

CHAPEL, February 8, 1933

PMW

-- President Wright

Scripture lesson: Mark, third chapter, Verses 13-21

There is one lesson I wish to draw for you from the scripture lesson I read in your hearing this morning. This is the lesson of the twelve apostles. We are told ^{by Luke & believe} Jesus went up onto the mountain and prayed all night and in the morning selected twelve. We know that four of them were engaged in fishing; one was, or had been, a collector of customs for the Roman government. This of course made him very much despised by the Jews. His name was Levi, but he is spoken of by the other name he bears, Matthew. Of these twelve two wrote the life of Christ. The other two gospels that give us the life of Christ were written by other people. Matthew and John wrote the story of his life and work.

We do not know very much about these folks. James and John were called the Sons of Thunder, probably because they were so high tempered, though we don't see it in anything they wrote. Simon, called Peter, was an exceedingly impulsive creature. We know something about John, little about Matthew and little about James. Now why do we not know about the others? Did they work? We do know something, of course, about Judas Iscariot, who betrayed the Master and we know how he died. But we know nothing about the others? I wonder if there isn't something fundamental in the fact that we do not know anything about them? In the span of one human lifetime these folks spread this new religion, through others, all over Palestine, Asia Minor, across into Europe to the city of Rome, and all this in just a short time. And yet the folks who did this are almost unknown to us, I mean they are not known individually. They submerged themselves for the cause. That's the point I want to get before you this morning. They were so absorbed in the work they were doing they had no time for personal advertising. To bring it down to our day,

their names wouldn't have been on the front pages of the newspapers; there were no great headlines about the men doing this work. So completely absorbed in the spirit of the thing they were doing they didn't want any publicity, they gave their lives to the cause. It is a wonderful thing in this life of ours if we can join a cause that is so great we can lose our lives for the sake of the cause. There are many hundreds of school teachers in North Carolina today whose names we do not know that are so absorbed in the work they are doing they have lost their lives in their work, and it is those who are doing the real work for the children in North Carolina; not those whose names you see on the pages of newspapers, but those teachers who are so interested in what they are doing they are giving their lives for the work's sake. You cannot find your life, in the truest sense, until you lose it in a great cause. Jesus taught people that. If you find your life you must lose it. It is the spirit of the individual that makes the individual willing, yes, anxious not to be known personally in the matter but to carry on for the sake of the cause, the spirit of a great purpose in life, that gives life its true purpose, its true reality. Some day we are going to fill the schools and churches of all denominations with the spirit for the cause's sake that is going to make the cause successful and that will bring the maximum of success to the individual.

I have been noticing headlines for the last ten years, making mental notes, and sometimes actual notes, about people in these United States of ours whose names are constantly on the front pages of the newspapers and more of those folks have gone down in disgrace than have lived to make great names for themselves. I know a judge in one of the western states who made a name for himself, whose name was on the front page of local newspapers even here on the Atlantic coast; stories of the wonderful work he was doing were read everywhere. Today all right-minded citizens in America are ashamed of that man and what he did. When I was living in Baltimore there was a certain individual there who was very prominent in social work in the community.

whose name was on the front pages of the newspapers almost daily. The last time it was there because he was disgraced because of his conduct. I do not mean that every person whose name is on the front page of the newspapers is a crook--far from it. Some of our best men are constantly in the limelight. But a great many are working not for the cause but for self-advertisement, and wind up in disgrace. Those who are willing to give their lives for the work may have a great deal of publicity. Paul had, and Paul was sacrificing his life for the sake of the cause, and Paul was the world's greatest missionary. He was very much advertised and is today. But at least nine of these disciples we know nothing about. They quietly gave their lives for the cause and by that sacrifice they made the religion of the Messiah one of the dominant religions of the world today.