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Are We Distracted from The Main Event?

Our Mission: To present Jesus Christ as Saviour and Lord to business and professional men and to develop Christian business and professional men to carry out the Great Commission.

Why then do we allow ourselves also to be distracted at this time when we ought to focus, and help others focus, on the Main Event - The coming of Jesus the Messiah?

Luke 16.13 observes, no one can serve two masters. For you will hate one and love the other; you will be devoted to one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and be enslaved to money. The Bible has many warnings against the (unholy) pursuit and accumulation of wealth. It is interesting that God observes that our greatest competitor to Him will not be some strange idol from a weird man-made religion but a desire to be wealthy. Why do we want wealth?

Because it represents opportunities for pleasure and comfort! It means the best houses, food, transportation and vacations. Wealth means getting to have all that we want and getting to do all that we want. Pursuing wealth is pursuing the self-centred life. While we often focus on the wealth

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accumulation side of God's warning, the greater issue is failure to take action upon our true purpose for being created. That is, we are made by God for God to serve God as worshippers of God. We cannot serve God well if we are enslaved to the pursuit of wealth.

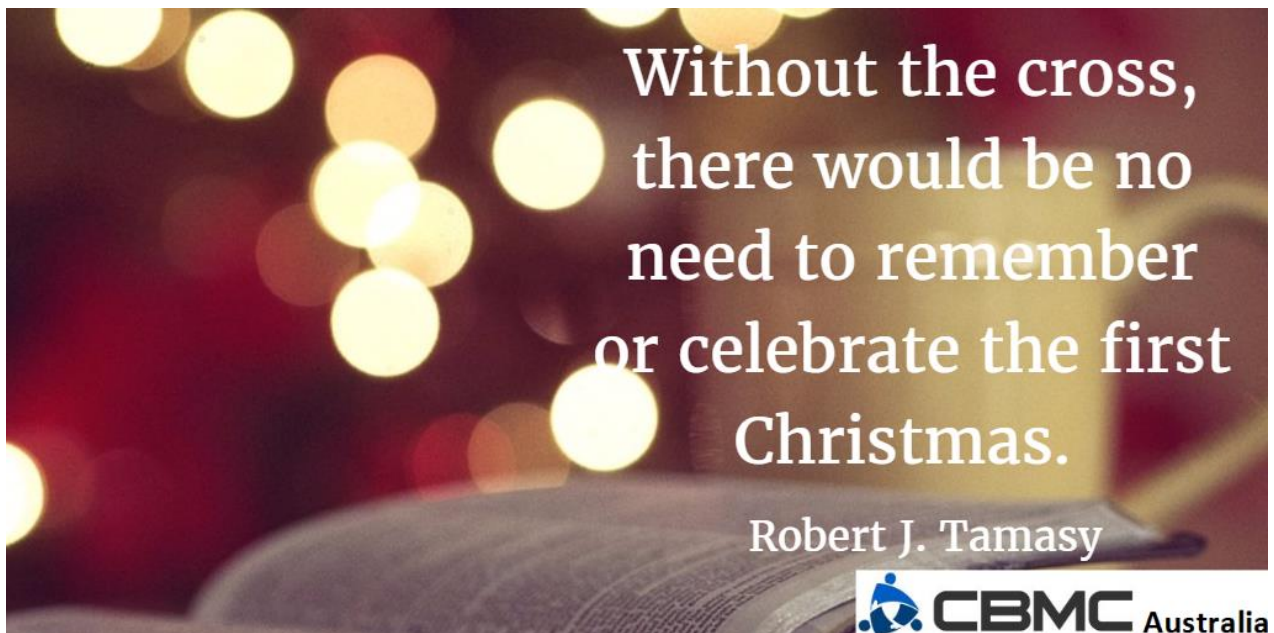
Rather than focusing upon how wealthy we are we should be focusing upon how well we are serving God. How well are we doing? What have we done for Him lately? God invites us to be rich in good deeds for these are what He rewards for all eternity when we spend all eternity with Him and those whom He has adopted. Serving God is not difficult but it does take focus, thought and intention.

We serve God every time we clothe the naked, visit the prisoner, feed the hungry and give drink to the thirsty. We serve God every time we welcome a child into God's world. That is every time we let children know they are valued and loved by God and we help them understand Him as the Creator of all Who has provided every good thing for their benefit.

