

Let everything that has breath
praise the Lord. Praise the Lord!

Psalms 150:6

Praise Points

with Karen Holland

One Thing I Ask

If you could ask God for one thing, what would it be? Why would you choose this as your 'one thing'? Look at King David's answer to this question.

One thing I ask of the LORD, this is what I seek: that I may dwell in the house of the LORD all the days of my life, to behold the beauty of the LORD and to seek him in his temple. One thing I have desired of the LORD, that will I seek: that I may dwell in the house of the LORD all the days of my life, to behold the beauty of the LORD, and to inquire in His temple. For in the time of trouble He shall hide me in His pavilion; In the secret place of His tabernacle He shall hide me; He shall set me high upon a rock. And now my head shall be lifted up above my enemies all around me; Therefore I will offer sacrifices of joy in His tabernacle; I will sing, yes, I will sing praises to the LORD.

Psalms 27:4-6

Why would dwelling in the Lord's house, to behold the beauty of the Lord, be the one thing that David would ask, the one thing he would seek? What does it mean to behold? The Hebrew word for behold in this passage is *chazah* and means *to see (by experience), to perceive, to contemplate (with pleasure)*. It should also be noted that David wanted to dwell in the house of the Lord both now and in the future, to tabernacle with the Lord. It's interesting that this idea of tabernacling is also found in the following verse.

And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth.

John 1:14

In John 1:14 the Greek word for dwell is *skeno* and means *to fix or have one's tabernacle with, to abide (or live) in*. This alludes to the Old Testament tabernacle where the Shekinah, the visible glory of God's presence, resided. This verse implies that the Shekinah glory that once was found in the Old Testament tabernacle has taken up residence in the person of Jesus.

This verse also ties the idea of dwelling or tabernacling with the Lord to beholding His glory. *The Son is the radiance of God's glory and the exact representation of his being, sustaining all things by his powerful word. After he had provided purification for sins, he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty in heaven.* (Hebrews 1:3) So just as the Shekinah, the visible glory of God's presence, "dwelt" in the Old Testament tabernacle, so Jesus dwelt among us as the "Shekinah Glory", the presence of God dwelling in the tabernacle of flesh.

Paul helps us understand that this glory was lost due to sin but will ultimately be regained through salvation, through the person of Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit:

...all have sinned and come short of the glory of God.

Romans 3:23

We... rejoice in hope of the glory of God.

Romans 5:2

...the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us.

Romans 8:18

But we all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord.

2 Corinthians 3:18

For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.

2 Corinthians 4:6

WOW! Tabernacling, abiding with the Lord and beholding His beauty, transforms us. Truly beholding the beauty of the Lord brings about transformation. One reason is that in the Lord's beauty, in His glory there is no sin. Jesus, the radiance of God's glory, is full of grace and truth. Truth that reveals sin and grace that forgives. Look at what happened to Isaiah when he beheld the King in the tabernacle. He immediately realizes his sin, his unclean lips. He also realizes that he can not cleanse his sin and save himself on his own "*Woe to me!*" *I cried. "I am ruined! For I am a man of unclean lips, and I live among a people of unclean lips, and my eyes have seen the King, the LORD Almighty."* (Isaiah 6:5) Beholding the Lord's beauty leads Isaiah to surrender completely, be forgiven of his sins and proclaim "*Here I am, send me!*" (Isaiah 6:8) Likewise when we truly behold the Lord's beauty we will be changed, our sins forgiven and our strength renewed to do the Lord's work.

Seen in this light, David's one thing is very important to him and his relationship with the Lord. So why isn't beholding the beauty of the Lord stressed more in worship today?

Beauty is often disregarded because some see it as having no real function; a mere decoration and nothing more. The Lord, however, seems to have created an extravagant amount of 'useless' beauty. Flowers grow in meadows, mountain tops, deserts where no man may even go. Creation is filled with unmatched displays of beauty; the beauty of a mountain stream, the beauty of a sunset or sunrise, the beauty of the stars in the night sky. The Lord seems to delight in this excessive display of beauty. The abundance of beauty in creation, points again to God's infinite glory which should be plain (Romans 1:18-20).

The heavens are telling of the glory of God; And their expanse is declaring the work of His hands. Day to day pours forth speech, and night to night reveals knowledge. There is no speech or language where their voice is not heard.

Psalms 19:1-3

In our busy consumer oriented society we tend to value efficiency and usefulness over beauty. This is tragic, since God appears to love so-called "useless beauty." Could this be another reason David was called a man after God's own heart (Acts 13:22)? Beauty may appear to have no purpose, but without it wouldn't our faith lack a certain vibrancy? Look again at David's plea. The meaning of beauty in this passage is *to be pleasant, beautiful, sweet, delightful, lovely, agreeable, suitable.*

The beauty of the Lord is much deeper than outward appearance or something pleasant to the eye. The beauty of Jesus was not his face, eyes or hair. It's Jesus the person, the radiance of God's glory, full of grace and truth. He is suitable or appropriate for every occasion. His grace is sufficient. Jesus the person is enough, he alone satisfies every desire. Jesus is the delight of our heart and soul. When we behold the beauty of the Lord we are beholding Jesus the person, his character, his attributes, that's why we are changed.

Don't we need to be overwhelmed by the beauty of the Lord? His beauty cleanses and stirs our hearts captivating our devotion and adoration. Like David, don't we need to behold the Lord's beauty, to be changed, cleansed and moved? Moved to praise Him for the beauty of His Holiness with our whole being; to offer a sacrifice of joy in His tabernacle? This is the power of beholding the beauty of the Lord in His tabernacle. Beholding His glory, our hearts are touched and changed to reflect His image. Like the heavens telling of the glory of God, their voice is

heard. When we sing the song of praise He puts in our mouths in the tabernacle, many will see and fear and will trust in the Lord (Psalm 40:3). This pleases God greatly.

Behold, bless the LORD is a call to see by experience, to perceive, to contemplate with pleasure the beauty of the Lord. Remember the 'one thing' Mary chose, she chose the necessary thing - to sit at His feet and behold.

Martha, Martha, you are worried and bothered about so many things; but only one thing is necessary, for Mary has chosen the good part, which shall not be taken away from her.

Luke 10:41-42

Mary was also the one who anointed the feet of Jesus with costly perfume, an extravagant act of worship. When Mary was criticized for this Jesus replied, *Leave her alone, why are you bothering her? She has done a beautiful thing to me.* (Mark 14:6)

Won't you come and behold the beauty of the Lord in His tabernacle and bless the Lord. Come experience the one thing that David asked, the one necessary thing Mary chose. Come behold the beauty of the Lord in His tabernacle, come sit at His feet. Come behold and do a beautiful thing. This one thing is not only for the present but also a wonderful promise for the future,

And I heard a great voice out of heaven saying Behold the tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them, and be their God

Revelation 21:3

The following song is based on these ideas. Check it out in the free music section of Pastor Steve's website! <http://www.justworship.com/freedownloads.html>

It's Only You

Steve Pruitt

One thing I have desired
One thing I will seek
To dwell in your house forever, Lord
To behold your beauty

Cause it's only you who fills my heart's desire
It's only you who fills my hunger pain
It's only you my passion and my thirst requires
It's only you, only you, only you

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Behold, bless the LORD, all servants of the LORD, who serve by night in the house of the LORD! Lift up your hands to the sanctuary and bless the LORD. May the LORD bless you from Zion, He who made heaven and earth.

Psalm 134

Give unto the LORD the glory due unto his name: bring an offering, and come before him: worship the LORD in the beauty of holiness.

1 Chronicles 16:29, Psalm 29:2