WRIGHT (FRANK HALL) SERMONS, 1916

Descriptive Summary

Title: Frank Hall Wright sermons
Dates: 1916
Accession Number(s): 1996-091
Extent: 2 inches
Language: Materials are written in English.

Full finding aid available here: http://www.austinseminary.edu/page.cfm?p=1125

Biographical Note:
Frank Hall Wright (1860-1922) was an evangelist in the western United States.

Scope and Contents:
The Frank Hall Wright Sermons are typed, bound sermons delivered by Wright at First Presbyterian Church of San Antonio in January 1916. These sermons were a component of special evangelistic services intended for both Christians and the general public.

Related Collections:
The Arthur Gray Jones papers at the Austin Seminary Archives include letters written by Frank Hall Wright to Arthur Gray Jones from 1915-1916.

Restrictions:
Materials are available by appointment only. Contact the archivist for details.

Preferred Citation: Frank Hall Wright sermons, 1916, Austin Seminary Archives, Stitt Library, Austin Presbyterian Theological Seminary

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"Agonizing before God."

"Strive to enter in at the strait gate: for many, I say unto you will seek to enter in, and shall not be able." What does it mean? When I was a boy at school I remember one thing that stands out in my memory. There was to be a long distance race, three miles. Eight men were going to run. One boy said, "I am going to win that race." There was an upper classman who always won the races, he was going to run. But Johnnie said, "I will win that race." There they were all lined up ready to start. Then there was the crack of the pistol, yonder they run, eight men. One man was way ahead. I thought that is the man who is going to win. But pretty soon he was out of it, he came back. Another man went away ahead. And soon he was out of it. And so they fell out one by one. Just two men running. Johnnie and the man who always won the race. And I looked at Johnnie to see if he was showing signs of weakness. But no with his teeth clenched and his hands clenched he was running with all the power that was in him. And with one jump he went over the line. He had strained his body, he almost fell over. But he shouted, "I have won it." There was agony in his face and soul. That is the word that Jesus uses. Agonize to enter into the strait and narrow gate. Why do we have to agonize? I will tell you why.
First because there are so many things to distract you. In no town
do we know that better than here in San Antonio. There is your
busines and your pleasure, your ambitions. So many things to
pull you away from Jesus. The first thing you know you will die
and be lost. That is why. Dissipation in pleasure, scraping
for the dollar. You get so enthusiastic in other things you
hardly see your own families. Strangers, almost, in your own home.
You had better settle it while you are young. The Bible says,
"Remember now thy creator in the days of your youth." Before
the evil days come. Well you say you have no pleasure then.
I say you get carried away with other things. Matt. 7:13--
"Enter ye in at the straight gate," that means the narrow gate,
"for wide is the gate and broad the way that leadeth to destruc-
tion and many there be that go in there." The way to heaven is
a hard road. The first thing is to be saved. Give up your own
will. Surrender to Jesus, he must be your captain. We can not
serve two masters. If you are going to be saved you must follow
Jesus. It is hard to give up your mind and will to follow Jesus.
This is the reason. The road to heaven is a lonely road. How many
are going on that road? If you are a Christian you sometimes feel
like you are alone. Because so few love Jesus. You are a stranger
in a strange land. We look for a better country. -A City that
hath foundation, whose maker and builder is God.--- Folks don't
want to be Christians, they say it is too lonely. The road of
is a road of danger. Satan is your enemy, he is fighting against you. He doesn't want you to understand the truth. He wants you to be blind to the truth. He knows that if you understand it you will be saved. He don't want you to be saved. He sends a little bird to take out the truth. Some one comes and takes it out. You are lost. He makes you believe in infidelity, makes you read books you have no business reading, makes you have affections you ought not to have. So you must have the whole armor. The hope of salvation is the helmet of the Christian. When you are ignorant you are weak, when you have knowledge you are strong. Then you have the spirit of God with you which is the word of God. It is like a sword. We have to have on the whole armour. Few there be that find it. It is a neglected road. The road that leads to hell is wide. It says, "Many there be that go in there." It is easy to loose your soul. First of all it is a simple road. It is down hill. If you go up stream how hard it is, if you want to be lost just drift along. Nobody can drift into the kingdom of God. If you want to be saved you have to agonize about it. The road to hell is smooth, down grade. You don't have to give up your sins. You can take them with you to hell. It is an easy thing to be lost. Not many people take this road to heaven. It is too hard. The other road is the popular road. When any body wants to be a Christian many discourage you in every way they can. But when a man is going down hill there are so many
people to help and encourage you. They say you must sow your wild oats. I say, if you sow wild oats, you must reap what you sow. You just mark what I tell you. — Whosoever a man soweth that shall he also reap. The road to perdition is the popular road, the pleasant road. There is music and dancing and eating and drinking. You don't have to talk about anything serious. But I say, there are pitfalls in that road but they are covered up. Satan comes to in the disguise of friendship. The Indians used to use pitfalls to catch deer. They would cover over the mouth of the pit and make it look like ordinary ground. The beast coming along would not see it. But just let him step on it and he would crash down to the bottom. And Satan covers up his pitfalls. If you see them you will not fall in.