We serve God when we care for the sick, the elderly and the disabled. We serve God when we help people understand that He is (I Am. Exod.3:14) and that He rewards those who place their faith in Him (John 14:16-17; John 21:31). We serve God when we sacrifice our own time, talent or treasure for the welfare and benefit of another human being. How well are we doing at serving God?

It's God to whom we will give an account for how we lived our lives accumulating enough evidence against us to convict us as His servant? Have we spent our best days on accumulating wealth so that someday we can do the things God wants? Will we then serve Him? How do we know we are guaranteed those 'some-days?' Life is really about loving God by loving people with whatever time, talent and treasure we have today. Tomorrow will take care of itself.

We are to make pursuing God and His kingdom on earth as it is in heaven our greatest concern.
Mike Winter, Marketplace Ambassador Recruiter



The Question posed to me was 'Why be involved in CBMC?'

We could say 'we specialise in making Disciples.'

We could answer something like this : 'To obey Jesus.
He commanded us to love our neighbour.
He commissioned us to go into the world and make disciples.'

Of course these short statements presuppose that we can answer questions like these –
'Why do we follow Jesus?'
'Why do we believe we need to be saved?'
'Why do we believe God's promises regarding Forgiveness, Redemption, and Eternal Life?'

Try as many have, to disprove the resurrection of Jesus from the dead, and have failed, this fact is crucial in our belief that Jesus is who he said he was, the Son of God (truly man), and God the Son (truly God).

The most astounding thing to me is that God, who created the whole universe, has reached out to me, a mere sinful mortal, through the Gospel of Jesus - the completed and perfect work of Jesus, and called me into his forever family. Called to be a joint heir with Jesus! I have been given the role of being Jesus' ambassador, and having the responsibility of continuing his work.

What a significant role! If there was no other way for me to be rescued than for Jesus to leave heaven and be born a defenseless baby here on earth; then to live a perfect life, only to end up being abused, scourged, and crucified, it shows what an important task we have – to make disciples.

Up to this point, our work could be directed through any church or ministry. But our special work area is the Market Place; the area that epitomises the statement 'in the world, but not of the world.' Making disciples and the close cousin – mentoring, are the relational outcomes envisaged in 2Timothy 2: 1-2 “ You then my son, be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus. And the things you have heard me say in the presence of many witnesses entrust to reliable men who will be qualified to teach others.” Or again here “ And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds, not giving up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but encouraging one another – and all the more as you see the Day approaching.” Hebrews 10: 24-25.



Aren't you thankful that the Lord has shown you the harvest field around you?
I trust you continue to thank the Lord Jesus for his generosity in providing our redemption.
Christmas is a time for our focus to be on this generous God, and thank him for providing eternal life. Thank him for giving us a ministry focus. Thank him for all the things he prepared for us to do and for the people in our lives to keep praying for.

Christmas is a time for shalom to be experienced. (And that has nothing to do with Santa!)

May your Christmas be honouring to Jesus and a great celebration of God's faithfulness and generosity.

On behalf of the CBMC Board, I pray the Lord's blessing upon you and your family this Christmas. I look forward in anticipation to walking with you, praying with you, and working in the harvest field with you throughout 2017.

Tony Levick
Chairman

Mentoring across the Generations

By Rev Graham Stanton, Matthew Hale Public Library –December 2016

“... I have been thinking about **Intergenerational Ministry** recently in conversation with Julie Moser, the Diocesan Youth & Children's missionary with the Anglican Diocese of Qu'Appelle in Saskatchewan Canada. Julie works with a number of small Anglican churches with very few young people as members.

At one church she visited, the group of elderly parishioners said they were happy to support her work with young people in other churches, not having any youth ministry of their own; they wouldn't need any training for youth ministry. Not to be dissuaded, Julie asked each of them how many grandchildren they each had. Altogether, this small church of grandparents had over thirty grandchildren.



With a bit of encouragement and training the church members began having conversations with their grandchildren asking them how they were going in their day to day life, reading and talking together about a passage from the Bible and praying for each other. For about an hour (+) once a week / fortnight, these grandparents began discipling their grandchildren. Without realising it, they had become youth leaders. (Learn how to use Skype if you do not already know.)

