing? What are some descriptions you see that show that?
5. How does David describe his relationship with God?
6. How do you think this helps him as he is facing these fears?
7. How does it mean that his enemies stumbled and fell?
8. What is David's “one thing” that he desires?
9. How does this perspective help David shape his understanding of God?
10. How does God protect David as he faces adversity? What do you think that means?
11. In what ways in your past have you seen how God has protected you in the midst of uncertainty or fear?
12. How does God being your “light, salvation, and stronghold” give you comfort as you face challenges in your life?
13. How can you apply David's “one thing” in your life and how can it give you purpose?

Respond in Prayer:

David focused on the attributes of God as he faced his fears. Spend time in prayer as a group by praying the ABC prayer. Start with the letter “A” and just have people share an attribute by saying one word that begins with that letter that praises God and then do the next letter. As a leader, start the prayer “Lord, you are...”. You may have to be first by saying, “Awesome

or Amazing". Then, "Beautiful"; "Caring", etc. Go through whole alphabet being creative with a few of them.

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Week 4: Mark 10:17-23

Main Idea: From the moment of salvation, Jesus becomes not only the means by which have been, are being, and will continue to be saved, but Lord and Master of every aspect of our lives. Nothing is to be segmented or compartmentalized away from His control. This sermon will focus on our tendency to trust in finances or material good over the provision of Jesus and call us to surrender all we are, and all we have, to the Lordship of Jesus.

GROW: Talk through these questions with your Life Group, your family and friends or others who are growing with you in knowing Jesus more.

God's Message:

1. The words below give different stages in the spiritual journey of a person. Where are you now in your relationship with God? Explain. No interest-Who cares-I'm open-Searching-Positive about Jesus-Recognize my need-Ready to decide-Repentance and faith-Growth in Christ. Explain.
2. Read the passage.
3. How does the man approach Jesus?
4. What does the verb "to do" suggest about this understanding of how to gain eternal life?
5. How does Jesus respond to his question?
6. Jesus gives the man a "pop quiz" on a partial list of the Ten Commandments, all of which relate to person-to-person relationships. What does the rich man's reply tell us about his view of himself?

7. What are the two parts of the command Jesus lovingly gives the rich man in verse 21?
8. What does the man's reaction reveal about him? Why does he go away sad?
9. Imagine that Jesus says to you, "One thing you lack is..." How might he finish the sentence with you? Why?
10. What are other things in your life that can get in the way of loving God first?
11. How can wealth be a barrier in trusting God?
12. What do you think Jesus was trying to teach the man?
13. In what ways do you relate to the young ruler?

Respond in Prayer:

Take a moment to read this as a prayer for your group. Have a moment of silent reflection first so that people in the group can be thinking about putting God above all things.

Pastoral Prayer (inspired by Mark 10:17-31)

"God of infinite patience and wisdom, we come to you with so many things that claim our time, our energy, our resources, our very lives. We are easily drawn away from serving you by the enticements of the world for wealth, ease, and comfort. Just like the young man in the scriptures, we are owned by our possessions, held captive by our treasures. You continue to offer to us healing and hope. You seek to transform our lives from captivity to freedom in witness and service. We look at the world in which there is so very much warfare and strife, anger and hatred, and we easily become overwhelmed by the needs and the stresses. Help us to place our lives and our trust in you, knowing that with your help, many wonderful things can be accomplished which will provide hope and peace for others and ourselves. Give us courage and strength to truly be your disciples. For we ask this in Jesus' Name. Amen.

~ from the Ministry Matters website. <http://www.ministrymatters.com/>

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Week 5: Philippians 3:7-14

Main Idea:

Following Jesus is not easy but is worth all we might have to endure because of it. In the final sermon of the series, we turn our focus to Holy Spirit-inspired faithfulness necessary to follow Jesus for the long haul.

GROW: Talk through these questions with your Life Group, your family and friends or others who are growing with you in knowing Jesus more.

God's Message:

1. How have your priorities changed over your life so far? How and why did they change?
2. Read the passage.
3. How would you describe what is important to Paul? What are some words or phrases that reflect his priorities?
4. How does Paul describe righteousness that comes from faith in Christ?
5. What are things Paul wants to know?
6. How does he describe his suffering?
7. Why would Paul consider his past accomplishments "rubbish" compared to knowing Christ? How did he get to this realization?
8. How can Paul's descriptions of his sufferings help Christians face their own?
9. How would you describe Paul's "one thing"?
10. Reflect on your own life: Are there things you currently value that might be considered "loss" compared to the surpassing worth of knowing Christ? How can you begin to reprioritize these values?
11. How can you begin to trust God more and not trust in yourself?
12. Think about a recent time of hardship in your life. As Paul did, how can this experience be an opportunity to know Jesus more intimately, as Paul did?
13. The resurrection power of Christ redefines our values and priorities. What is one area of your life where you need to experience this resurrection power. What would it look like to live this in your daily life?

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Respond in Prayer:

Read Philippians 3:13-14 again. Have people reflect in prayer silently, then pray the following...

"Heavenly Father, thank You that we are Your children. We want to live our lives the way that You have ordained and run the race that You have set before us. Help us to press on

toward the goal of our calling in Christ Jesus, trusting in Him to overcome every problem, disappointment, and challenge we may face. May we always trust in our Savior, Who has overcome the world. In Jesus' name we pray, AMEN.”

Source: <https://prayer.knowing-jesus.com/Philippians/3>

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