

Chapel, October 9, 1925

R.H. Wright, President.

I want to talk to you this morning on the passage of scripture that I read to you a few days ago. It is found in the first chapter of the book of John, the 17th verse -- "For the law was given by Moses, but Grace and Truth came by Jesus Christ."

There is back of every law a spirit. Laws are enacted in our state and Nation to control the outward acts of human business. You cannot make laws to control the motives of a human being, because we can only judge them by their acts. There are certain laws - written and unwritten - that are permanent ; that is, they change not at all, or very infrequently. There are certain social laws, some of them I don't understand, I confess. I don't understand why you have to eat lettuce or lettuce salad with a fork, when you can't cut it with a fork and it is wrong to cut it with anything else. But there are certain social laws that are more or less permanent. I hope that one about lettuce is not. There are certain social relationships that we must conform to, otherwise we put ourselves out of touch with other people with whom we have to deal. I may conform to that given law with one motive and you may conform to the same law with quite a different motive.

Moses is the world's great lawgiver. Moses and those who followed him worked out a splendid scheme of government, and the people followed it, but that form did not put into it the spirit. O, Moses intended that it should. Don't misunderstand me. There was a spirit back of Moses in the making of it, but when it became a law, it became more or less ritualistic, formal, and people simply conformed to it with different motives. Now, the thing that I want to get to you

this morning is this, that back of all we do there is a spirit that prompts us. The spirit of the act, after all, is going to be the thing that Jehovah will judge us by. We must conform to the law. I am not trying to do away with law, don't misunderstand me, but back of it is a spirit that is going to direct you in the way in which you conform or fail to conform to the law. Now, I don't want to be too technical. There are any number of things that are facing the boys and girls of today who are in college, great decisions that you must make because many of those decisions are going to determine the kind of life you are going to live. If you look strictly at the law, the formal outward form, you will not get the guidance that you need, because back down in your life is the spirit that is going to keep right on making itself felt in all that you do. I am a teacher of the fifth grade say and I am having an awful lot of trouble keeping those children quiet. There are certain regulations in the school which say that the child must sit at the desk at a certain time, but he does not sit there and study. He is punching the boy just across the aisle or he is sticking a pin in the one in front of him, or he is doing any one of a number of things, and I come down on him and say "if you don't conform, I am going to send you to the principal of the school and he will settle with you". Is that the way to control that child? No, that will not get you anywhere and it will not have any impression on the development of the character of that child. It is enforcing the law, but it is leaving out the great thing. You must reach down beyond the law into the little life and associate with the motives that are there. Get ahold of the springs of life that are deep down in his soul and make that child realize that you want to help him, that you are here as teacher of this class, not to put the law on him, but to help him to develop the right kind of man or the right kind of woman. If you can go beyond the law into the soul and make every child in your class room realize that you want to be of service to him and that you are interested in that child's well being and that you have faith and confidence in that child, you will soon find that he won't stick the pin in the boy in front of him. He does not want to. That child

will soon find that he wants to study his lesson, that he wants to conform to the law. You have touched the well spring of life, you have put another motive in the law and the child becomes a law abiding citizen, and instead of a source of annoyance and trouble to you he becomes one of your co-workers, and helps you to get the thing done that the law was created to have done. You are giving him grace and truth. You are filling the law full of the right kind of thing. Way down deep in your soul and in mine runs the spirit of your life and of my life and all normal people want to do the right thing. I am going to repeat that because most of us don't believe it - Way down deep in your life and in mine runs the spirit of your life and the spirit of mine, and every normal human being wants to do the right thing. We do not see right and wrong in the same way and a thing may look right one way in my eye and look right another way in your eye, but each of us wants to do the right thing, and if we will go deep enough into the spirit of it, we will find the truth and the truth will be in 99 cases out of 100 the same to you that it is to me.

If I can get you to grasp what I am driving at this morning -- back of the law, under the forms deep down in your life is the spirit that will lead us on to the truth and give us a freedom that we cannot get any other way. It is the spirit that counts, and I hope tomorrow morning to finish this talk that I have outlined for you and make some applications.