But if you don't see them—— When you are hunting deer you can not go with the wind because the deer will scent you and be gone before you ever see him. He uses all the defenses he knows anything about. I used to trap birds. Now I would not kill one of them. O if I were hungry, I would kill anything to eat. But just to massacre that is terrible. I would not kill a cardinal bird unless I were wo hungry I could not live. Don't kill the songsters. When I was a boy I used to kill them. I know I used to set a trap and get them. I would wait until the snow was covering the ground and then I would set my trap. Put meal on the outside and a lot of meal on the inside. And then I would watch. Possibly a beautiful cardinal bird would come along. They are beautiful but wild. He is hungry and the
snow has covered the earth so he can find no food. It comes up to the trap and then it flies up to a tree. Then it comes down again and picks around and flies up again. If it would only stay there. But it goes back again and eats the nice food. How it satisfies. It goes into the trap. The man who made that trap knew the bird nature. When a bird is full with food then it shakes it plumage and jumps up on a limb. And there in that trap is a long bar in that trap and the moment the bird jumps on it it is a prisoner. That little thing flies against the sides of that prison house. It tears the plumage from its body but all in vain, soon its blood will crimson the snow. All because it satisfied its natural desires. Some folks say God put those desires in us and it is all right to satisfy them. Don't you believe it. Satan knows how to get you. Knows your habits, your environments. He covers up the pitfalls so you can not see them. First thing you know he is in your soul. He covers up the pitfalls with music with works of art. In New York city in a great big saloon there is a beautiful picture of some great master. I tell you when you go in the door you see the gentleman with the silk hat and the cane. All the signs of wealth are there. And yet the whiskey in that saloon is just as deathly as the whiskey in the lowest dive in the city. You see elegantly dressed men go into that place and drink. The devil asks no better of you than that you should under rate the power of drink. I once went to see a man to talk to him about his soul. About that whiskey business.
And he said, "I think I am man enough to see when it gets control of me I quit." There was nothing to do there. That big man was just so full of pride, so I let him alone. Two years later I went back there and I went into his office. He had been in a drunken fight the night before. Had a bandage over his eye. I said, "Well how is it now?" And he said, "It has got me, I tell you when I go to dinner I don't dare go until my pals are off the street. If I see a friend coming down the street I start in the other direction. I am afraid to meet him. It has got me." The devil don't ask any better of you than that you under rate the power of sin. You see the picture of the devil as a hideous thing with horns and all that, that is a childish picture, it belongs to the dark ages. A time when men did not read this Bible. The Bible pictures him as a man of wonderful wisdom and beauty. He knows how to ruin men. He knows their ambitions and the love of success. He knows where to get you. -Agonize to enter into the strait gate.- When I was a student only ten thousand out of thirty thousand men in New York city ever went to church. They go to seek business and pleasure. Boys come there and have no companions. Left their father and mother. Maybe they have only a little hall bedroom. They go out to find pleasure. Maybe at first they go to the church. Will they find it in the churches. No. A great many churches have no regard for strangers. How many people have no one to welcome them. That boy finds companionship where the red lights are. In the cheap vaudevilles in places where you don't need an introduction. The devil
