

10 August, 2025

9th Sunday after Pentecost

The one thing necessary is God Himself

Proverbs 3.13-18, Psalm 63.1-8, Philippians 3.7-14, Luke 10.38-42

Key Verse: *“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 10:42

Life in the modern world is often characterized by busyness and distractions. We live in a society where we constantly juggle multiple responsibilities, and at times, the most important thing - our relationship with God - takes a backseat. We run after achievements, possessions, and status, but the question remains: Are these things truly essential? In today's readings, we are reminded that the one thing necessary in life is God Himself. When we prioritize Him above all, everything else falls into its rightful place. In this sermon, we will explore the significance of placing God at the centre of our lives and how today's scripture passages guide us toward this understanding. We'll reflect on how wisdom, spiritual thirst, the pursuit of Christ, and the story of Martha and Mary all point us to the “one thing necessary” - a deep and abiding relationship with God.

1. The Wisdom of God (Proverbs 3:13-18)

In Proverbs 3:13-18, we are reminded of the supreme value of God's wisdom. The passage tells us, “Blessed are those who find wisdom, those who gain understanding, for she is more profitable than silver and yields better returns

than gold.” The image of wisdom being more precious than jewels speaks to the spiritual wealth that surpasses all earthly possessions. Wisdom in the Bible is not simply knowledge but a relationship with God that leads to right living. The pursuit of God’s wisdom is the pursuit of God Himself. We often chase after things that seem important - wealth, security, and personal success - but Scripture teaches that none of these can compare to the true value of knowing God and His ways. In the end, all other pursuits will fade, but our relationship with God remains eternal. This passage reminds us to seek after God’s wisdom, which gives life, peace, and joy. It is a wisdom that leads us to discover that the most important thing is not the material or temporal, but the eternal.

2. Thirsting for God (Psalm 63:1-8)

Psalm 63 is a psalm of David, expressing deep longing for God: “You, God, are my God, earnestly I seek you; I thirst for you, my whole being longs for you.” David, in a dry and weary land, longs not for physical sustenance but for God Himself. This psalm captures the essence of the human soul’s deep need for God. The imagery of thirst is powerful because it reveals that nothing in this world can satisfy the spiritual longing within us. Just as our bodies cannot survive without water, our souls cannot thrive without communion with God. David’s cry reminds us that in the midst of life’s trials, hardships, and distractions, our greatest need is God Himself. We often seek satisfaction in other things - career, relationships, entertainment - but these only leave us more thirsty. True fulfilment comes only when we drink deeply from the living water that God offers. When we seek Him earnestly, we will be satisfied, and our souls will cling to Him, as David’s did.

3. Pursuing Christ (Philippians 3:7-14)

In his letter to the Philippians, Paul speaks about the transformation in his own life after encountering Christ. He writes, “But whatever were gains to me I now consider loss for the sake of Christ” (Philippians 3:7). Paul had every reason to boast about his accomplishments - his heritage, his zeal, his righteousness under the law. Yet, he realized that none of this compared to the surpassing worth of knowing Christ. Paul’s pursuit of Christ reflects the same truth we find in our other readings: there is nothing more important, more necessary, than knowing God. He writes, “I want to know Christ - yes, to know the power of his resurrection and participation in his sufferings, becoming like him in his death.” For Paul, everything else pales in comparison to this one thing: being found in Christ. Like Paul, we too are called to put

aside the distractions and lesser pursuits of life in order to focus on what truly matters - our relationship with Christ. As we run the race of faith, we press on toward the goal of knowing Him more deeply.

4. The Better Choice (Luke 10:38-42)

The Gospel reading from Luke 10 tells the familiar story of Martha and Mary. As Jesus visits their home, Martha is busy with all the preparations, while Mary sits at Jesus' feet, listening to Him. Martha, frustrated with her sister's inaction, asks Jesus to tell Mary to help her. But Jesus responds with compassion and clarity: "Martha, Martha, 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).

This story teaches us a profound lesson about priorities. Martha's desire to serve was good, but in her busyness, she missed the one thing necessary - being with Jesus. Mary, on the other hand, chose to prioritize her relationship with the Lord, recognizing that sitting at His feet and listening to His words was the most important thing. In our lives, like Martha, we can become consumed with the demands and worries of daily life. We are constantly pulled in different directions, trying to do more and be more. But Jesus invites us to pause, to sit at His feet, and to listen. When we make time to be with Him, we are reminded that He is the one thing necessary.

Conclusion

As we reflect on today's readings, we are reminded that our ultimate need is not found in worldly pursuits, possessions, or achievements, but in God Himself. Whether through the wisdom found in Proverbs, the thirst for God expressed in Psalm 63, Paul's pursuit of Christ, or Mary's choice to sit at Jesus' feet, the message is clear: the one thing necessary is God. When we place Him at the centre of our lives, everything else finds its rightful place. Let us strive to be like Mary, choosing the better portion, knowing that it will not be taken away from us. As we go about our busy lives, let us never forget that the most important thing we can do is spend time with the Lord, seeking Him and His kingdom above all else.

Prayer

Gracious and loving God, we thank You for reminding us that You are the one thing necessary in our lives. Help us to turn our hearts and minds toward You, setting aside the distractions and worries that pull us away from Your presence.

Teach us to seek You above all else, knowing that in You we find true fulfilment, peace, and joy. Strengthen our faith and guide us to choose the better portion, just as Mary did. We pray that we may thirst for You like David, pursue Christ like Paul, and embrace Your wisdom as the greatest treasure. May we always remember that You are with us and that Your love will never be taken away from us. In Jesus' name, we pray. Amen.