



The Main Thing

by Kelsey Kotash, Syracuse, New York

Then Jesus asked them, "Which is lawful on the Sabbath: to do good or to do evil, to save life or to kill?" But they remained silent. (Mark 3:4)

It was a Saturday night, on the eve of Easter, when I got a phone call from one of my drummers. I was not able to pick up at the time, but a feeling of dread came over me. "Oh no," I thought. "He's calling to bail on me. He can't bail on me... It's Easter! We have to have drums on Easter!"

I look back on that scene now and chuckle (especially since the cause of my alarm was just a pocket dial). Yet, I'm sure many of us have experienced similar situations and emotions. The main vocalist gets sick. The piano player is a no-show. The soundboard catches on fire (that actually *did* happen at my church!). Whatever the situation, it's easy for us to get our minds and our hearts a bit out of focus. This happens when we don't keep the main thing the main thing.

The well-known worship song, "Heart of Worship" by popular worship leader/songwriter Matt Redman, has quite a story behind it. Frustrated with how apathetic the church had gotten, the pastor of the church got rid of the soundboard and band for a season. The church came together with just their voices until they had regained their focus in worship. Out of this experience came "The Heart of Worship." The church got back to keeping the main thing the main thing.

There are several times in Scripture when Jesus became angry with the Pharisees for how out of focus their thinking was. Once, Jesus healed a man with a shriveled hand on the Sabbath. He asked, "Which is lawful on the Sabbath: to do good or to do evil, to save life or to kill?"

The obvious answer was to do good, right? To heal the man, even if it's on the Sabbath. But not to the Pharisees! This scenario actually resulted in them plotting to kill Jesus! On another Sabbath, Jesus healed a blind man and was met with great resistance from the Pharisees. Their heads and hearts were in the wrong place.

Remember the phone call that made me panic? I realized that my focus was in the wrong place. Instead of the meaning of Easter and celebrating our risen Lord, I was hung up on the possibility of not having a drummer. Perhaps, like me, you sometimes find your head or heart in the wrong place. That person sang the wrong part. There's a typo on the screen. Why aren't people clapping?! If people really love the Lord, then why do they look miserable while we're singing? And on and on it goes. I once heard about a church leadership meeting that went sour over carpet color selection.

Friends, worship is not about whether or not we have a drummer for an Easter service, a typo on the screen, people not clapping, or the color of carpet. As adapted from Robert Burns' "To a Mouse," "The best laid plans of mice and men often go awry." There's no use getting bent out of shape when our plans don't go as we had hoped, because that's not what worship is about. True worship is about choosing to fix our hearts and minds on our Redeemer/King.

Let us not be like the guys in the Bible story above, getting hung up on the wrong things. Instead, let us keep the main thing the main thing: worshiping and serving our Savior and Lord.

Heavenly Father, please forgive us for times when we have gotten off-focus. Help us to check our hearts and our attitudes to make sure that we keep the main thing the main thing by glorifying and honoring You, and You only. Through Jesus we pray. Amen.

GOING DEEPER:

1. Are you willing to share any funny, or even serious, stories in which your focus was in the wrong place?
2. What do you tend to get hung up on with regard to the worship ministry?
3. How can we be sure that our focus is in the right place?