

February 7. 12 verses of 13th Chapter of the
Book of Exodus.

One day last week I talked to you on the subject of citizenship, and I want to talk again this morning on the same subject, some of the things that the schools can do to help develop the right type of citizenship in America. (There is a tendency in some places to put in a course, a special course in citizenship. I am not sure that a course in citizenship will make ^{good} citizens, but there is one thing that is necessary for a person to be a good citizen of any kind, and that is the individual must have a certain amount of knowledge, a certain amount of information is absolutely necessary for a person to be a good citizen. Now this is especially true with reference to knowledge of the history of one's country. If you want to be a good American citizen you need to know something of the development of the American government; you need to know something of the history of our country, and without that knowledge it seems to me that it is almost impossible for one to be an intelligent citizen. To be a good citizen of North Carolina you need to have some knowledge of the History of North Carolina. To be a good citizen of this county or any other of the 100 co's you need to know something of the history of that county. You need to have a knowledge of the form of government under which you live; you need to know something of its institutions and how the government operates. We call this civil government or civics. It is necessary for you to have a knowledge of how the officers are chosen and what the duties of the officers are; how the laws are made and why certain laws are made, how the laws are executed, how we get the Judges to pass judgment so far as the interpretation of laws is concerned, and also how we select the judges who try the cases to see whether or not a person is guilty or not guilty. In some countries a person is considered guilty if he is in indicted. In our country he is considered innocent until you prove he is guilty. The assumption in this country is in favor of the individual. Knowledge is one of the fundamentals to good citizenship, but that same knowledge may be used by a person to be a poor citizen instead of a good one. In other words one may use his knowledge to evade the law instead of to conform to the law. One may use his knowledge to break the law and appear not to break it. Knowledge is a very dangerous thing if not properly used, so I feel like saying that back of knowledge the real fundamental in good citizenship is not knowledge but the spirit that's back of it. Knowledge is essential but the spirit of the individual back of that knowledge is the determining factor as to why a given individual will be a good citizen or a poor one. Thus in your work in the school it seems to me that one of the essentials is to create the right kind of spirit in the student body, in the child life. Let the children get the knowledge, see that they get it, but see that they approach it with the right kind of ideals, the right kind of standards, the right kind of motive power back of it. That's the thing I am calling the spirit. There is a sense in which the spirit of the school is the real determining factor in the making of good citizens. Now the teacher is a very large factor in creating the spirit of the school. I want to put down as one of the essentials in creating the right kind of spirit or atmosphere as it is some times called, one of the essentials is faith. Now I am not going to preach you a sermon on faith, but faith is certainly one of the determining factors in creating the right kind of spirit. You must have faith in your

children, they will go almost to the limit, they will line up back of almost any kind of thing if the teachers has unlimited faith in them. How do you feel toward a person that you are pretty sure doesn't have faith in you. Will you follow that person very far? No, we American won't. If you believe that that person is absolutely and implicitly trusting you through and through, if you are made to realize that that person confidently expects you to do the right thing, it makes it much more difficult to the wrong thing, and that is true with children, little children. That is true with boys and girls of high school age, especially true at that time. May I give you an observation that I made one time in a high school. We trusted the high schools students, trusted them absolutely. Some of us did and some of us didn't. We tried to make that the spirit of the school. We took the teachers off the corridors, we took them away from the lunch room and so called play room, oh, we didn't make them go away, they had no duties there, but quite often we would see the teachers going through the lunch room with the girls, it was a girls' school, but they were not there to watch the girls, previously two of them had been assigned to stay there and report misconduct on the part of the girls, and they reported some every day, no longer were they to do that, some times they were there and sometimes they were not, and when they were there it was just because they wanted to be. We went further than that, when they gave an examination or test they didn't stay in the room unless they wanted to. Now I had in that school, one teacher who believed it would work and she gave an examination or test on algebra, and she ~~went~~^{wait} out of the room, and she staid out most of the time. These were high school girls, and when she came back, collected the papers, and corrected them, she found that a number of them were just alike, and several of them that were just alike were wrong, and that teacher came in to see me about it, it looked like her heart would break because she didn't expect that, and she says Mr. Wright it is all broken down, and I said no it has not.

but they cheated. I said have you got any faith in them, she says, I don't know. Don't say one word and don't do one thing just let it alone for a day or two and less see what will happen. Don't let them know that you didn't have absolute and implicit confidence in every one. The next day she came into my office and says Mr. Wright 12 girls, I believe it was 12, came and told me that they cheated. Well, I said I am glad they did. I said have you got any faith in them? Then it began to dawn upon her that the faith had shaken, and they were much better citizens for fighting, and those girls couldn't be made to cheat in that teacher's room any time after that, and no other group of girls could. She put on those 12 the punishment that those 12 said put on them. There was another teacher who said she had faith in them, but she said they will cheat if you give them a chance. I said give them a chance, she said they will cheat, then you haven't got a bit of faith in the girls.

So I said go on and give them an examination whenever you get ready and do it in your own way. I went into her room, she happened to have a corner room, and I went in the door in front of the teacher and behind the students

I walked by her desk and said I would like to see you in the office before you go home to-day. She came by, I said, have you read any of those papers on such and such a class? Did any of them get help? She said yes. I don't blame them I would too. You didn't trust those girls at all, and you went further than that you tried to them. I said Miss (calling her by name) those girls have got a little sense too, and I saw you looking through your fingers and watching them, and they saw the same thing I saw. I said you have absolutely no faith in them, and they responded to the faith that you had, that is they didn't have any faith in what you said or did, and they got help if they could, because it was a game between you and between them and they were playing the game, but that good old soul never did see it and the girls continued to get help in her room when they could, and the same girls continued to refuse to get help and furthermore almost ran some of their classmates out who did get help. A clear demonstration to me that if you want to make good citizens you must have faith in those you are teaching, unlimited faith, and those who fail if you have faith in them will struggle back to their feet; and will have backbone and manhood or womanhood enough to come up and acknowledge it, and that's the way to make good citizens. Create in them that high sense of honor that makes them come up and acknowledge their own shortcomings, then you don't need a law.