

### ***What are Microblades?***

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### ***Memory Verse***

**One *thing* have I desired  
of the LORD,  
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 enquire in his temple.  
Psalm 27:4 KJV**

### ***Commentary***

To learn best how to pray and how to praise God, we turn to the book of Psalms, Israel's hymnbook compiled over centuries. Just under half the psalms, including this one, are attributed to King David, and he seems to have been the guiding force in the compilation of the book. The Bible contains a number of different types of psalms, including psalms of praise, lament, trust, and wisdom. Several psalms are royal or messianic; several celebrate Creation and the Exodus.



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## *Commentary Continued*

Psalms 27 seems to be a psalm of trust as David writes of his confidence in spite of being pursued, attacked, besieged, threatened, accused, and nearly overwhelmed (27:2-3, 5, 12-13). In the midst of all this adversity, he trusts in the LORD's deliverance (27:4-6). The psalm ends with quiet confidence that Yahweh will strengthen the hearts of those who wait for Him.

**"One thing I have desired of the LORD, that will I seek."** It's wonderfully clarifying to be focused on one thing. Spurgeon writes, "Divided aims tend to distraction, weakness, disappointment. The man of one book is eminent, the man of one pursuit is successful. Let all our affections be bound up in one affection, and that affection set upon heavenly things." Notice that David turns desire into action; he desires God's presence and therefore seeks God's presence.

Notice that David's "one thing" is not what we'd expect; if enemies pursue us with iron weapons and murderous intent, we might find ourselves asking God for weapons or at least rescue. But David wants nearness to God more than anything else. His "one thing" anticipates that of Mary, the sister of Martha many years later, whose one thing was sitting at Jesus' feet to hear His Word (see next Microblade verse, Luke 10:42).

**"That I may dwell in the house of the LORD all the days of my life."** Some Christians avoid church, or when they think of church, they say "Oh, what a weariness," like the worshipers of Malachi's day (Mal. 1:11). But love naturally craves nearness to its object; believers long for the courts of the Lord (Psa. 84:2), as David does in this psalm. "So far from being wearied with the services of the Tabernacle, he longed to be constantly engaged in them as his lifelong pleasure" (Spurgeon). His goal is not just to visit but to dwell, to reside in God's presence, to make his home there.

**"To behold the beauty of the LORD."** David purposes to pursue God's presence, and he has a definite agenda: he wants to gaze on God's splendor; he wants his vision filled with Who God is. Spurgeon notes that we must not gather with the saints to see or be seen or even just to hear the minister—rather, we must go to see the Lord!

## *Commentary Continued*

**"And to inquire in His temple."** When we enter God's presence, our posture ought to be that of the inquirer—one who asks questions and makes requests. We have ignorance and need understanding. We have needs that require divine provision. David knows where his resource lies. Do we?

## *Application Questions*

1. What was the Psalmist's foremost goal in life? What is yours?
2. What does it mean to behold the beauty of the Lord? What types of things often obscure that vision?
3. Are you actively seeking a closer walk with God? Name several specific proofs that support your answer.

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### ***Memory Verse***

**But one thing is needful:  
and Mary hath chosen  
that good part,  
which shall not  
be taken away from her.**  
Luke 10:42 KJV

### ***Commentary***

Luke's gospel comes from the pen of "the beloved physician," the Gentile travel companion of Paul and Silas (Col. 4:14). Paul poignantly mentions that during his final trials in Rome, "only Luke is with me" (2 Tim. 4:11). During Paul's months of imprisonment in Caesarea, Luke may well have sought out eyewitnesses, perhaps even interviewing Jesus' mother Mary herself! Be that as it may, Luke's gospel includes precious material found nowhere else in Scripture including the parables of the Good Samaritan and the Prodigal Son, the story of Zaccheus, and our Microblade memory verse. Luke also gives special attention to women and their involvement in Jesus' ministry.

The Gospel of Luke actually begins the amazing history continued in the book of Acts. Luke details his reason for writing: many others had



## *Commentary Continued*

set out to describe Christ but Luke had "perfect understanding of all things from the very first" from "eyewitnesses" (1:2-3). Luke gives Theophilus "an orderly account" (1:3). Since he speaks of the temple as still standing (21:5) and ends with Paul still in custody (Acts 28), Luke evidently wrote before AD 65.

