

Keep the Main Thing the Main Thing

"Then Jesus came to them and said, All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age"(Matthew 28:18-20 (NIV).

My wife probably dreads my grocery store trips. They're always an adventure, a relatable scenario for many spouses, I imagine. Despite a meticulously prepared list, my ADD kicks in the moment I enter, and items practically jump off the shelves. I inevitably return home with far more bags than anticipated, and, more often than not, some of the very things my wife asked for are missing.

Years ago, I heard the phrase, "Keep the main thing the main thing." For us, the main thing is Jesus. I wonder if we, as individuals, as congregations, or even as the CBC, can be tempted to adopt some of my grocery store habits in our ministries. We can be involved in so much. Many of our churches offer a multitude of programs and ministries that we support and invest in—and many of them are excellent and can start with pure motives. However, if we are not careful, those same programs can cause spiritual drift as we pick up more and more "things to do."

Jesus was quite clear when he laid out our priorities as the Body of Christ, and the main priority is the Gospel of Jesus Christ. In the Great Commission, Jesus told us to go and make disciples. As followers of Jesus, the main thing is Jesus and spreading His Gospel; that is central to it all. All of the other things—the food pantries, the clothes closets, the kids' activities—are to be extensions of the main thing: sharing the Gospel of Jesus.

Like my grocery basket, the more things I add, the more cluttered it gets and the more effort it takes to carry. The more extras I add, the more the essentials get buried. Many Christians and churches alike have now packed their lives full of things, many of which are missing the mark of the main thing. They are busier than ever, but less spiritually engaged than ever before.

As we enter the fall season, it might be a good time for each of us to examine our priorities as people and as congregations. Is Jesus the main thing? Or has He been quietly pushed to the side in the name of productivity, creativity, entertainment, or any other myriad of things? Take time to think of all that you are involved in and ask: Is Jesus the main thing in this? If not, how can I make him the main thing? Or is this

something I need to devote time and energy to, or should I be devoting my efforts to something more Gospel-centered?

Prayer: Lord of Lords, search and know me and my life. You know my heart for you and your Gospel. Help my life, my motives, my schedule, and my priorities to all focus on the main thing—Jesus and His Gospel. In the name of Jesus Christ. Amen

Jon Prater – CBC Executive Board

Weekly Prayer Point

... We ask God to give you complete knowledge of His will and to give you spiritual wisdom and understanding. Then the way you live will always honor and please the Lord, and your lives will produce every kind of good fruit. All the while you will grow as you learn to know God better and better. We also pray that you will be strengthened with all his glorious power so you will have all the endurance and patience you need. May you be filled with joy, always thanking the Father. He has enabled you to share the inheritance that belongs to his people, who live in the light. For He has rescued us from the kingdom of darkness and transferred us into the kingdom of his dear Son, who purchased our freedom and forgave our sins." Amen. **Colossians 1: 9b-14 (NLT).**

Please pray for these congregations and pastors:

- Collinsville Congregation in Collinsville, VA and Pastor Roy McVey
- Columbia Furnace Congregation in Edinburg, VA and Pastors Bill Fitchett and Buster Doman

CBC Prayer Committee