

# One Thing Needful

by John Newton

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*A life of faith in Jesus Christ is the one thing needful for a fulfilling and meaningful life.*

**Scripture:** Psalm 23:1, Psalm 37:5, Galatians 2:20, Philippians 4:7, Colossians 3:2

**Topics:** "Faith In God", "Eternal Perspective"

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## Description

John Newton emphasizes the importance of having our hearts united to the Lord in humble faith, rejoicing in Him as our Shepherd and portion, and submitting to His appointments with cheerful acquiescence. He reminds us that the end is approaching and challenges us to judge things in light of eternity, realizing that many earthly concerns will fade in significance. Newton stresses the necessity of a life of faith in the Son of God, filling our hearts with His power and presence to avoid being filled with folly and vanity.

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## Transcript

August 28, 1779.

My dear Friend,

I want to hear how you are. I hope your complaint is not worse than when I saw you. I hope you are easier, and will soon find yourself able to move about again. I should be sorry, if, to the symptoms of the stone, you should have the gout superadded in your right hand; for then you will not be able to write to me.

We go on much as usual; sometimes very poorly, sometimes a little better: the latter is the case to-day. My rheumatism continues; but it is very moderate and tolerable. The Lord deals gently with us; and gives us many proofs that he does not afflict willingly.

The days speed away apace; each one bears away its own burden with it, to return no more. Both pleasures and pains that are past are gone for ever. What is yet future will likewise be soon past. The end is coming. O to realize the thought, and to judge of things now in some measure suitable to the judgment we shall form of them, when we are about to leave them all! Many things which now either elate or depress us, will then appear to be trifles light as air.

One thing is needful: to have our hearts united to the Lord in humble faith; to set him always before us; to rejoice in him as our Shepherd and our portion; to submit to all his appointments, not of necessity, because he is stronger than we, but with a cheerful acquiescence, because he is wise and good, and loves us better than we do ourselves; to feed upon his truth; to have our understandings, wills, affections,

imaginations, memory, all filled and impressed with the great mysteries of redeeming love; to do all for him, to receive all from him, to find all in him. I have mentioned many things, but they are all comprised in one, a life of faith in the Son of God. We are empty vessels in ourselves, but we cannot remain empty. Except Jesus dwells in our hearts, and fills them with his power and presence, they will be filled with folly, vanity, and vexation.

I am, &c.

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