

November 2, 1928

I read to you this morning from the fourteenth chapter of the book of Romans. This lesson is rather interesting if we understand the situation. Jesus came into the world as the Messiah and rose from the dead on our Sabbath, the first day of the week. The Jewish Sabbath day is on Saturday according to the old Jewish custom. People disagree about what things are right to do on that day. That is what Paul had in mind when he was talking with these people. One man says I can go out and play golf on Sunday and it does not hurt me and another man says I can go to a ball game and it does not hurt me. Some people in the church do not like the idea of doing these things on Sunday.

Another thing in the lesson today is what people should eat. Most people in America today will eat just what they can get if it is palatable. You remember the old Testament makes provisions for whether things be clean and whether certain things be unclean and that is all right. There had arisen another kind of thing that concerned this new church. People who worshipped idols and made sacrifices to their gods would after they had offered the sacrifice put the meat that was left on the market and sell it and some members of the Christian church went to the market and bought this meat and ate it and they really and truly thought nothing about it. They had even gone to the feasts of the idolaters and ate with them. They knew it was going to be a fine feast and that the meat had been offered to an idol they didn't believe in. And other members of the church would say just watch John Smith, he eats with idolaters and is worshipping idols. Then there were people who believed that they should not eat flesh of animals



at all. They would eat nothing but herbs or nuts off of the trees and there are people like that today. There came up a question in the church of what you should eat and what you should not eat and that is the reason Paul writes to them as he does in today's lesson. If you are a vegetarian then eat the vegetables and give thanks to God and if you eat meat eat it and give thanks to God. And Paul said it makes no difference which you do if you are satisfied in your own conscience that you are doing the right thing.

Back in that time they had a number of slaves or servants as they called them. And then John Smith would get mad with his neighbor over the servants and so they were beginning to fall out with each other and he says the servant is subject to his own master and not to anyone else. In other words, attend to your own business and leave other folk's business alone. How much better this world would be if we all attended to our own business and did not try to run the other fellow's business. And this lesson while it deals in a large part with things temporal, is a good lesson for all of us. Keep your own things straight and your own conscience clean about the things you do. Attend to your own business and leave other people alone. Much of the interesting gossip that goes the rounds and it has always been so comes from the servants in this home to the servants in the other home and then at the club meeting and the card party they begin to say confidentially to each other, had you heard this or that and then the gossip starts. Paul says let the servant alone and attend to your own business and the world would be a great deal happier if everyone would do that.

You are going out of this college to teach the children of North Carolina to be good citizens. Teach them, of course, to be law abiding citizens. Teach them to live the kind of life that they honestly believe that they ought to live. Teach them to attend to their own business and



leave the other fellow's alone. Let them realize that gossip is one of the subtle forms of backbiting and doing one's neighbor an injustice. I believe that the citizens of the nation ought to be taught these things because it is necessary if we want to live in harmony and in love with our fellow man and some of these matters are of as great importance as you can teach them from the text books and from the prescribed courses of study. I do not know whether there has been any gossip in this school this year; I have not heard any but if there is none I take my hat off to you as being the finest bunch of young women in the world. Dont pass everything on that comes to you. Ask yourself the question, "Do I know this thing to be true or did I just hear it?" You can hear anything. Spreading gossip is besmirching character and I for one do not want to be associated with persons who spread gossip. The person that brings gossip to you will take whatever you say and take that gossip to someone else and you will become involved. You did not say what they repeated but you listened and became a part of it. The great majority of folks, old and young, are right minded, the great majority of our people want to do the right thing. It is only now and then that we run across someone who is inherently mean and it does not take but a little while to find them out. If these statements are true, we are thinking more of ourselves and of our fellow students if we look upon their acts with a spirit of love, thinking no evil and being filled with love. It makes life so much happier and so much better. Take the lessons Paul has given us and make them a part of your life.

----Robert H. Wright, President