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There are many goals that you might take any time, during our lives. There are some, of course, which are tremendously important at all times. What I will speak of today are not necessarily the only important goals, not necessarily the most important, but some of them certainly are, and they are goals which I believe that it would be tremendously helpful for everyone to take it to mind and to heart in thinking about your plans for the coming semester.

Of course, one goes to a school; you take a course and you get a credit, and you take a certain number of credits and you get a degree. Our civilization is degree minded. And you don't get out many years before you find that a degree in itself is not of any tremendous value. There are Ph.D's pumping gasoline at gas stations today. The fact that you get a degree does not guarantee that you will accomplish anything in life. It is a sort of fetish today this degree business. We have to be in line with it. But I think of seminary as an opportunity. You spend 3 or 4 yrs. here and you'll have an opportunity to prepare yourself to serve God effectively.

So I was thinking of four goals which if each one would have them in mind for this semester I think they would get quite a bit of benefit from it.

The first of these I will mention will naturally proceed from Isa.6:1-8. (Reading text . . .)

There are many lessons in these 8 verses, but this morning I am not going to go into them but merely note how important in this section is Isaiah's coming actually to know God. He knew about God before. He had heard a great deal about God. He knew many facts about God. But here he saw God. When he saw Him he realized his own sin. He realized the importance of serving God. He said, Here am I, send me. He came to know God in a way he never had before. That, I would say, is one of the primary goals I would like to set before you this present semester -- to know God.

In the first place we should learn better to know the triune God. In the OT we are constantly reading about God, and some people have the idea, a feeling that this is God the Father in the OT, and that now in the NT we learn about Jesus. That is utterly incorrect. Jesus is God. God is one God. There are three persons in the Godhead, yes. But there is one God. To know God, the triune God, is one of the most important objectives that anyone can have. It is not an objective that you can fulfill in a day, or a month, or a year. In your whole life you can keep on learning to know God better, but it is a goal that each of us should keep in mind. Job said, "I have heard of you before, but now I have seen you with my eyes, and I abhor myself and I repent in dust and ashes." When we actually know God what a tremendous difference it makes in our lives. Do you know God as the Creator? Not just as a theory that all this universe came into existence because God in some way caused it. But God is the one who produced everything you see, everything with which you have contact, the Creator of all things and the One who is ever present in connection with everything that occurs.