

- There is a sense of high adventure in the air today, as perhaps there has never been before in the history of mankind. Less than two weeks ago, a human being was literally and physically vaulted clear out of this world. And for the first time in history, he made three complete orbits of the earth without being in the earth, being outside its gravitational pull, but with all the world looking and listening so that as he orbited the earth on the other side, all the people of one city could wish him well by turning on all their electric lights. And then after driving his space ship three times around the earth, he could by making a decision, bring it back to earth and land it at a predetermined area. This could be done successfully so that he could step out of his spaceship again, back on earth and say, "I am feeling fine." And encourage his fellow men to make the journey. Plans already are made for four other trips like this to be made this year and then for a much longer trip to be made before the year ends. Our nation is at the present time, challenging its young men to prepare themselves for careers in science and technology that will back up and make possible space exploration, challenging young people to prepare for careers as space men, not simply to orbit the earth outside the earth's atmosphere, but to make trips to the moon and back and to do other things which will be of exciting nature in the near future. This is not something that you read in a comic book, for the first time, this has happened within the past two weeks with everyone in the world being in position to know about it, to see aspects of it and to hear aspects of it. And this is a challenge which is before you today. Never before in the history of our nation, have we had a Peace Corps, which would make it possible for you and people like you to volunteer your services as representatives of your nation in other nations of the world, to teach them, to help build their schools, their hospitals, to repair their bridges, to teach them what they need to know about health that we have learned, to go out as representatives not of the armed forces, but of the peace forces of America. We offered this opportunity to the underdeveloped nations of the earth and the response was so terrific that for example, the call has come for 50,000 more school teachers than we are able to supply at the present time. The response in the other nations of the earth, whose friendship we want and need was so great that we had to call for many more persons than we have thus far been able to supply. The Peace Corps invites you to join it and to be a part of it and to give this service in the distant places of the earth. This is a thrilling challenge, which has not been offered before the students in America. And then there has been another new and from my point of view, even more exciting possibility that has opened up in recent years under the leadership of the Reverend James Robinson, a New York minister, who has organized what has been called the Operation Crossroads Africa. So that in the summertime college students, while pursuing their college careers may go as members of teams to the various nations of Africa to do something similar to what is done in the Peace Corps and yet to go beyond that, namely, to go there and not simply as hospital builders, as bridge menders, but as Christians to go in the name of Christ and to say, "This service, we perform for you at our own expense, or at least at the expense of the groups who are sponsoring us, to do something for the people over in Africa and with the people in Africa." This is not simply something that our students go over there and do for them but do with them shoulder to shoulder. Three Duke University students this year have responded to that appeal and Sucre, Betsy Gwyn and Al Reimer are three of the members of this present student body who will be in the Operation Crossroads Africa teams this coming summer. And then they will again be back in our student in the fall. This is high

adventure. It isn't simply a thrilling adventure, but it is a great opportunity for service. Also planned on our campuses and other venture to Managua Nicaragua, which is being planned by Bob Hyatt of our Religious Life staff. And there are a number of Duke University students who are going down there this summer. Well, so it is that this thrill of high adventure is sweeping not simply the world today, but particularly our Duke Campus and people are being inspired to serve in far away places with strange sounding names all the way from outer space to the distant places on the face of the earth. This is great. This is good. Let no one say a word against this. However, there is something which we are inclined to forget as we are obsessed with these distant opportunities for service, which we should not forget and which if we do forget will rob the adventure of a great part of its unique distinction and greatness. We are in danger of forgetting that opportunities for service are about us now and here all the time, which are as demanding, as challenging and as great as any of these wonderful opportunities that beckoned us from outer space and from the other side of the earth. And therefore I believe that without in any way taking our vision away from the distant opportunities we should by means of a kind of bifocal vision look also at what is at hand. See what you can do at home for God, for mankind, for the kingdom of God. Now I am not thinking here particularly of Indianapolis, if Indianapolis is your home, I am thinking of Durham, because Durham is where you live, move and have your being at the present time. Durham, North Carolina, where you sit now and where I am standing, this is where we are. And today we are emphasizing a great opportunity for service here, known as the Edgemont Community Center, which is at a particular point in space known as 301 Elm street, Durham. There is a building there with walls and a floor and a roof boys and girls come to that building, a program is they're being carried on by people who represent this chapel and the Duke University Religious Council, the Duke YMCA and YWCA. We have specific organizations and committees set up to plan this work and to finance it. As you know, approximately 50 cents of every dollar that you put in the chapel offering Sunday after Sunday goes to support the Edgemont Community Center. 301 Elm street, Durham, North Carolina. Part of your dollar goes to help send our representatives to Africa, but a large part of it stays here for this service at hand. But the most important part of our service for the Edgemont Community Center is not what we put in the chapel offering plate but what we do in working at the Edgemont Community Center by offering our services to the committees of the Y's that are carrying on this work, and they need your help. They have the help of a good many of our students. From time to time, there are additional persons whose help is needed. Today we would like to single out for special emphasis, this project, which is not an outer space, it is not on the other side of the earth, it is here, where we study and where we live. You know it's an interesting thing that Jesus often challenged people to leave their homes, their fishing nets, their tax tables, their friends, and follow him to distant assignments. We remember these things because they're rather dramatic. What we are inclined to forget is the fact that Jesus also challenged a great many people to serve him where they were, where he found them, at home. In the fifth chapter of Mark for example, there was a man who was not in his right mind and he came to Jesus and Jesus restored him to sanity and health. And the man immediately made the same response that a great many other people hadn't had made in answering the call of Christ. He said, "Well, master, I want to be with you and I'll go with you anywhere you go." I imagine he was a little bit surprised when the Lord said to him, "Decapolis is the place where you are to serve. Tell your family and your friends and your fellow citizens, what the Lord has done for you, make your witness in Decapolis." And I can imagine that this man almost shouted, "Decapolis, that's where I live." And I can then imagine Jesus saying, "That's just the point. That's just the point." If we cannot make a witness where we are, we cannot make a witness where we are not. Jesus is saying to a great many people I

