

## ONE THING (Bill Cahusac)

- Where have you seen God at work in your life this week? (Share any brief examples and encouragements).
- Was there anything from Sunday's message which you found particularly inspiring or challenging?
- Was there anything else you particularly noticed?

A new year is a traditional time for excellent intentions and fresh resolutions. After an indulgent Christmas, often these are about what we eat and drink and about our bodies – what we will be able to wear when we get ourselves in shape...

### Matthew 6:25-33 (NIVUK)

<sup>25</sup> 'Therefore I tell you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat or drink; or about your body, what you will wear. Is not life more than food, and the body more than clothes?' <sup>26</sup> Look at the birds of the air; they do not sow or reap or store away in barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not much more valuable than they? <sup>27</sup> Can any one of you by worrying add a single hour to your life [footnote: 'or a single cubit to your height']?

<sup>28</sup> 'And why do you worry about clothes? See how the flowers of the field grow. They do not labour or spin. <sup>29</sup> Yet I tell you that not even Solomon in all his splendour was dressed like one of these. <sup>30</sup> If that is how God clothes the grass of the field, which is here today and tomorrow is thrown into the fire, will he not much more clothe you – you of little faith? <sup>31</sup> So do not worry, saying, "What shall we eat?" or "What shall we drink?" or "What shall we wear?" <sup>32</sup> For the pagans run after all these things, and your heavenly Father knows that you need them. <sup>33</sup> But **seek first his kingdom and his righteousness**, and all these things will be given to you as well.

It's not so much that Jesus is condemning noble aspirations for a healthy diet and better exercise as 'pagan pursuits' (the NIV has opted for a rather more pejorative translation than is implied by the Greek *ethnoi*, more usually rendered as 'Gentiles', or 'nations' – meaning anybody who wasn't Jewish), rather he is anxious that his disciples should keep their purpose focused on the most important thing – to 'seek first his Kingdom and his righteousness', or, as the Living Bible puts it, 'give him first place in your life and live as he wants you to'. Bill suggested several small steps we might take to help us get on track – Using a devotional app (Lectio365 is excellent, other apps are available); Praying and reading the Bible in a year (other timescales are available); Joining online Morning Prayer from Emmaus Rd. (lunchtime and evening are also available); Helping on the Alpha team; Joining or leading a Collective; Joining a team at Church; Volunteering at the Lighthouse, etc.

- What **One Thing** might God be calling you to this year as you 'seek first God's Kingdom and his righteousness'?
- Did any of Bill's suggestions particularly resonate with you?

### Five "One Things" in the Bible...

(Read these verses on their own and, if you have time, look at the context in which these words were spoken or written)

1. **Psalm 27:4**      **To Seek God in Prayer**  
*One thing I ask from the Lord, this only do I seek: that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life, to gaze on the beauty of the Lord and to seek him in his temple.*
2. **Mark 10:21**      **To Follow Jesus, no Matter the Cost**  
*Jesus looked at him and loved him. 'One thing you lack,' he said. 'Go, sell everything you have and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven. Then come, follow me.'*
3. **Luke 10:42**      **To Be a Learner, Listening at the Feet of Jesus**  
*'... few things are needed – or indeed only one. Mary has chosen what is better, and it will not be taken away from her.'*
4. **John 9:25**      **Mission – to be Bold in Your Witness for Jesus**  
*He replied, 'Whether he is a sinner or not, I don't know. One thing I do know. I was blind but now I see!'*
5. **Phil. 3:13-14**      **To Press on in Pursuit of God's Purpose**  
*... I do not consider myself yet to have taken hold of it. But one thing I do: forgetting what is behind and straining towards what is ahead, I press on towards the goal to win the prize for which God has called me heavenwards in Christ Jesus.*

- Do any of these five **One Things** particularly speak to you?
- What is Jesus' invitation to you today?