

CHAPEL October 16, 1930

-- President Wright

Scripture reading: Thirty-seventh Psalm, Verses 1-11

I was talking with a rather interesting young business man recently about Sunday School and Churches, and he said that when he was a boy he swore off from going to Sunday School, said that they made it so miserable for him that he swore that when he was old enough to control his own actions he would never go to Sunday School again. I don't want to make it so hot for you in here (Please turn off the heat in those radiators near you) that you won't want to come, that you will go away saying that you are glad you don't have to go to Chapel any more. I only want to bring you some message that will be of help to you.

I chose this passage of scripture deliberately this morning because it seems to me that it follows so satisfactorily the subject we had Tuesday morning. You remember what we said about trying to get away from God and couldn't do it, and what it would mean if each one could realize that in his daily life. This first verse was quoted to me during the second year of my teaching experience, out from college. The first year I was principal of the school and the second year I wasn't. I moved to a privately owned school that had two men who headed the institution. One of them was not only a very wise man but a philosopher. He was talking with me about the misconduct of two or three boys that was worrying me considerably--considerably more than it should have, perhaps, for I was digging deeper and deeper into it and probably getting farther and farther from the truth. This old Professor said to me "Professor"--as he always called me--"there is a passage of scripture that would do you good. 'Fret not thyself because of evil doers'."

That has entered into my life and thoughts many times, and more than one time in life has it saved me from doing things that wouldn't have been wise, or from carrying the burdens of other people, when I couldn't have carried them. "Fret" means to tear. It is a good old Anglo-Saxon word meaning to tear and when you are fretting you are literally tearing your self "because of evil doers". We are going to have them always, and because X sins is no reason why you should feel guilty. I went through a period when I felt mean because of the meanness of a few bad boys in the dormitory in which I was in charge. I should have met them on the square and said, "All right, boys, go ahead and do what you want to. I'll report it in the morning and you can take your punishment. I'm going to bed now." But I wouldn't do that; I was carrying their burden because of their meanness. I don't know what was the matter with my conscience that it was worrying me--don't ask me why I did it, but the world is full of people like that. You will see them everywhere "fretting because of evil doers". When you find the facts of the case, see what goes on in your school do you stop there? You ought to. Nine tenths of the people will not. Then there is that other class that dig into gossip of the place and roll it as a sweet morsel in their mouths, tearing their hearts out to find something wrong. Such people are like certain large black birds in our contry flying around hunting for the same thing as the people who delight themselves in making the most of unsavory things.

You are not going to be able to carry the whole world on your shoulders when you go out to teach, you won't be able to make every crooked tree grow straight, every child have the same ideals and standards you have, to make every parent see things as you do; you are going to run into a world that is different and that won't harmonize with your ideas. "Fret not theyself

because of evil doers" and I am going to add "Don't dabble into other people's business. The world is not going to look at things like I do, and I'm glad of it, but it took me a long time to reach that point. I am glad the youth of today is different, glad that the people coming into this new era of improved conditions--and it is an era of improved conditions, in spite of all you may hear to the contrary--have a different view from the one I had. I have never been up in an airplane yet--just cranky, I suppose--. I'm like the ducky that said he didn't want to join the navy, but would rather be in the army so that when the General said Run, Boys, Run! he could obey orders. I am not opposed to these improvements but I prefer to make my adjustments at a lower altitude, about sea level, in fact. And do you happen to know where Sea Level is? It is a little town.

I hope this will be of as much service to you as it has been to me. You owe certain obligations and these you must meet, and you must also go that second mile, but even then things will take place that will not be satisfactory, but "fret not yourself". I am not going to make a talk any time soon on gossip, but women have credit for being universally fond of and greedy for gossip and men are just as bad as women. "Have you heard?" "They say" "Did you hear that -----" No, thank Goodness, and I don't want to hear it! When you are out teaching get the facts in any case so far as they concern your responsibilities, and stop there. Don't try to find out things that are not your business. I haven't one particle of respect for a gossip monger, not that I'm taking their sins on my shoulders, but I simply don't want to be associated with that kind of person.

Shoulder your own burdens, and good luck to you.