think that he wants them to make a witness where they are. But in spite of that, we seem always to want to see the grass that is on the other side of the fence, imagining that it is greener than the grass, which is on our side of the fence, the grass which is beneath our feet. There seems to be a human tendency to minimize the opportunities for service and for greatness, which are at hand, and to emphasize the opportunities that are on the horizon and which we cannot see very clearly but we imagine if we were looking at them, we could see them with great clarity. What great can be done here? What is right here that is wonderful and outstanding? Let me give you an illustration, which I hope you will not forget. This illustration is all around you now where you sit, it is around many of you when you lie down to go to sleep at night. It surrounds many of you as you eat your food three times a day. Some of you perhaps have not read Professor Blackburn's book on the architecture of Duke University and may therefore not know the description which is contained in that book of the process by which the stone for Duke University was selected. Mr. James B. Duke was a great admirer of Princeton University, its architecture, its stone, its colors. And so when the decision was made that a great west campus would be built here as Duke University should blossom and flower, he wanted the best stone that could be had. And he preferred that it'd be similar to that of Princeton. So he sent word to all of the great stone quarries of America that had stone anyone resembling that and asked them to send samples here to Durham. Dr. Frank C. Brown, the late controller of Duke University was asked to erect sample of walls of the various kinds of stone, which Mr. Duke had shipped here. He took a great interest in this very important project, went over to Raleigh to the state geological lab, conferred with them, saw an interesting sample of stone there, which had 14 different colors. He made inquiry about it and found that the laboratory in Raleigh considered this a very excellent building stone and felt that it would be very very durable. Upon tracing this stone down, it was discovered that it came from an abandoned quarry in Hillsborough, 13 miles away from Durham. And so without the Duke family or the trustees or the building committee knowing anything about where any of the stone came from, Mr. Brown erected these sample walls, and they came and looked at them and on the basis of the beauty of the stone and the durability of the various kinds of stone as tested out, not only in the state laboratory, but also in the federal laboratory, they picked this particular Cambrian stone and then they said, where does it come from? 13 miles away was the answer. And they did not let that fact keep them from choosing it. Many people would have been inclined to say, "Oh no, we'll not use this stone because it comes from our area. Let's get something that is from a great distance." But they built the university out of as it were hometown stuff. It is a university that is famous around the world, we say without false pride. The pictured stone of this building is carried around the earth proudly by many publications. Something great can come from where we are. Something great can be built out of the rock on which our feet stand, don't you ever forget it. I hope I will never forget it. We are inclined to forget it because of the human tendency to imagine that nothing really great can be where we are. Why do you suppose we did not see these opportunities for great service that are at our hand? This question has puzzled me at different times. I think the answer to that question is that we assume that nothing great can come from where we are and what an insult we give ourselves. If other people were to insult us to that extent, we would become enraged and would insult them in return, very likely. If someone were to say to me, "Now because your wife is your wife, she cannot be a fine person." I would be angry, but do I always assume that the possibilities of a great marriage are mine because she has married me? Can anything great come out of Duke University? Oh, it's my school, isn't it, of course not. If anyone else were to insult me this way, I would not allow it and yet from time to time, I'm willing to insult myself to this extent. This is a curious fact, but a fact, nevertheless, when Jesus Christ left the town of Nazareth and began his

