

# The Leader's One Magnificent Obsession

By Johnny L. Derouen

## Pre-Session Assignments

One week before the session, participants will take the following assignments.

### Assignment One

Read Psalm 27:4–5; then read the comments related to Psalm 27:4 in the section **It's in the Book**. King David was called the “man after God’s own heart” (see Acts 13:22). Prepare to share your answers to the following questions: What was King David’s one magnificent obsession, the one thing he sought? What does he mean when David says he wants to “dwell in the house of the LORD all the days of my life”? What are two results of David’s seeking his one magnificent obsession?

### Assignment Two

Read the comments related to Ecclesiastes 12:13 in the section **It's in the Book**. Many historians believe King Solomon was the wealthiest and wisest king in history. Prepare to share your answers to the following questions: What was the magnificent obsession of King Solomon? By performing a web search or asking a church leader for assistance, research the Hebrew meaning of the word translated *fear* (v. 13) and the positive ways one may show fear toward God.

### Assignment Three

Read Matthew 22:37–40. Prepare to share your answer to the following question: How is Jesus’ greatest commandment similar to the magnificent obsessions of King David in Psalm 27:4 and King Solomon in Ecclesiastes 12:13?

## Scripture to Memorize

*One thing have I asked 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 gaze upon the beauty of the LORD and to inquire in His temple.*  
Psalm 27:4

## Session Goal

Consistent with God’s Word and in the power of the Holy Spirit—by the end of this session, disciples will know and understand the one magnificent obsession God desires for His disciples.

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He received his master’s and PhD degrees in Student Ministry at Southwestern Seminary, and he has a BS in Microbiology. Johnny served as the minister of youth at Oak Park Methodist Church of Lake Charles, Louisiana; Meadowbrook Baptist Church of Fort Worth, Texas; First Baptist Church of Muskogee, Oklahoma; Houston’s First Baptist Church; and Travis Avenue Baptist in Fort Worth, Texas.

Johnny is also a member of the Metro Youth Ministers Association (serving as chairman in 1990). He has written articles for a number of youth ministry publications, authored the book *Christ, the Basis of Faith* (2008), and has written contributing chapters on youth ministry and teaching youth in many books including *Accelerate* (2013).

## It's in the Book

30 minutes

### Real-Life Scenario

Most people choose not to build their lives around Jesus. What are some of the “other things” people usually choose to build their lives around? What are some of the dangers for building your life around anything but Jesus? Consider searching online videos for “stars who committed suicide.” Review the famous people who appeared to have everything the world has to offer. Note that this wasn’t enough to get them through the difficult times of life. Why? What difference could it have made if they had built their lives around Jesus as their one magnificent obsession?

Read Psalm 27:4–5 out loud.

### Studying the Passage

**Verse 4.** Psalm 27 is a Psalm showing trust in God. In verse 4, King David made a vow to God that he would seek one thing all the days of his life. Many theologians believe David wrote this Psalm either after the rebellion of his son Absalom or early in his life after Samuel anointed him as king. Either way, David appears to be looking back and restating a vow he had made when he was young. The vow reveals his fearless trust in God.

### Assignment One Feedback

The person who completed **Assignment One** during the week can now share answers to the following questions: What was King David’s one magnificent obsession? What does it mean when David says he wants to “dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life”? What are two results of David’s seeking his one magnificent obsession?

## The Vow

### Studying the Passage

**Verse 4. dwell in the house of the LORD all the days of my life.** This is what David vowed would be the one thing he would seek all of his life, his one magnificent obsession. This was a Hebrew way of saying “to live permanently in God’s presence.” His desire was never to do anything that would remove him from God’s presence and direction.

David’s vow is one of the most single-minded, focused and committed statements in the entire Bible! It has no parallel in Scripture. Many disciples (including this author) have chosen this as their life verse and focus of their lives.

In making this vow, David desired two results:

- 1. To behold the beauty of the LORD.** In Hebrew, *beauty* literally means “engaging, delightful, and beautiful.” David wanted to delight in who God is and enjoy walking with and knowing Him in all of His beauty!
- 2. to inquire in His temple.** The temple was the structure that symbolized God’s presence. David wanted to inquire of God alone in order to seek and know His wisdom and guidance for life. David knew that God was the only trustworthy source of guidance and wisdom.

Jesus alone has the standards of right and wrong, as He is the Creator of the universe and the fashioner of all humans (Psalm 139:13). David vowed that he would live his life God’s way by spending time in His presence!

### Discussion Questions

In spite of all King David's failures and sins, he was called "a man after God's own heart" (see Acts 13:22). What does this mean for us as disciples when we fail or fall into sin? Does this change our one magnificent obsession? How should we respond after failure?

### God's Protection

#### Studying the Passage

**Verse 5.** David trusted in God's protection over his life as a leader. He knew God would be his refuge in times of trouble. God did watch over him as he was anointed king by Samuel, yet had to wait for nineteen years as Saul reigned before him. God even watched over him during the rebellion of his son, Absalom. David could "hide" in God's *tabernacle* (where God's presence is) and His *tent* (a Hebrew metaphor for God's protecting presence and grace) in the good times and in times of trouble.

