

How Do You Prepare for a Tough Day?

I have a friend who faithfully exercises nearly every morning before work. Her typical workout is 144 lengths of the YMCA pool, a distance of two miles. On days when she has an early morning meeting or lots on her to-do list she gets started earlier, sometimes arriving at the Y before 6 AM. She doesn't let the busyness of life get in the way of maintaining good health. When she has a lot on her plate she just starts earlier and still accomplishes it all.

The great theologian and Christian reformer Martin Luther had a similar perspective. When Martin Luther anticipated a particularly difficult day, before rushing into his day, he increased his prayer time. He is quoted as saying, *"I have so much to do that I shall spend the first three hours in prayer."* After he felt strengthened by his time with the Lord he was ready to handle whatever came his way that day.



Martin Luther

Many of us would go in the opposite direction. We often make excuses why we couldn't spend more time with God on a difficult day. When we do that we place God lower in our priority list than the tasks at hand or appointments on our calendar. Pretty soon, excuses become the norm and God takes a back seat. We try to handle things ourselves and forget that God is willing to help us through those situations. Martin Luther knew that he needed the extra strength of God on the tough days.

Think back to my friend in the YMCA pool. The result of her faithful, "no excuses" exercise priority, is an exceptional level of fitness and health. She has her priorities right, but not just with her fitness routine. Her highest priority is her faith. Even on days of an extra early swim she has already had her quiet time with God before heading out the door to the Y.

It takes discipline to have your priorities right in the face of monumental tasks. It is part of our hesitancy to give up control. Having God at your side will give you support when you need it the most.

When times get tough, get started earlier. Include both quality and quantity time with your Heavenly Father. Bring Him into your life, especially at the times you need Him the most.



Scripture: *Come near to God and he will come near to you. ... James 4:8).*

Question: How do you build your relationship with God during the busiest and most stressful times of your life?

Prayer: Heavenly Father. Our days are packed with things we need to do. Our days also have stressful situations that challenge us. We pray that we will seek your guidance in advance to help us through the difficult times. Amen.