

(Ralls)

Chapel May 1, 1930

-- President Wright

Scripture reading: Sixteen verses from Matthew 20.

I have read in your hearing this morning a passage of scripture I want to talk to you about because people today are like they were at that time when Jesus was teaching them to understand the kingdom of Heaven. In this story that Jesus gave to illustrate it doesn't look like, on the face of it, that the people were treated fairly; as the world views this kind of thing he didn't give them a square deal. He went out to the market place where people assembled at that time that wanted to work--to be employed-- and told them to go out and go to work and he would pay them a penny a day for work in his vineyard. This was a Roman coin worth about sixteen cents. These people went out and went to work--they accepted the contract. About three hours later he went out again and did the same thing. Then again about the ninth hour he went out and told some others to go to work in his vineyard and he would pay them whatever was right. About the eleventh hour ^{again} and went out and found others standing idle and told them the same thing. This was only about an hour before the whistle blew or the bell rang or whatever the signal was to stop work for the day.

When the day was over the steward was told to go out and pay each one a penny apiece, beginning with those who worked only an hour. Those who had worked only an hour were very much surprised to get a penny--a full day's wages. Those who had been out three, six, and nine

hours received the same. Then those who had been working nine hours began to say "It isn't right. Here we have been at work all day and have borne the heat of the day and over yonder is a bunch of folks who have just worked one hour getting as much as we are getting". I wonder how you would have felt about it, wonder if you wouldn't have felt just the same way they felt. He said to them, it is my money and am I not paying you what I promised, what you promised to work for? And then he said "So the last shall be first, and first last: for many be called, but few chosen." And they didn't understand him, and many today do not grasp his meaning, because we do not understand what the kingdom of Heaven is like. God's kingdom, so far as this earth is concerned is in the hearts of human beings and when you enter into the kingdom you enter into the fulness of it whether you enter it way on toward the sunset of life or whether you enter into it in the earlier years of life--in your youth. When you enter into the kingdom you enter into it with all the benefits that come. When you realize fully all the significance of the spirit life you enter into it fully whether it be the first hour in the morning or last hour in the day you enter into the fulness of that life. Jesus was trying to get this over to these people, trying to show them what that kingdom is and they couldn't grasp it because they were absorbed in things temporal. I am wondering if you and I, people of today, are not quite often absorbed in things temporal so that we fail to see the things lying right before us.

I wonder if the people in North Carolina who are spending millions and millions of dollars annually for all kinds of things see the significance of spending only 13.4% for the education of the boys and girls of our

state. I wonder if we realize the significance of bringing people into the fullness of the spirit life. Young friends, it is the most important thing in human life.

I believe in subject matter and in acquiring knowledge; I believe in going to school and getting knowledge and information that will be of service not only in making a living but in making a better life; I believe it is a person's duty to save something out of his salary, to lay up something against the day that may come when he will need it; believe in doing things temporal and making provision for the body but our security lies not in the temporal but in the spiritual life. Those who enter into it early get much more out of life; temporal existence on this earth is worth much more to them, life is fuller and more complete.

I don't know that we do this much today but a few years ago we had to wait and wait for trains-- trains that were late ten, twenty or fifty minutes. To me about the hardest work on this earth is waiting-- doing nothing. Those men who were waiting there for eleven hours for a job had a harder time than the ones who went out to work early in the morning. There is more joy and satisfaction for those who enter into the spirit life early than for those who wait. The ^{was the} thing the Master was trying to teach those people and they couldn't see it, couldn't grasp it. The call was for many, but only a few got it. "Many are called but few are chosen." Many have the truth before them but only a few accept it. How fortunate are those few who have accepted it early in life, and are living the fuller, spiritual life, for one can't live the full life without living a spiritual life; it is utterly impossible. Jesus realized that. Jesus came not to destroy, but to fulfill, and in that particular case fulfill means to fill full with the spirit that makes life complete.

That is what he was trying to teach those people. Few of them saw it. May you be more fortunate--may many of you see it!