

# THE BIG ROCKS

An expert on the subject of time management was speaking to a group of business students. He stood in front of these high-powered overachievers, pulled out a one-gallon, wide-mouthed Mason jar, and set it on a table in front of him. Then he produced about a dozen fist-sized rocks and carefully placed them, one at a time, into the jar. When the jar was filled to the top and no more rocks would fit inside, he asked, "Is this jar full?"

Everyone in the class said, "Yes."

Then he said, "Really?" He reached under the table and pulled out a bucket of gravel. Then he dumped some gravel in and shook the jar, causing pieces of gravel to work themselves down into the spaces between the big rocks. Then he asked the group once more, "Is the jar full?"

By this time the class was onto him. "Probably not," one of them answered.

"Good!" he replied. He reached under the table and brought out a bucket of sand. He started dumping the sand in and it went into all the spaces left between the rocks and the gravel. Once more he asked the question, "Is this jar full?"

"No!" the class shouted.

Once again he said, "Good!" Then he grabbed a pitcher of water and began to pour it in until the jar was filled to the brim.

Then he looked up at the class and asked, "What is the point of this illustration?"

One eager beaver raised his hand and said, "The point is, no matter how full your schedule is, if you try really hard you can always fit some more things into it!"

"No," the speaker replied, "that's not the point. The truth this illustration teaches us is this: If you don't put the big rocks in first, you'll never get them in at all."

What are the "big rocks" in your life? Are you putting them in first?

## First Things First

Dear Lord, keep us from having our lives so full of *good* things that we don't have time for the *best*.

Help us not to be so pressured that we put off our time with You. Help us to bask in Your spiritual sunshine, rest in Your arms, drink deeply of Your Word, and inhale of Your Spirit. Help us to seek You most of all—more than any of the other things we enjoy. Help us to remember how You said that without You, we can do nothing (John 15:5), so that we won't have misplaced priorities, but we'll have You, Your love, and Your values in the right place—first!

—David Brandt Berg

You always have time for the things you put first.

## The Bible on Priorities

Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God, and keep His commandments: for this is the whole duty of man (Ecclesiastes 12:13, KJV).

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"Teacher, which is the greatest commandment in the Law?"

Jesus replied: "Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.' This is the first and greatest commandment.

"And the second is like it: 'Love your neighbor as yourself'" (Matthew 22:36–39, NIV).