

CHAPEL, February 11, 1933

-- President Wright

Scripture lesson: 9 Verses from the 4th Book of Mark

It isn't often that I call special attento to something printed in the newspapers, but I am going to ask all of you who get a chance to see a News and Observer today to read what Mr. Pou said in Congress yesterday. Mr. Pou is one of the older members of Congress. His health has been poor for some time. He makes a statement that shows the whole world that there is at least one man in the United States Congress who is a patriot. The article is well worth reading. Our Democracy is the type of government that in its final analysis rests on the heads of the people. The kind of folks that we select to make our laws are the people responsible for the condition we find ourselves in so far as the United States Congress can affect it. In a Democratic government we want people to discuss things, discuss our problems. We want people to debate questions. We want people to make just as many friends for their side as they can make in an honorable way. But when a point is finally decided, a question is finally settled, then to be a good citizen, even though you may not agree with what is done, to be a good citizen it is necessary for you to support the law. That's the place where it looks today like our republic, or democratic form of government is going to fall down. It took a long, long time to bring about prohibition, a long, long time to bring about universal education; it has taken a long time in our country to bring about a great many things for the good of the people. If the opposition has enacted a law you are not a good citizen unless you obey that law, but you can fight to have it changed. There seems to be a tendency in our country to disregard the truth but to go out and spread propaganda that, in truth, is not the truth. People do spread propaganda erroneously. Such people, absolutely, are bad citizens. They are not unmoral, they are immoral. We need, probably more than any other nation, on the face of the earth, to develop a citizenship of fair-minded folks; a citizenship willing to weigh every proposition

made and to hunt for the truth, and then stand for that truth. There are too few people today who will do that. Too many people have a preconceived idea and then search for data to prove that their idea is correct. A lot of folks study the Bible in just that way. They say, I believe this, and then turn the sacred pages to prove what they want to. You can prove anything by the Bible if you take part here and part there, and put it together. Sam Jones' answer to people who did this was taken from the Bible. He did the same thing, and said "Go hang thyself. Whatsoever thou ^{doest} ~~do~~, do quickly."

To understand scripture we must be familiar with the circumstances, know something of the manners and customs of the people at the time the writer is telling of. Why, I read in your hearing this morning that Jesus went out and sat down in the sea. As a matter of fact, ~~He~~ sat down in the boat. The Bible says "~~so~~He entered into a ship and sat in the sea". At that time when someone talked to a crowd of people he sat as he lectured instead of standing. The Rabbis that delivered what we now call sermons sat as they delivered their sermons. We should know that before we can understand fully the Bible lesson I read this morning,

To be a fair minded citizen, to be an efficient teacher, it is necessary for you to acquaint yourself with a multitude of things you do not actually teach in the classroom. Fair-mindedness is one of the crying needs in the school room today because fair-mindedness is one of the crying needs in America today.