

THE BIG IDEA: When we're focused on one thing, we won't be distracted by everything.

The Take-Off

83% of adults are stressed at work. 90% of adults experienced stress over money in the last month. 1 in 2 adults feel stress over family relationships and over health.

Maybe you hear those stats and could name a few more things that you have juggled or are currently juggling.

While there's nothing inherently wrong with multi-tasking, the truth about multi-tasking is that we become okay at a lot of stuff but never really great at any one thing.

And if we know one thing about God, he's all about being the one thing!

That's the beauty that lies in this month of focus - not that for a month we'd take our eyes off of everything else for a bit, but that for the rest of our lives we'd be challenged to keep what's most important in focus

Here's the Big Idea: we can't do the main thing if we're distracted by everything.

So let's start off this month of focus by asking what should be the main thing and the biggest reason why we stink at doing it.

Sure, that's negative, but I'm positive that it's accurate: we are, as North American believers, failing at the one thing we've been asked to do by the Savior we're following!

1. We're only supposed to do one thing

- a. What's the one thing? Matthew 28:19 - make disciples
- b. Now, as we'll see throughout the month, if we're making disciples, then those disciples will make disciples who will make disciples and so on.
- c. You get the picture, right? This is like an ongoing cycle of disciple making, and so we've got a funny little made up word in our mission statement that sums that whole process up: we want to make disciplers.
- d. Just know that disciplers isn't a word, but it's our word. It means a disciple who makes a disciple.
- e. It means that following Jesus would last more than one generation, right, and yet most of us have a hard enough time making our own discipleship last week to week, don't we?
- f. It begs the question: why are failing so much at the one thing - the ONLY thing - that we were given to do?
- g. Let's peek at an encounter in Mark 8:27-38 and see if we can find an answer.

2. The only game-changing question

- a. Sometimes, the best way to learn a hard lesson is by seeing someone else be tested, and in Mark 8 we find what could be called a "watershed moment" in the life of Peter and the disciples
- b. A watershed moment is a turning point. It's a picture of a ridge that divides the flow of water
- c. Jesus asks his disciples who people think he is, and they answer, but then, in verse 29, he asks the one question that makes this a turning point. "But what about YOU? Who do YOU say that I am?"
- d. Peter's response changed everything, because Peter said to Jesus, "You are the Christ."
- e. We will fail at the one thing we've been called to do as long as we can't answer that question. "Who is Jesus?"
- f. Answers to that question are all over the map, and here's a video to prove it. [Play video]
- g. See how shaky those answers are? Can you imagine trying to teach with confidence something you yourself are unsure of? It would be about as successful as me trying to teach someone how to rebuild a car engine!
- h. But when we're sure - when we have laid to rest any doubt about who Jesus is and have made him Lord - everything changes!

3. God can show himself through us instead of having to show himself to us

- a. One of the craziest things that I found as I prepared this week was this stat: Jesus did 3 times as many miracles before this watershed moment as he did after
- b. I literally counted, and I found 31 miracles before and 11 after
- c. Jesus didn't need to convince the disciples who he was, and he was free to teach them about who he was calling them to be
- d. It was right after Peter's confession that Jesus "began to teach them" about the why he had come and what it meant to follow him
- e. The reality is that none of us are following Jesus if we haven't decided that he is, in fact, Lord.
- f. Not what others think - if that drives us, we'll cater to fads and feelings and culture

- g. And this is how focus gives us resolve
- h. Settling the matter of Jesus as Lord is the only thing that can lay a solid foundation for a lifetime of being a discipler
- i. Going all in on God allows God to pour all into us.
- j. You wonder why your walk with Jesus feels shallow and shaky and on this week and off the next?
- k. He is not Lord.
- l. It doesn't mean you have to be perfect. The Great Commission was given to those who doubted and even after Peter's confession he was used by Satan enough to be rebuked by Jesus.
- m. But when he's Lord, our options get very limited, because we will do what our Lord asks.

4. Focus can set us free

- a. That's how focus can set us free, because focus helps us realize what matters the most.
- b. I've thought about that this weekend.
- c. We celebrate freedom as a nation because our forefathers focused everything they had on one thing: independence from England.
- d. My mom would have been 74 yesterday, and her death was a watershed moment that brought focus to my life about what mattered and a resolve to pursue that more than things that don't matter.
- e. There will always be distractions, but going all in helps us push past all else.

The Landing

And that brings us right back to Peter, standing there with his pals talking and laughing and feeling good about how popular Jesus was growing with the crowds.

"Everyone's saying great things about you, Jesus! Some say a prophet, others even call you Elijah! It's awesome to be a part of this with you!"

I can see Jesus stopping as he walked, and looking Peter in the eye.

I can see Jesus, knowing that he was going to call Peter to a life of discipling all nations by taking up his cross in the same way Jesus would, knowing that there was no way Peter would commit to that based solely on what others thought about him, I can hear Jesus asking, "But what about YOU?"

Church, we are called to make disciples who make disciples. We're called to be near God, near man and all about the process of making disciplers, and it is not a life that you or I will stay true to if we don't resolve fully in our hearts the answer to that question.

If it is anything other than "Jesus, you are Lord," then we will fail simply because we will keep our options open in case we do fail.

But when we agree with Peter that Jesus is the Messiah - literally, the ONLY ONE ANOINTED BY GOD - then in that one watershed moment, we open ourselves up to all that Jesus wants to do in us and through us, and

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