

October 2, 1929

At our chapel exercises yesterday I spoke to you on some of the things we are trying to do for you. I am going to continue that talk this morning because I want you to realize what we are doing for you.

Among other things I think we should cause that spirit to enter into your life to help you become the best possible teacher. A number of places pay very little attention to the importance of college spirit in college life. I have heard many say that a spirit will grow up in a college and will become a dominant influence in the life of the students. I believe that spirit ought to be built up not by the students alone but by everyone connected with the college.

As President of the college I have one main opportunity to help you build up that spirit. I give a great deal of my time and thought to the things I say to you during the chapel exercises. This is the one place that I can give to you my ideals and aspirations for this college. And for that reason, that is one of the reasons, we require you to attend chapel. There are students in the college who say, "Oh, it does not make any difference whether I go to chapel." A student was in my office this summer. She was bemoaning the fact that she had not gotten a place to teach. I asked her about her record. She said it was all right except for absences. She said one of my teachers failed me for no other reason than because I was absent. I said, young lady, if I were a superintendent looking for a teacher and your record shows what it does I would not hire you. I know a certain business college in another state. It is operated by a native North Carolinian. He started that college after that city had had a tremendous fire. He had been working for another business college and he opened the college with himself and his wife as teachers and one student and he had as his slogan, "It pays to attend a good school". He required that one student and

when his student body got larger and it did get larger, he required them to be on time. The doors of the college were opened fifteen minutes before nine. He said, "You may come as early as you care if you can get in but if you come one minute late you will have to go home." Well, he sent a number of students away and they missed a day of instruction which they had paid for. I do not know how much he is worth today but I think \$100,000.00 would be a conservative estimate. He now operates his college in a large building and uses all of the building. He required his students to meet every obligation of the college. The result was that when they went into the business world they met the obligations of the business world. Many business offices waited for him to train people to work for them. I know this to be so. He got a spirit in his school that made his business college one of the leading business colleges of this country. It was the spirit that that man and his wife along with other members of the faculty after the college grew, it was the spirit they put into it that made it a success. That is just as true of a teachers college or of a denominational college as it is a business college.

You and I meet here with all of the teachers and officers of this place to create a spirit that will make East Carolina Teachers College a better college than it is today. I am proud of the spirit of our school. It is a wonderful spirit. Woodrow Wilson on one occasion in my presence when he was President of Princeton said that he sometimes believed that the students of Princeton underwent the hardships of the college work for the benefits that they got from associating with each other in college. In substance he said that he believed that one of the biggest things in Princeton University was the spirit that went into the lives of the students who went there. One of the biggest things in East Carolina Teachers College is the spirit that goes into this state from this student body. You are going back out into North Carolina and other states to teach and to the spirit that you carry with you into your school that is going to have a great deal

to do with your success or your failure. If you go into a school to find fault and complain you will be a failure. You will be like the young married man when he said constantly to his bride, "You cannot cook like Mother did." That was not the way to get his wife to cook good. You enter into a school to teach and it is not going to be like the school system you came from, of course, and it is not going to be like the college where you got your training. Carry with you a spirit of service to enter into and help make the spirit of that school what it ought to be. Give those in authority your undivided support. Wait until the opportune time then go and have a talk if you think things are not right. Remember the quotation I gave you the other day:

"A good thing to remember,
And a better thing to do.
Is to work with the construction gang,
And not the wrecking crew."

A lot of folks in this world think they can make a great name for themselves by tearing down all that human society has built up. They are members of the wrecking crew.

I hope this year that the splendid spirit we have had will become even broader and that its influence will reach out to every student who comes to college here.

There is one other thing that is always a burden on my heart. Almost every year there is some one, two or three, sometimes more who absolutely rebel against the spirit of the school, who absolutely rebel against the regulations of the college, who stand right on the border line and step over each chance they get. They think that nobody will see them. They think they can get by and they do get by quite often and after a while they step over and are caught and then it is too late. Then they are brought up before the student government association and then the faculty and with regrets we have to ask that they go home

and then they weep and say, "It will kill Mother. I just cant stand it." Young friends, the time to think about that is now. The time to think about that is before you do this thing. It is the fool who thinks he can stand in the way of progress and stop it. Dont join the wrecking crew for if you do, it will wreck you.

You are making your associations, you are selecting your friends, you are picking those who are going to influence your life and you in turn are going to influence theirs. If you are picking those who want to stand on the border line, my advice is to withdraw from school now because the chances are that we will have to send you home. I was on the train several years ago and we passed by a certain college that was co-educational. The students would come down to a certain place and get right on the curb then someone would come by and push them over. I found out later that this was the dead line and if you voluntarily stepped over this line you were sent home but if you were pushed across you wouldn't be. It would have been a good thing if the President of that school had seen this and sent them all home. There are persons who want to stand on the border line and some day they will step over. Dont join that crew.

Robert H. Wright, President
East Carolina Teachers College

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