Our memory verse comes from Jesus' teaching on the road to Jerusalem (Luke 9:51-19:27). As He travels, Jesus visits Mary and Martha, the sisters of Lazarus well known from John 11. When Martha welcomes the Lord into their home, Luke notes that Mary sat at Jesus' feet to hear His Word. Martha, Luke writes, was "distracted with much serving." Martha questions Jesus' appreciation of her service and complains that Mary has left her to handle the household work alone (10:38-41). She asks Jesus to command Mary to help. Jesus lovingly and gently corrects her focus on the wrong things.

**"But one thing is needed."** Above all the good and helpful acts of service Martha undertook, only one thing rose to the rank of "necessary." As Charles Hummel notes, many of us neglect the truly important things by submitting to the "tyranny of the urgent." Notice how Jesus' answer corrects Martha's priorities. On all our to-do lists, we should draw a heavy black line and write "time with Christ" above that line and everything else below it. Nearness to Christ stands in a class by itself.

This account immediately follows the parable of the Good Samaritan (Luke 10:25-37). From this context, the Mary's of the world should remember not to step over or around broken people in our path citing the higher calling of worship (Liefeld). And, it follows that the Martha's of the world need to remember that all the philanthropy in the world can never take the place of seeking God's face (Psa. 27:8).

**"And Mary has chosen that good part, which will not be taken away from her."** Jesus credits Mary with hitting the bullseye. She has chosen the one thing needful, "that good part." Sitting at Jesus' feet to hear His Word outranks all the other good and proper duties we have. Those who make this choice to honor Christ will not be deprived of their good portion.

## *Application Questions*

**1.** When you have opportunity to hear Jesus' words (at church, devotionals, Bible study, etc.), do you consider it good/better compared to your to-do list? Write a short prayer you can lift up before these events--asking God to open your heart and ears with joy.

**2.** How will you prioritize your plans this week as you consider this memory verse?

**3.** Do you cling to things which will be taken away? Describe the confidence this verse gives you to pursue Jesus and His Word.

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### **Memory Verse**

**He answered and said,  
Whether he be a sinner *or no*,  
I know not:  
one thing I know,  
that, whereas I was blind,  
now I see.  
John 9:25 KJV**

### **Commentary**

John wrote his gospel *"that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing you may have life in His name"* (20:31). To this end, John deploys a well-chosen set of Jesus' signs and sermons designed to reveal Him as the Promised King of Israel (1:49), the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world (1:29), the Son of God (10:36), and the "Light of the world" (8:12). John portrays Christ as the Light who conquers the darkness (1:5-9), and the story of Jesus' healing the man born blind gives John the opportunity to show unbelief as blindness and faith as sight.



### *Commentary Continued*

**"He answered and said."** The one speaking is the man born blind, whom Jesus has just healed on the Sabbath by means of anointing his eyes with a clay/spittle mixture. Healing on the Sabbath, along with making clay and anointing eyes, violated Jewish oral tradition, which was considered as binding as the Law of Moses itself (Carson). Jesus revealed that the man was born blind not because he or his parents sinned, but rather to enable the works of God to be seen in him (John 9:3). The Pharisees warn the healed man to give God the glory, yet they condemn Jesus as a sinner. Jesus' Deity is completely off their radar. The healed man responds:

**"Whether He is a sinner or not I do not know."** This is one of three places where the healed man claims ignorance (9:12, 25, 36), but he is learning who Jesus is step by step. Three times the Pharisees claim to know who and what Jesus really is (9:16, 24, 29), but they are actually plunging deeper into blindness (Brown). The Pharisees wish to guide the healed man into what they think is a correct view of Jesus; they think they know more about Him than the healed man. It seems possible that the man feigns ignorance to avoid direct confrontation with the religious power brokers (Keener). Or perhaps the fact that Jesus has healed on the Sabbath puzzles him. Could a sinning Sabbath-breaker really heal one born blind?

**"One thing I know: that though I was blind, now I see."** The Pharisees had charged the man to give God glory; ironically, this is exactly what he does! By glorifying Jesus, he in fact glorifies God.

Notice the modesty of the man's answer, which we should imitate: he refuses to enter into debate about things he does not know; instead he testifies about what he does know by personal experience of Christ. This is the essence of Christian testimony: telling what God has done for us through Jesus Christ. We feel safe leaving the more abstract theological questions to the experts when we realize what Jesus Christ can do for us and in us. Try as they might, the blind man's interrogators "cannot make the miracle go away" (Michaels), and so it is with us!

### *Commentary Continued*

The formerly blind man's testimony provides the text for the second half of the most famous line in English hymnody: "Amazing grace.... I once was lost, but now am found; was blind, but now I see."