#### Discussion Questions

Where does God live? Is God omnipresent? If He is omnipresent, then where is God in your good times and bad times? Are we ever out of God's presence? What does that mean for our lives as disciples of Jesus?

#### On Your Own

In the space below, write some of your initial thoughts about a magnificent obsession for your life. Does David's vow provide ideas you can use? Write some ways you can delight in Christ and inquire of Him in His temple.

**Read** Ecclesiastes 12:13 out loud.

#### Studying the Passage

King Solomon, the author of Ecclesiastes, was the wisest and wealthiest man in the biblical period. Solomon wrote Ecclesiastes as a record of his looking at all he had done. Sadly, he declared that most of what he had done on earth was empty and vanity. He concluded that he had given time and possessions to things that would not last.

**Verse 13. The end of the matter; all has been heard.** Solomon made a blunt statement. In essence this phrase means, "This is it! This is the end of the matter! After all has been said and done, this is what really matters in life!" Clearly what Solomon is about to say will be important for a disciple of Jesus!

#### Assignment Two Feedback

The person who completed **Assignment Two** during the week can now share answers to the following questions: What was the magnificent obsession of King Solomon? What is the Hebrew meaning of the word translated *fear* (v. 13) and the positive ways one may show fear toward God?

## Discussion Questions

What are some ways we can show God that we fear Him and will keep His commandments? Solomon's statement in verse 13 applies to all mankind, not just believers. What are some of the predictable consequences for anyone who builds his life around anything other than Jesus?

Read Matthew 22:36-50 out loud.

## Studying the Passage

**Verses 36–37. which is the great commandment.** This question from a lawyer gave Jesus an opportunity to make an important declaration. He then announced the most important thing in life, the greatest of all commandments, and the one magnificent obsession: **You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.**

## Assignment Three Feedback

The person who completed **Assignment Three** during the week can now share an answer to the following question: How is Jesus' greatest commandment similar to the magnificent obsessions of King David in Psalm 27:4 and King Solomon in Ecclesiastes 12:13?

## On Your Own

In the space below, write a formal statement of your magnificent obsession—that one thing you will seek with your life above all other things. Draw from the words of David (Psalm 27:5), Solomon (Ecclesiastes 12:13), and Jesus (Matthew 22:37). Consider displaying your statement somewhere in your home

or making the statement the wallpaper for your phone.

## Heart and Hands

8 minutes

Read again the **Real-Life Scenario** near the beginning of the lesson. Consider whether your answers have changed during the session.

Be silent for two or three minutes. Thank Jesus for His sacrifice and for the gospel. Adore Him for His glorious reign on the throne of heaven. Then ask the Holy Spirit to reveal to you:

1. A way the Scriptures you studied today will change your heart for the glory of Christ.
2. Or a way those Scriptures will lead you to stop doing something for the glory of Christ.
3. Or a way those Scriptures will lead you to do something for the glory of Christ.

Write what the Spirit reveals to you below and then be ready to share what you have written with the group.

**Since Last Week**

5 minutes

**Grace-Filled Accountability**

5 minutes

**Planning for Evangelism, Missions, and Service**

5 minutes

**Prayer**

7 minutes

## **At Home: Nail It Down**

Three crucial passages give us a clear view of the one magnificent obsession Jesus wants disciples to build their lives around. These passages use different terms, but they state this *one thing* in similar ways and with the same result.

In Psalm 27:4, David stated that he would only seek one thing all of his life—to dwell (live) in the presence of God, enjoying God’s delightfulness, and inquiring, seeking, and meditating on the wisdom and guidance of God. He then declared complete trust in God as his protector and hiding place in times of trouble.

In Ecclesiastes 12:13, Solomon gave his final conclusion (“when all has been heard”) on what really matters in life: to fear God and keep (obey) His commandments. This conclusion—this magnificent obsession—applies to all people. Any other way to live life will end in futility and meaninglessness.

Jesus incorporated Psalm 27:4–5 and Ecclesiastes 12:13 in the greatest commandment, to “love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.” When He added, “Love your neighbor as yourself,” you have all of the commandments of God summarized in one sentence (Matthew 22:37–40).

Disciples who make loving God and loving others the one thing they seek after—their one magnificent obsession—they will be joining Jesus in bringing a display of the kingdom of God to the lives of precious people who will glorify (the Greek word means to reflect an image) and exalt the name of Jesus.

### **Follow up Question**

*How will you seek Jesus as your one magnificent obsession?*

The Making Disciples curriculum is a gift from Southwestern Seminary to those who, for the glory of the Father and in the power of the Spirit, will spend a lifetime embracing the full supremacy of the Son, responding to His kingly reign in all of life, inviting Christ to live His life through them, and joining Him in making disciples among all peoples.