

Nov. 5, 1924.

15 Chapter of St. John, beginning with verse 12 and reading through the 17.

I want to talk to you just a little bit this morning because some of you do not know Mr. Underwood. Many of you and practically all who were here last year did know him, and it is unfortunate really for those who didn't, that you failed in your life to become acquainted with this character. Sam Underwood, as he was known by his friends, and that's compliment to be known by your given name, was a man who loved human beings. It was because of his love for people that I selected that passage of scripture this morning from the Book of John, where Jesus was talking to his disciples. His burning desire and ambition in life was that he might be of some service to his fellow man. He was not afraid to die. I have never seen any one who faced death, knowing that death was before him, with a great a calm so far as his spiritual life was concerned as Sam did. He was not the least bit afraid to die. He wanted to live that he might be of service, and he told me that if he couldn't get well he didn't want to have a long sickness, but he did want to be of real service to his fellow man. He is one man that I have known in my life who really and truly had through and through the spirit of real service. He had a most enviable outlook on life. I mean by that he had a philosophy of life that made him love people, even those who didn't like him, and he had almost no enemies, and made him want to be of service to people who may have misunderstood his acts, made him really and truly want to do something for every human being he came in contact with. Even in the midst of intense suffering I have seen him laugh even at himself. He had a chill at my home one time, and it was one of the terrific chills he ever had, and while he was shaking he would laugh at himself for shaking, He knew he was sick, he had asked me to get a physician as quickly as possible, He didn't think he was going to die because he was a philosopher. He knew that chills passed off. In his recent illness when he was suffering, and you could tell from the way he looked that he was suffering, he would smile occasionally in the midst of it, and say something that would show you he was still holding his mind not only on himself but on others. Never in my life have I known a person who has given his life so completely in service to his fellow man, and in an effort to make his fellow man better because he, Sam Underwood, had come in touch with him.

I heard him say on one occasion when he was making a talk, this happened to be in the Rotary Club, that when you get to know a man, really to know him, then you will surely become his friend. In other words his friendship was just as wide as his acquaintance with his fellow man.

His burning desire in life was to help, chiefly, the childhood of this state. When he was Supt. of schools in this county, and they were looking for a Supt. in our State capital of Raleigh, after they had talked with him for some time, and had several conferences, I sat down and had a good long talk with him about it. I hated to lose him, I hated for him to leave the county, and to break his association with the college, and he did not want to go, but he said I have got to go to Raleigh, as I see it the greatest task of my life is there, to straighten out the schools in that city and give those people a chance.

I have got to go. He says, I want to come back as soon as I can do that piece of work. He gave up his work ^{here} and went to Raleigh purely because it was his duty. He staid there and for two years and got the entire township, because it's more than just a city, back of him and back of an educational program, and got them to issue bonds to build school houses, and got the building program almost done when he realized that he could not stay any longer without its almost killing him, and he gave up that task and came back to us. He literally sacrificed himself for the children of our state capital. Oh, I don't mean to say that he wouldn't have died at the same time that he did if he hadn't gone. I don't know that, but he went there purely as a sense of duty that he owed to the childhood in that community, and that spirit was the spirit back of this man in practically everything that he did, but he didn't carry to the world the burden of the job, he carried that himself, and he met the world with a smile and a hearty handshake and a pleasant word, and the world that he met helped him to carry the great work that he was engaged in. He was indeed and in truth one of our States's noble men.