

Papers

Chapel, January 16, 1930

RMW

--President Wright

Scripture reading: 33rd Psalm

I want to carry on the thought we had in our lesson yesterday in Chapel, and to give you just a little conception of what is going on in our own state.

North Carolina is worth, in round numbers, approximately five billion dollars. That is the estimate of the total wealth of this state. North Carolina has an indebtedness, that is, all indebtedness, county, municipal, etc., that is between five and six million dollars. That means that our indebtedness is a large per cent of our total wealth. And that explains, in part, why taxation is so very high in our state. Of course, approximately two hundred million dollars of ~~our~~ indebtedness in our state is for public highways, and that is taken care of by gasoline tax.

The thing that is interesting to me is that a very large per cent of this indebtedness in our state is for the material advancement and only a comparatively small per cent of that indebtedness is for things leading toward the spiritual life; toward the uplifting of our people; toward the education of the children and young men and young women of our state. The general impression that is created is that schools are the thing that is putting North Carolina in such a condition financially. This is not correct. "You cannot serve God and Mammon" and those who are doing so will constantly find excuses for the thing they have done. "Blessed is that Nation whose ^{God is the Lord} ~~Law is God~~". We need to come to a realization of the situation as it really is. We need to come to a realization of the fact that ~~that~~ we have been materialists,

for a long, long time, and that we have neglected exceedingly the spiritual side of our people. Three years ago this spring I went before the Appropriation Committee and requested that they make a larger appropriation for the enlargement of this college, because the money to be spent here was for the training of young women, primarily young women, to go back into the state and educate the children of our state; and I placed my plea with those people on the basis that the debts that we are now creating are going to have to be paid by the children who are in school today. And I cautioned the joint committee that the time would soon come when we would have such a large debt we would not be able to appropriate funds to educate the children of our state.

On some of them it made an impression, and they told me afterward that I was right about it, but they didn't see any way to get the money. They proceeded at once to appropriate several million dollars for the material satisfaction of our people. There is no question about it--we have been materialists. I am not a preacher, and I do not wish to preach, but any person who studies the movement of human affairs, any person who studies world movements, any person who goes back into the annals of history and studies nation after nation will realize that Jehovah has so organized humanity that progress comes to those who are developing the spiritual. Looked at from the standpoint of material gain only it will pay people to develop the spiritual side--those things that will lead to a higher and better life.

I realize we are a young nation. We had to build from the beginning. There was nothing here but nature. Forests had to be cleared. Homes and schools and towns had to be built. Railroads and other roads had to be constructed. Churches had to be built. We have done this in a large way, and we have been materialists from the very beginning.

We have reached a point in our national history when we must turn to the other side of life if we hope to make our nation secure. The time has come when we must all work together if we are to make our nation secure. Whether we are Jews or Christians makes no difference. We all worship Jehovah, and God is a God who rules over the nations of the world. And as I see it we must put rather more emphasis on those things that are not material; those things that lead to a higher life--higher in soul, higher in relation to fellowmen.

There is a tremendously large task facing the teacher of today. Our people in North Carolina are determined to give their children an education. There is no question about that. That opportunity is going to come to those children through what you and I do. We must get our people to realize that that after all the big debt hanging over them is not a debt for the education of our children but a debt brought on because of the attitude of our people toward material things--and because we have been worshiping Mammon instead of God.

Take this nation as a whole, and only a fraction over two percent of our total expenditures are for the spiritual development of life. Over 80% is spent because of war, and wars come to the nations of the world because we have not followed Jehovah; because we have not been quite the kind of people we should have been. For the first time, it seems to me, in the history of the world, people are beginning to realize this.

There is a reaction against expenditure of so much money; against heavy taxation. And it strikes schools first. The cry is raised against the next generation, the helpless children of today. We want to get a thorough conception of our obligation to the state, the nation, and

R. H. W. Chapel 4

above all to Jehovah as the ruler of the universe.

I have wanted to ~~call~~^{throw} out these thoughts to you, young people.
Agree with me, or not. It doesn't make much difference, but it does
make a great deal of difference whether you think about them, or not.
Find the truth, and the truth will make us free.