In reality, Youth Ministry, or any personal ministry, that is serving other people with the Gospel, is essentially about entering a relationship where someone who is already a disciple of Jesus can show another (younger) person what being a disciple of Jesus actually looks like. When the message of the Kingdom is so abundantly fruitful that when it is sown, heard, and accepted, it produces a harvest of thirty, sixty and a hundred fold (Mark 4:3-20) We have a great promise that whatever small work of discipleship we might be able to be involved in, God is at work to draw people to life in his Son through the Holy Spirit. Who do you know that you can talk with about Jesus?”

What is needed most isn't textbooks but 'Text- people'

"What's needed most isn't textbooks but 'Text-people' - because the teacher's personality (Coach/Mentor/Team Leader) is the 'text' that pupils will read and never forget." Abraham Heschel, 'The Spirit of Jewish Education'."

Christian Ministry Alliance's (CMA) new ministry focused on Christians in or approaching their fourth-quarter (Q4 for shorthand) and the churches and ministries who wish to engage them effectively is being formally launched with four one-day conventions, plus a lunch in Launceston, in late February next year. CMA is thrilled to have world class keynote speakers attending, plus we're right now assembling an additional faculty of Australian presenters for each region. Super early-bird registration is now open.

Have you made plans to attend the Q4 Seminar "Faithful for a Lifetime!" in February next year yet?

Yes! – Great, fantastic!! I will want to compare notes afterwards.

No. -Why Not?

Now is the time to plan and prepare. If you wait till mid-February, you will 'miss the boat'.

We in CBMC have been asking you to pray for, and seek younger men to mentor. Another description has been to talk of coaching another person. These names resonate with different people. We ought not to get confused of pedantic about this ministry as from a Christian perspective it is all Discipleship.

At the recent CBMC Board meeting we determined to ask , encourage, or even 'bribe' you to join with us and put aside a day to attend one of these conventions so we may better connect with younger people.

We have to make some change to what we have been doing and a Coaching role may not need excessive amounts of time to be set aside. We do need to meet with these younger people at a time when they are available. [*Read my lips! We are not asking them to come to our prayer breakfast! (Well not yet, and maybe never.) Our prayer is that they gather other younger people to meet with them for that!! What a great result for your Coaching!] We do need to see that their Christian development is vital in the economy of God and to fulfil the 2Tim.2:1-2 imperative: "You then, my son, be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus. And the things you have heard me say in the presence of many witnesses entrust to reliable people who will also be qualified to teach others."*



CMA "Q4" Conventions will be held in:

- Sydney – Feb22;
- Brisbane - Feb24;
- Melbourne – Feb27;
- Launceston 1st March; and
- Adelaide 2nd March.

For more information and to register please go to: <http://www.cma.net.au/q4/> and then advise Trent at our National Office of your registration (maybe a surprise!).

Upcoming Events

Prayer meeting

Regular prayer meeting are held in the following locations

- Victoria
 - Horsham
 - Melbourne CBD
 - Burwood East
 - Warragul
- Queensland
 - Ipswich
- Tasmania
 - Hobart
 - Launceston
 - Scotsdale
 - Ulverstone

Outreach events

New South Wales

- Pennant Hills –

Tasmania

- Devonport – regular outreach events and forums are held

Queensland

- Brisbane
- Camp Hill – group meeting as part of Camp Hill Church of Christ men’s group using Operation Timothy
- Woolloongabba – Korean group meets weekly for breakfast and reflection and regular hold encouragement events

Victoria

- Melbourne Prayer meeting

21st CBMC Asian Convention

We need your help.

To ensure we have the best CBMC Asian Convention we can we need your assistance.

- We need you to pray
- We need you to help with the organizing
- We need you in Brisbane for the event



We need you as CBMC Members and friends to pray for this event.

Pray for insight, wisdom and connections as the organizing team and Board deliberate and plan for this event. We see this as a pivotal event for Australia, where we can invite our friends and colleagues for them to hear first-hand the great work CBMC does around the world. Pray for everyone involved in planning and resourcing this event.

We are one year out from the 21st CBMC Asian Convention. The Australian Board is seeking your daily prayer support so that this event may be planned well, within the required budget, and the work of CBMC throughout Asia (including Australia and New Zealand) will be strengthened bringing honour to our Lord Jesus.

If you would like to join the prayer team please email admin@CBMCAsianConvention.com. And you will be added to the team.

