

CHAPEL, October 24, 1933

*Wright*

-- President Wright

Scripture lesson: 8 verses from the 13th chapter Book of Romans

The scripture lesson this morning gives us a good lesson in civics; it gives us an understanding that those in authority are after all ministers of Jehovah, and that we should do our part as good citizens.

I want to talk to you this morning about an election that will be held in our state two weeks from today. Our government is so organized that the people have a say in all fundamental questions of government. The laws are executed by administrators selected by a vote of the people; the laws are judged by judges selected by a vote of the people; not all the judges, however, are selected that way. This government of ours has arranged two ways by which the fundamental law, and that is the constitution, may be changed. Our constitution may be changed by a two-thirds vote of each House of the Federal Government, that is, the Senate and the House of Representatives, and 36 states. A proposed amendment may be made in either House, and that is the way our constitution has been changed up to this time. If the people of the United States want an amendment to the constitution that Congress, which includes the Senate and the House, will not propose, then two-thirds of the states, through their legislation may propose an amendment to the constitution, and then it takes the same form as if proposed by Congress. Congress has proposed an amendment that will repeal the eighteenth amendment to our constitution. They have told the people to pass on this question by constitutional convention. This is the first time in the history of the Republic that an amendment is to be made, or attempted to be made, by constitutional conventions. It takes three-fourths of the states to ratify any proposed amendment and make it become an amendment to our constitution. In this constitutional convention we are to vote on November seventh it is left with the individual states to determine how many people shall be chosen as members of this convention, and it takes only a majority vote of the members of that convention



to adopt or kill the amendment--it does not take a two-thirds vote. The State of North Carolina has determined that we shall have as many delegates to this constitutional convention, if held, as we have members in the Lower House, our legislative body known as the House of Representatives. This means there will be a hundred and twenty delegates selected on the basis of representation in the House of Representatives. In other words, every county in the state will have at least one member, and may have more, according to population. The county of Pitt will have two.

This is very unusual--in the November election we are really holding two elections in one; first, we are to vote whether or not there will be a constitutional convention called. The words "For convention" and "Against convention" will probably appear on the ballots. The person who is a prohibitionist will want to vote against repeal and against a convention. The person who is called a Wet will vote for a convention. However, not all the people who will vote for a convention are Wets. Ordinarily, that election would be held at the time of the regular elections. This one is being held at the regular time in an off year. The Federal government wants the people to vote now whether or not they want the eighteenth amendment repealed. If the majority of voters in North Carolina are against repeal there will be no convention held in the state. If the majority of voters favor repeal there will be a convention held in North Carolina, and at the first election, that is, November 7, we will choose the delegates to this convention. If the state goes dry there will be no convention, but the dry delegates will have been selected. If there is a convention there will be wet delegates selected. After the delegates are selected they meet in the state capitol and vote whether or not they want the eighteenth amendment repealed, and the majority of votes of the delegates will determine whether or not the state is for or against repeal. This is two elections held in one. Ordinarily, we would hold the election



a year from November 7, and that election would determine whether or not a convention would be called, then two years after that another election would be held and delegates selected. I am giving you these facts because it is something unusual taking place in this Republic of ours.

It looks to me like there is no question about repeal for the national government. I think thirty-three states have already held conventions and voted for repeal. But we cannot have repeal until these conventions are held and the people vote for it.