

CHAPEL, January 11, 1933

--President Wright

Scripture reading: 11 Verses, First Chapter of St. Mark

I have started this morning to read to you the Book of Mark, because the International Sunday School lesson deals with this book, and will continue to deal with it for some time. I hope that I may from time to time add something to the study of this book that will be of some help to you. Mark wrote the first of the four gospels. This is the first attempt at writing the life of Christ. It was written about A. D. 70, and we have no record that he had any notes other than the notes he had taken from Peter, and do not even know that he had made notes. Mark was not one of the twelve disciples. He probably is the young man referred to in connection with the last supper. He started out on one occasion on a journey with Paul, but turned back. Paul got mad about it, but later was reconciled to Mark, and it is probable that he was with <sup>Mark</sup> ~~Mark~~ at the end of his life.

Mark does not give us any of the earlier life of Jesus. He was convinced that this man Jesus was the Messiah that the Jews were looking forward to and he wrote this book in an endeavor to convince the Jews and others, but primarily the Jews, that Jesus is the Christ, or Messiah. That seems to be Mark's object in writing this book. He himself was quite sure that Jesus was the Christ and he wanted to get his people to realize that fact and so he compiled this history of the life of Jesus. The other gospels that were written later evidently--the gospels show this--evidently took this <sup>one</sup> as a basis. We know when we stop to think about it that it was impossible for Mark who was not one of the twelve disciples, who did not come in daily contact with Jesus while He was living, to sit down nearly forty years later and write the life of Jesus primarily from what he remembered. It is expect~~ing~~ing more than a human being can do to expect him to give all the events in the life of Jesus from his own experiences, from what he remembered and from what others said.

In our study of the gospels it would be very helpful to us if we could understand the time and circumstances that brought about the writing of the various books that comprise what we call the Bible. Mark seems to have been remarkably active. He must have either made notes or had a wonderful memory. He tells the story a little shortened, sometimes covering a long period of time in just a few sentences. Remember he is writing this not to give a detailed life of Jesus but to bring out essential facts in the life of Jesus that go to show that Jesus is the Messiah. If you keep that in mind in this study it will be very helpful to you; it has been to me. If Jesus is the Messiah, and Mark is perfectly sure that he is, then what are the things that a writer about 70 A. D. should say about this man to convince the Jews that the Messiah has come? Mark is trying to pick out those things and give them to his people to prove his thesis. I do not know that it is entirely accurate, but I do know it is expecting a lot of a man to put the events in the order in which they occurred that long afterward, and Mark probably hasn't done it.

A study of this book is going to be a great help to any human being who wants to order his life in keeping with the fundamental principles of this great book, the one we call the Bible.