knows that they want companions. The result will be that they will drift forever away from God. Jesus says, "Agonize." The Bible says "Many shall seek to enter in it and shall not be able. Many professed Christians will be lost." Matt. 7:21-- Not every one that saith unto me Lord, Lord, but he that doeth the will of the Father.-- A great many preachers will be lost in hell. Because God has no respect of persons. To be a popular preacher is a dangerous thing. Because a man is a popular preacher is no sign that he will be saved. Saul was lost. Judas a disciple of Jesus was lost in hell. Don't you think because a man is a preacher he is saved. Because you see them doing signs you think they are Christians? Whether you do miracles or preach, if you don't serve Christ you will be lost. If you dishonor his Son you dishonor God. Any body that denies the incarnation of Jesus Christ is anti-Christ. Many shall fall in those false heresies. No difference how pious a preacher may be. Salvation comes by resting on the finished work of God. A great many preachers teach that if you love God you will be saved. If they preach against the cross of Jesus Christ they will be lost. They are blind leading the blind. No wonder Jesus says,--Agonize to enter the City of God.-- One time there was a popular preacher in a great city. And a young preacher came to that place and he tried to preach like that great preacher, he dressed like him, tried to be just like him. One day went to sleep in his room and he dreamed that the great preacher came to him and said, "I have been summoned before
the Lord and rejected. I have preached myself, and not my Lord. I have been rejected." It scared the young man so he rushed out of his house and the first thing he heard was that the great preacher had passed into eternity. I don't put much belief in visions and dreams but that is a fact. Just because you are an officer in the church or because you are a Sunday School teacher is no sign that you are saved, and you may be rejected. It is a terrible thing to go on trusting in your own little acts and doings. You try to go in by some other door. Jesus says, "I am the door." Have you entered in by the Lord. Have you accepted Jesus Christ? Is there any body here tonight to whom Jesus shall say, "Depart from me, I do not know you." And you will be shut out into the darkness of eternity. I am glad I can not know if there are such here. I have just one comfort. I gave my heart to Jesus thirteen years ago. I drifted away from the master, became cold and indifferent. I went to college and got farther and farther away. But God got me back. I studied theology three years and felt I ought to preach. I preached two years and for two years I did not get one soul. Not one soul had I led to Jesus. I prayed to God to give me a soul. He showed me my heart, how worldly it was about the ministry. I wanted to be a great preacher and sermonize. God made me see that if I had been truly God's child I would not have gone so far away from him. I was afraid I had committed an unpardonable sin. In one brilliant
moment it seemed I had lost all my worldly ambitions. I wanted Jesus and his salvation more than anything else. I don't know where it was. I know I had a Bible. And I read John 6:37 --- This is the promise Him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out. --- I knew that I wanted to be saved more than anything in this world. I knew the fourth night that if I had never come to Jesus before I came then. I took Jesus at his word. I was going to trust him and take his promise. There I left it. Something strange happened. From the minute I made a surrender to God he filled me with the blessed spirit. I know I felt humiliated. From that day to this I have been an evangelist. The Lord has been giving me souls. I never will know how many. I never tried to count them. How do I know when you come up to profess Christianity whether you are saved. I only know I want to be faithful to Jesus. If one thing would make my heart rejoice it would be Lord Jesus if thou wouldst approve of me. Heaven it will be if Jesus says "Well done." I could not stand to miss that approval. Can you stand it? For Jesus to say, "Weak and slothful servant." It is a matter between my soul and Jesus. I believed I settled it long years ago when a boy. But I drifted away. And God brought me back to him. Have you a doubt about being saved? When your eyes close tonight they may never again see this world. When you awaken the light of eternity may shine in your eyes. If you missed Jesus it will be too late. If you are not saved, seek the Lord tonight. If you are not happy seek the Lord tonight.