

blessings for us. But Oh how easy it is for us to make excuses, we've got to do this, we've got to do that. We've got to take care of this. We've got to earn a little more money. It is our duty to earn enough money to take care of ourselves decently. That is our duty. It is our duty to take care of our families in a reasonable way. That is our duty.

But any of these can become an excuse if carried beyond what is normal to interfere with the Lord's work. We had a fine man who graduated some years ago. He became pastor of a fine growing church. There was every reason to think he would do a fine piece of work there. But then his wife had the feeling he should devote a great part of his time to taking care of household affairs. Taking care of fixing things around the house. Taking care of the children under various circumstances. All sorts of things, soon the people of the church became upset. In the end his ministry proved a failure. Not because he gave his family its proper place. Not because he took care of what was necessary but because he allowed it to assume a large place -- larger place than what it should.

God's work must come first if we ~~we~~ are to have the blessing that he ~~wants~~ wants us to have. He said Go into the field and ~~compel~~ them to come in. He wants us to come. He is anxious to compel us to receive the great blessings that He has. We don't know any of us in what way He may use us. We do not know what the gifts are we have. Some folks who seem most promising, and who have such ability that we are sure here is one who is going to go forward and far. In the end he peters out and doesn't accomplish much. Some who don't seem to have much ability as far as you can see, some who appear unpromising, in the end accomplish more for the Lord than many who seem to have far greater gifts.

God knows what His purpose is for each one of us. God wants us to put His purpose first and not to make excuses--even good excuses.

You are all at the beginning of the semester, and you look forward to the end of the semester. How easy it is to think, Oh well exams are months off. The tests are weeks and months off. Let's do this now and we can study the day before exams. We can study the week before exams. We can write that paper the last week. Well, if you get into the ministry and come into the pulpit Sunday morning and you have left your preparation until the last ten minutes you will not last long, or if you do last long because of having unusual fluency in speaking you will not accomplish much for the Lord in any case.

God wants us to avoid the excuses that would allow us to postpone that which we need to do. What we need to do must be to learn to know Him better. How do we know how we are to serve the Lord? How do we know what we're to do in His service? How