### *Application Questions*

**1.** If you are a Christian, God opened your spiritual eyes to the light of gospel. Who has heard you tell this story? Whom will you tell next?

**2.** Are you ready to answer people who question you? (See 1 Peter 3:15.) How will you prepare yourself better?

**3.** What kind of spiritual debates occur in your church, home, or workplace? Name 2-3 topics. What biblical facts can you stand on, humbly, when people discuss these topics?

### *Application Questions continued*

2. In your own words, what does it mean to forget? Will you pray for help for this?

3. Name 2-3 things you think are ahead for you. What is the next step on each? Pray also for direction as you serve the Lord.

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### *Memory Verse*

**Brethren, I count not myself  
to have apprehended:  
but *this* one thing *I do*,  
forgetting those things  
which are behind,  
and reaching forth  
unto those things  
which are before.**

Philippians 3:13 KJV

### *Commentary*

Obedying the heavenly vision to "Come over to Macedonia and help us," the Apostle Paul with Silas, Timothy, and Luke brought the gospel of Christ to Philippi about A.D. 50 (Acts 16:6-34). There they met Lydia, a seller of purple garments, and the Lord opened her heart to believe in Jesus Christ. Following the exorcism of a local girl's spirit of divination, the authorities beat and imprisoned Paul and Silas. They were beaten physically, yet not spiritually! God miraculously rescued them through an earthquake, after which the jailer and his family also believed and received baptism. A vibrant church was born!



## Commentary Continued

More than one foe threatened this newborn church. Persecutions loomed, internal tensions simmered, and enemies of the cross opposed (Phil. 1:29; 3:17-19; 4:2). Yet the keynote of Philippians is joy (1:18; 3:1; 4:4). In approximately A.D. 61, Paul writes from prison in Rome with death on the horizon (1:13, 22-23), but his evident delight in this body of believers bubbles over in warm pastoral counsel. Paul shares his own testimony for the instruction of the young believers in Philippi.

In Philippians 3, Paul balances the Christian life between the opposing dangers of legalism and license (Lightfoot). On one hand, the circumcision party based their confidence on outward conformity to the Law (Phil. 3:1-2). On the other hand, some were straying from Christ because they made salvation by faith into an opportunity for the flesh (Phil. 3:17-19). Paul knows that righteousness comes by faith apart from works of the Law (3:9), but such saving faith does in fact—work! Using the athletic metaphor of a runner reaching out and straining for the finish line, Paul says he is striving towards that for which Christ Jesus had already laid hold of him (3:12).

**“Brethren, I do not count myself to have apprehended.”** Paul uses a unique form of direct address to grab the Philippians’ attention—“Brethren, listen....” Paul then continues the picture of the runner (3:12) to depict his ongoing pursuit of Christ (Fee). He has not yet finished the race.

Note the apostle’s humility. Paul wisely suspends judgment on himself; he also models this in 1 Corinthians 4:5—*“Therefore judge nothing before the time, until the Lord comes, who will both bring to light the hidden things of darkness and reveal the counsels of the hearts. Then each one’s praise will come from God.”* Romans 6:11 uses the same verb as Philippians 3:13: *“Reckon yourselves to be dead indeed to sin.”*

**“But one thing I do.”** As we read on in the verse, it really sounds like two things, but in fact it’s one thing with two parts. What God joins together here, let us not separate: forgetting is part of pressing forward. Pressing forward is part of forgetting. It’s tough to press forward

## Commentary Continued

without the right kind of forgetting; we’re handicapped in our forgetting if we’re not pressing forward. As with the other “One Thing” verses, how wonderful it is to be able to have a single focus, to be able to focus on one thing.

**“Forgetting those things which are behind.”** If a runner looks behind him, he often stumbles or loses his lead. To bend the metaphor just a bit, we travel the King’s Highway towards heaven; looking in the rear-view mirror too deeply causes accidents. We must learn to forget past things; the context (Phil. 3:3-7) indicates that we must especially forget our former strong-points and achievements—even the spiritual ones.

**“And reaching forward to those things which are ahead.”** Paul looks forward to the day when he will receive the fullness of what he already possesses in Christ (Fee). It is easy to think of this pursuit in light of Heb. 12:1-2.

*“Therefore we also, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which so easily ensnares us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.”*

## Application Questions

1. Knowing your own shortcomings, who in your daily life needs to see mercy from you—even as you deal with their shortcomings?