

CHAPEL, January 28, 1933

-- President Wright

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Scripture lesson: Mark II, Verses 5-12

I hope you are reading the papers every day. Read Will Rogers today. It is interesting to see what he tells us happened to the Lamé Ducks in Congress and to the scientists known as technocrats. The State of North Carolina is unquestionably going through one of its most critical periods. No one knows now what the outcome will be. For the first time, I believe, in the history of the state, people who are going to the state capital to lobby are required to register, so that people will know what they are representing.

The Sunday School lesson we have read this morning is most interesting. Here we see a sick person, a person who has palsy, probably paralyzed, since he was being carried on a stretcher or bed. The people who carried him couldn't get to Jesus with him through the crowd, so they took him up on the roof and broke through and let him down in front of Jesus. Jesus saw their faith and the faith of the afflicted man and said "Thy sins be forgiven thee." If you had a famous minister in your midst and he said to some sick person in Church "Thy sins be forgiven thee" I wonder what you would think, how you would feel about it. These Pharisees said, Who can forgive sins but God? I am not sure I would not have said the same thing. Many said, that man is queer. To understand scripture we must understand public opinion at the time the thing took place. It was thought at that time that a disease was the result of some kind of sin ~~committed~~. These people firmly believed that. Jesus had to take all that into consideration. Any teacher or great leader must understand where people are in their thinking, in their mental attitude. This person didn't have faith in anyone's ability to heal him unless the cause of the disease was removed. The first thing Jesus did was to give that man cause to have faith. He said, Your sins are forgiven. If his sins were



forgiven the man saw no reason why he shouldn't be made whole. Jesus knew what the Pharisees were thinking. He said, I have told this man his sins were forgiven and I am going to show you I have that power. He said, Take up thy bed and walk. And immediately the man was whole. Jesus rewarded his faith. People were doumbfounded, they had never seen anything like this happen before. Let's go back farther in our thinking. Jesus was the Messiah. The Pharisees didn't believe it. They believed if a person was sick it was because of sin. Jesus demonstrated to them that He was the long-looked for Messiah. This was worked out on the logic of the Pharisees; worked out on the ideas of the day. He demonstrated to the keepers of the law, the close students of the law that He was the Messiah.