public ministry, he became famous. And within a short period of time, he was the most talked about man in Palestine, you would have thought that when he returned to his hometown and preached in his home synagogue, they would have been the first to say, "This man is the son of God." But what happened? You remember that when Jesus preached in the synagogue at first, they were thrilled and they said, "Never man spake as this man." And then mentally, they kind of pinched themselves and said this, "Is not this Joseph's son." And then they wrote him off. But what was wrong with his being Joseph's son? Just this, Joseph was one of the citizens of their town. They were saying, in other words, "Isn't he one of our boys, don't we know him? And if we know him and he is one of our boys, he cannot be the son of God. Can any good thing come out of Nazareth? Answer, no, because it's our town where we live." And so the people of Nazareth miss the opportunity to have the greatest thrill that any town in the world could have namely to realize that Jesus Christ, the son of almighty God was one of their hometown boys. They missed this because of the tendency to imagine that the grass is greener somewhere else, that nothing good can happen here because it is our place. And therefore no opportunity for serving God that is really worthwhile can be here. I think it's because we don't look for it where we are that we do not see it. JBIV, the former Merchant Prince of North Carolina so-called, had the hobby of raising flowers. Now he is where his specialty and every year at the Asheville Men's Flower Show, he would display a great many beautiful dahlias. Those of you who have seen Mr. IV's dahlias either in Charlotte or in Asheville will testify to the excellence of their beauty. He cultivated not simply flowers, but the art of raising flowers. And he knew what to do, how, and when, in order to make the flowers beautiful, he would rise before daylight every morning and go out and work his flowers. One year at the Asheville Men's Flower Show, a lady approached Mr. IV, she said, "I have come a long ways to see your dahlias because I have heard of their beauty and their excellence. I would like to know where you get your bulbs, because I would like to get some of the same kind of bulbs you have so that I could grow beautiful dahlias like you grow." He said, "Lady, the important thing is not where you get the bulbs, it's what you do with them when you plant them in your own soil." She said, "I know that that's important, but the most important thing surely must be the bulb that you have at the beginning. So please tell me where you get them if it's not a secret." He said, "It's no secret, but I have forgotten where I get them and if you'll give me your name and address, when I get back to my home in Charlotte, I'll write to you." She gave him her name and street address and while he was riding, she then added the city is Lebanon, Ohio. And he looked up from his writing then and said, "That reminds me, I order them from the Golden Rule Farm in Lebanon, Ohio." To which she exclaimed that nursery is just around the corner from where I live." Now, you see the reason she didn't see those bulbs at the Golden Rule Farm in Lebanon, Ohio, where she lived while she was not looking for anything in her hometown, with which she could develop into a beautiful garden. It was somewhere else, Asheville, if you get on the train and ride long enough, you'll get to a place where you can get some beautiful flowers. She did not realize that her best opportunity was where she was because she was not looking for it there. Now the relevance of this, so the matter before us is that we can do our best service in these distant places if we prepare ourselves first by serving where we are One of our great challenges today is to effect racial brotherhood in the world. A world that torn apart by racial brotherhood and on which sundering communism feeds needs men of goodwill to establish the bridges of racial brotherhood. Where are we going to do this, in Africa? Well, yes, but I understand the one of the first questions, which the people in Africa ask us when we get over there is "How are things in the town from which you came? In other words in Durham, how does it go?" Professor Robert Rankin, the Chairman of our own Political Science Department here at Duke gave an address to a civic club downtown just a few days

ago, in which he said that as a member of the President's Commission on Civil Rights, he had gone over the country and had come to the conclusion that no city in the south had the possibilities for greatness and development in racial brotherhood which Durham has because of the excellence of the leadership in both the Negro race and the White race, which we have here, which many other cities do not have. And so he issued the challenge to us in Durham that we move forward in this area and make great progress in achieving racial brotherhood here, in order that when we go out from here to Africa or to other parts of the world, we may be prepared for the kind of service which will be effective there. We need to realize that we build upon the progress which we make today as we move into tomorrow. Dr. George Hester, who is professor of history at Southwestern University tells a rather amusing incident of something that happened in the US Patent Office back in the 19th century. The US Patent Office was operated in those days by one man. He did everything that was done by the Patent Office. And after he had been sitting there in his chair with his feet propped up on his table for several days, with nothing to do, he resigned and went into some other kinds of work because he said there was no future in the Patent Office. Everything has been invented, that's going to be invented. If that core soul could walk into the bureau of patents today, he would receive a mighty demonstration of the fact that what is invented yesterday makes possible more inventions today. And these in turn make possible additional inventions tomorrow that we build upon the past. And so instead of moving out of what was to become a tremendously booming business, he should have stayed there, but he thought that there was nothing great where he was sitting, no future. Not only do we look back and see how the people of Nazareth missed Christ, not only do we see how people have overlooked opportunities for beautiful gardens, we see how in our own lives, in our own time, on our own campus this month, we can miss great opportunities for serving Christ by concluding that since the Edgemont Community Center is just made up of boys and girls, just ordinary people, just folks who make mistakes, who do crazy things, people whose joys and sorrows are about like ours, that there's no possibility of doing anything great for God there. It looks rather drab and dismal at times. And by assuming that we would miss the greatness one day of hearing Jesus Christ say to us, "In as much as He did it unto one of the least of these, my brethren, He did it unto me." Jesus says to many of us today, what he said to that man, whom He restored long ago, when we asked him, "Good master, where shall we go to serve you?" " Right where you are, tell them, tell these people what the Lord has done for you and can do for them." Well, God, our heavenly father, who does call us to serve thee at all times, and in all places, grant onto us, the sharpness of vision that will enable us to see at hand the opportunities which we should take advantage of, which will give us the grace to put ourselves aside long enough to do it. May we not shirk our great worldwide task for Christ. May we not shirk the one which at hand and now may the grace of the Lord, Jesus Christ, the love of God, the father, the communion and fellowship of the holy spirit rest and abide with you now and evermore.