

can we know what is most important? There is one way. That is through the study of the Word. Fill our minds with the Word. Get into God's Word and make it a part of us, and God has in it the answer to all our problems, to all the matters in life where we have to make important decisions. Don't put it off.

When I was in seminary I found there were times when I neglected my devotional life. I found there were times when I did not give the attention and time to it that I should. But I made this resolution. I said during the time of tests, during the time of stress and of examinations, then of all times I am not going to allow the devotional life to be pushed off into the background. I never let an exam come or a special task that was just ahead force me to neglect my devotional life. In times of stress particularly we need to truly know the Lord, and have our eyes on Him as we follow Him.

Oh how easy to make excuses. How many of us as the semester comes to the end will think of excuses why we did not grow in grace more than we did. Of excuses why we did not do better in our lessons than we did. Of excuses why we did not make more progress in being trained to make our lives serve the Lord effectively. But let's not make those excuses. Even though they are valid and proper. We can be turned aside to that which is wrong any one of us very easily if we don't keep our eyes on the Lord. Let us not let sin keep us from doing what God wants us to do.

But for most of us that will probably not be the temptation. But the temptation will be to let the proper things, to let these regular parts of life assume a greater part than they should and become excuse from doing our utmost for God. Oh what a banquet the Lord has prepared for those who love Him. What a banquet he has prepared that he wants all of us to partake of. What a banquet he has of good things he has for those who fill their minds with His Word. For those who are determined to put Him first in all things. What a banquet!

But how easy for us to let excuses turn us aside to keep us from getting the utmost that He has for us. Let us pray:

O God our Father we thank you for the banquet you have give us. The banquet of good things. The feast you have prepared for those who love our Lord Jesus Christ. But O our God how commonly we make excuses; how ready we are to put other things -- even good things--in the place of the best things. How ready we are to postpone the things which should be done today until later and make invalid excuses for so doing. We pray our God that you will help us to look forward to that banquet you have prepared, to look to Jesus Christ who gave His life for us, and then to put him first and move forward to make our lives to accomplish the utmost for Him. We ask in Jesus' Name. Amen.