

Keep the Main Thing the Main Thing, and Take the Flack!

➤ = next PowerPoint

➤ Intro:

- combined two sayings:
 - the main thing is to keep the main thing, the main thing
 - if you aren't taking flack, you aren't over the target
 - explain pic, anti aircraft gun, navy ship
- lesson: keep the main thing the main thing, and take the flack

➤ What is the main thing? – keep the main thing, the main thing

- love God, put Him 1st, live by the golden rule
 - **Mk. 12:30-31a** the main thing is love (agape) God and neighbor
 - **1 Jn. 5:1-3** love God and keep commandments, love brethren
- - seek first His kingdom and righteousness
 - **Matt. 6:25-34** don't be anxious about life (food and clothing), seek first God and His righteousness and all these things will be added to us
- - fear God and keep His commandments, this is the whole duty of men
 - **Ec. 12:13** fear God and keep His commandments, for this is the whole duty of man
- - receive Jesus as the authority of your life
 - **Jn. 1:12** receive Jesus (authority of your life), given the right to become child of God
- - worship God in spirit and truth
 - **Jn. 4:23** worship God in spirit and truth (Jn. 17:17)
- - live on earth so you spend eternity in heaven
 - **Rev. 2:10** be faithful until death, and Jesus will give you a crown of life
- the main thing is to keep the main thing the main thing – way of thinking – priorities

- **We don't think like the world** – keep the main thing, the main thing
 - **1 Jn. 2:15-16** we don't live to satisfy the lusts of the flesh
 - **Matt. 16:26** what will it profit if we gain the whole world and forfeit our souls?
- - **Eph. 4:17-19** we don't think the way the world thinks – think different, act different
 - **Eph. 4:20** because we've learned Christ
- **What are some things the world mistakenly makes the main thing?**
 - money, possessions, social status, relationships, unlawful relationships (fornication, adultery)
- **Christians are different** – not like the world – keep the main thing the main thing
 - don't want to be like the world
 - don't try to keep up with the Jones' - piers
 - different dreams, goals, aspirations
- - **illus.: Rich Willis** has been a friend of our's since I preached in Kissimmee, FL, immediately after we were married
 - listen to a Christian man dying of cancer, age 49 – left behind his wife, children, parents, others
 - diagnosed with cancer in 2006, died June 27, 2009, his funeral was 2 weeks ago (7-2-09)
 - Sunday, May 3, 2009, a month before dying, Rich wrote – attitude, what's important
 - “I've been enjoying another week so thick with blessings that once again, I am reminded of how unworthy I am to be the recipient of so much from God, and yet I am so grateful that He continues to notice me and my family, and to supply us with so much more than we need.”
 - June 7th (20 days before dying) Rich preached a sermon at the South Bumby congregation on “Attitude” then offered the invitation
 - background:
 - at this time he was on oxygen full time, and didn't know if he would lose his voice
 - the doctor has already told him and his wife it's “time to get your things in order”
 - Rich's comments about the sermon: – attitude, what's important
 - “I simply have a deep, abiding faith that God is true to his promises, and I know that I have been his humble servant. I hope that as you listen to this and read my posts that you will somehow be moved to be obedient to him as well.”
 - June 27 (day Rich died), two messages Rich had typed on his cancer blog from the hospital room
 - Nancy wrote for Rich – attitude, what's important
 - Rich is making me write 2 sentences. He is strong in the love of God, Christ and his family.
 - Rich's daughter (Aimee) – attitude, what's important
 - “He wanted me to tell you all that he was so thankful for all your prayers, and asks to continue to pray for the family. He also asked for me to include all the blessings I could think of, but I don't know (if, aem) the blog would hold all I could think of.”

- **What's the main thing?** – summary
 - obey God and be His faithful child
 - enjoy God's blessings
 - have a deep abiding faith
 - be strong in the love of God
 - pray to God and be thankful

- **If the doctor told you you'd die next week, what would be most important to you?**
 - **isn't that what should be** important to you today, whether you're dying or not?
 - **what would you do different?**

- **What do your friends say is most important in your life?** – observe your conduct
 - God, church, worship, saving souls through the gospel, working in God's kingdom, helping others, family, friends, recreation, material possessions – **give examples of these**

- **You'll take flak for doing the right things!** – for keeping the main thing the main thing
 - illus. (saying): **If you aren't taking flak, you aren't over the target!**
- - **video: WW2, fighters taking flak (June 1944) (youtube)**
 - **guns firing at planes, when over target take flak**
 - **flack:**
 - 1938, “flack” shortened term of name of German anti-aircraft cannons - exploding shells
 - today called shrapnel
 - today we have flack jackets
 - metaphorically, flack means *harsh criticism*
 - **when we live the right way, we take flak from others**
- - **cost: sword, world hates us** – are you taking flak, paying the cost
 - **Matt. 10:32-36** Jesus came to bring a **sword**
 - **those who don't obey are militant** toward those who believe
 - **Jn. 15:18-19** the world hates us, because it **only loves its own** – not God's
 - **Jn. 3:19-20** those who do evil hate **light** – Jesus, Christians
 - **1 Jn. 3:13** don't be surprised if the world hates you
 - **the flak we take is from people who wish to do us harm** – enemies of the cross, those who hate Jesus
- - **you must lose your life to win** – so the flak can't destroy us
 - **Matt. 16:24-26** lose life to find life
 - **if we no longer live from a worldly standpoint, flak world hurls at us can't destroy us**
 - **Col. 3:5** consider earthly body dead to immortality
- - **you must persevere when taking flak** – not let flak get you down, cause you to turn away from God
 - **Lk. 8:15** good soil hears, holds word fast, bears fruit with **perseverance**
 - **perseverance:** enduring or waiting as a determination of the will, and not simply of necessity
 - **illus.: man holding up a load**
 - **Rom. 2:6-7** (God) judgement, **perseverance in doing good**, seek for glory and honor and immortality
 - **Rom. 2:8** different from **unbelievers** who don't persevere or seek or obey God
 - **not giving up, busy working, not turn back to the world**
- - **you must stay focused of your goal to navigate through the flak** – got to take flak to get to heaven
 - **illus.: Jesus focused on His goal**
 - **age 12** in temple, about Father's business
 - **in garden** determined to drink cup Father gave Him, even if He didn't want to do it personally
 - **illus.: Paul focused on his goal**
 - **slave to all**, became all things to all men to save some (1 Cor. 9:19, 22)
 - **died daily** – recommitted himself every day (1 Cor. 15:31)
 - **illus.: running back**, up the middle, taking flak being hit by other players
 - will not be denied, desire for a touchdown so great it drives him to run through the tackles and score a touchdown
 - **Heb. 12:1b-2** focused on our goal, Jesus, heaven
 - **Rev. 2:10** faithful until death, Jesus gives crown of life
- **we take flack from the world when we keep the most important thing, the most important thing, but the reward is great**
 - **we're successful if** we lose our life for Jesus' sake – persevere – stay focused on the goal

Summary / Inv.

- Are you keeping the main thing, the main thing in your life?
- Is this evidenced by the flak you're taking for doing the right things?
- **inv.:** if the most important thing is not. . . . / if you're not taking the flak. . . .