

Next Tuesday is our semi-annual day of prayer. We consider these days of prayer a very important part of the seminary work. I think it's well that we should begin to prepare ahead of time for the day of prayer.

In the Gospel of Luke, ch. 11 we read, "One day Jesus was praying in a certain place. When he had finished, one of his disciples said to him, Lord, teach us to pray, just as John taught his disciples." Lord teach us to pray.

We've had two extremes in this matter being taught today. We have the extreme of those who have a form that they rattle through. There are churches where you go in and hear the Lord's prayer rattled off so rapidly you can hardly catch a word of it. People are just used to going thru it with a kind of mumbo-jumbo, and they don't stop to think of the meaning of the words. It's just a form. Many have reacted strongly against that by going to the opposite extreme, and reminding us that prayer is talking to our Heavenly Father. And we should be able to talk to Him freely and easily. So some go to the extreme of never using special forms for prayer.

I think there's a real blessing and value in both approaches. I don't believe we should neglect one for the sake of the other. Prayer should be spontaneous; it should be from the heart. But we benefit by getting the suggestions of those who have been great prayer-warriors. We benefit by getting our minds filled with the language of Scripture, in order that we may be sure to communicate the wide range of thought and feeling that the Lord wishes us to express.

The disciples noticed how great a part prayer had in Jesus' life. They asked Him to teach them how to pray. We used to have an annual day of prayer. Then we decided it was always so much of a blessing we decided to have it each semester. Then we decided not simply to have a day each semester, but to put it in our catalog and have it specifically planned that far ahead. It is something that should have a definite and important place in our lives.

It is important that you get the head knowledge we are trying to give you here. That is very important. We want you to be able to go to the Word yourself and interpret it. To find in it the treasures that God has for you there. There have been those who have understood the Scripture, who have been able to interpret the original and interpret the theology very thoroughly and fully, yet have been either on the way to hell themselves because it meant nothing whatever in their lives or have been blind leaders of the blind, or have been absolutely useless as far as bringing God's Word to others no matter how much they knew.

God wants us to be able to feel in the very depths of our being the great truths of His Word. He wants us to realize that prayer is a force in the universe. It is a great force.