Prayer Points

- Asian CBMC Board meeting in February 2017 in Brisbane
- 21st Asian CBMC Convention in Brisbane in October 2017
- For the Board as they look to plan activity in 2017
- for members to invite a new generation to be involved in CBMC
- for Operation Timothy in Australia, that a new group of Paul's and Timothy's is established in Australia
- for a great Christmas for all our members

Financial Support



Thank you to the members who regularly contribute to the ministry of CBMC across Australia. Your assistance is greatly appreciated in supporting the work we do. As we begin looking to 2017 we realise what your support has enabled over this last year.

We invite others to consider regularly partnering with CBMC as we look to new initiative for 2017. By supporting this ministry you are investing in us by

- Supporting our CBMC staff and volunteers
- Assisting in providing resources to members and guests.
- Increasing our reach and effectiveness



These activities cannot be done without the financial support of our members and friends. We invite you to give a once off gift or a monthly contribution towards the work of CBMC Australia.

You can give your support by:

- Cheque
- Credit Card (securely on our website <http://www.cbmcaustralia.com.au/donations/> or over the phone to our office)
- Bank Transfer (BSB: 083054 Account number: 24 836 1352)
 - Or contact our national office: admin@cbmcaustralia.com.au or call 07 3172 9365

Do we really need Christmas this year?

Whew, what a year! We couldn't wait to get past the election and all of its stress and strife. Maybe the holidays will be better, we thought. Maybe people will be nicer, we hoped. Then came Thanksgiving with the in-laws. Surely another helping of pumpkin pie will cure all that ails us. Now as Black Friday turns into another Monday and the calendar and the world turn the page to December complete with headlines blaring about school violence, election recounts, and dictator passings, one has to wonder, should we bother to pull out the tinsel and garland or just fast-forward to the New Year?

Do we really need another Christmas? We sing the same songs, put up the same tree, and shop for the same socks and sweaters every year. Is the message of peace on earth, good will toward men still relevant? Still possible?

Consider the story behind Christmas. Hollywood would recast Christmas. Joseph's collar is way too blue. Mary is green from inexperience. The couple's star power doesn't match the bill. Too obscure. Too simple. The story warrants some headliners. A square-jawed Joseph. Someone of the Clooney vintage. And Mary needs a beauty mark and glistening teeth. Angelina Jolie-ish. And what about the shepherds? Do they sing? If so, perhaps Bono and U2?

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Hollywood would recast the story.

A civilized person would sanitize it. No person, however poor, should be born in a cow stall. Hay on the floor. Animals on the hay. Don't place the baby in a feed trough; the donkey's nose has been there. Don't wrap the newborn in rags. They smell like sheep. Speaking of smells, watch where you step.

A good public relations firm would move the birth to a big city. See what Roman palaces they might rent, what Greek villas they could lease. The Son of God deserves a royal entry. Less peasant, more pizzazz. Out with the heads of sheep, in with the heads of state. Shouldn't we ticker tape this event? Maybe throw in a little Trump Tower escalator entrance.

But we didn't design the hour. God did. And God was content to enter the world in the presence of sleepy sheep and a wide-eyed carpenter. No spotlights, just candlelight. No crowns, just cows chewing cud.

God made so little of his Son's coming. No hoopla at his birth. Is this a mistake?

Or is this the message?

Perhaps our world, and your life, resembles a Bethlehem stable. Crude in some spots, smelly in others. Not much glamour. Not always neat. People in your circle remind you of stable animals: grazing like sheep, stubborn like donkeys, and that cow in the corner looks a lot like the fellow next door.

The moment Mary touched God's face is the moment God made his case: there is no place he will not go. If he is willing to be born in a barnyard, then expect him to be at work anywhere—bars, bedrooms, boardrooms, and brothels. No place is too common. No person is too hardened. No distance is too far. There is no person he cannot reach. There is no limit to his love. When Christ was born, so was our hope.

Actually, I think we need Christmas more than ever this year.

We could use a season that is dedicated to giving, not receiving; to caring, not critiquing. Put away our differences. Put up the Christmas tree. Take comfort in the familiar story and the ancient carols. Our world, like that of Bethlehem, is difficult and crowded. Our days can feel as cold and uncertain as that midnight manger. Yet, in the midst of it all, let's do what Mary did. Let's invite the source of peace to enter our world. Let's find hope, once more, in the infant King.

God became one of us so we could become one with him. That is the promise of Bethlehem.

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