WRIGHT (FRANK HALL) SERMONS, 1916

Descriptive Summary
Title: Frank Hall Wright sermons
Dates: 1916
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Language: Materials are written in English.

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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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|     | “Marred Lives Made New,” 7:45 p.m., January 21, 1916 |

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"Marred Lives made New."

Now you know of course that the Indians are religious. Every dance they give is a religious dance. For instance the ghost dance. It takes a long time to prepare for it, to prepare the people and the priest. It all depends on the old folks, upon what they remember. They have no Bible. They called me, "preacher." A medicine man once said to me, "We don't understand that book, we can't read that medicine book, so our minds tell us what we must believe. We know the same God, we all worship the same God. We worship the same God who made different kinds of trees and men and made religion. The God who gave you white men your religion." Because I read the book and dressed like a citizen they called me white. They wore their hair long, wore blankets and moccasins and smoked a long pipe. I have told you how they would point the stem of the pipe down to the devil first to appease him, they were kind to their enemy he was first. Then they point to God he is their friend, he can wait. These people have a religion of fear. he said, "My mind tells me what to worship." They are very polite. They let you talk and then they talk. Some of them talked against me. I have seen some of them tremble with wrath against us in our meetings. If looks could kill
we would have been dead long ago. They would talk back at us angry and we would be just as nice and try to explain why we believed so.

That is a good way to do. It would be a good thing to have some old time meetings. Not too much preaching, more of testimony. If any body has a special little token of God's favor let them get up and tell about it. That is a grand thing. In China the people worship the pig, in Egypt they worship the snakes. Out there in that western country you have heard of snake dances. There are some that worship the crow, I have seen a crow dance. They worship the sun. I have seen Indians who worshipped the sun. There was a Baptist lady who came to help us win those men. She brought about twenty five of them to Jesus. They called her, "This Way." They said," We walking in crooked roads. Now we know God, we walking in right road." Some of them looked like deacons, clean clothes and everything was different. One of the Indians said, "Right down there I used to worship the sun." When they worship the sun they cut their skins and then run a stick through that out. Then they have great feasting and then they set a pole up. Then they dance around that pole until the weight of the body tears out that stick. They tie a lariot to the pole and then to the stick. That gives them one degree. What a painful, suffering religion. I have known Indians who can show the scars from that dance all over
bodies. They did not know how to worship God. Just think of the sweet way we know. That Jesus died for us on the cross. He don't want us to afflict our bodies in that way. A little boy had to make his own medicine, to conjure with when he went to war. It was supposed to give him success. The little boy would go out into the woods alone. He never took anything to eat. If he killed a bird or an animal he could not touch it. He was going through a time of fasting and praying. He went off to cry to the Great Spirit. That little boy would pray with tears in his eyes. They did not wipe away the tears with their fingers, but with the base of the hand. No doubt he would put those wet hands on the ground and cry to the Great Spirit. He was trying to make his medicine. Trying to get some conjuring to follow him in war. Then he would sing his song the song I am going to sing. - Here he stands, I am he. - He wants the great spirit to give him the medicine he can conjure with. Think of that little Indian boy out in the forest alone praying to the great spirit. What a pretty song, what a sad plaint that is. Of course they had different songs. They sing and dance by rythm. They have a mascal religion. They eat that bean. It is a dope habit. They say they never understood religion until they eat that bean, that dope. You can hear them every Saturday night. They commence at sundown and they eat that bean all night.
They eat and feast until they are in a stupor. Sunday morning they are not fit for church. The devil knows how to get them. The government allows them to do that because they say it is a form of religion. How are you going to make them quit it as long as the government allows them to do it. But they have all kinds of songs. They dance and have big ceremonial forms. They are great people for form. If everybody danced like that you would not have more than one party I reckon. Every Indian dances alone. They don’t go and grab one another. They don’t go through the embraces and that kind of thing. I tell you it’s strenuous, it makes you pant like a lizard. They sing and dance. I can dance that step too, I tell you. That is one of my morning exercises. It keeps your body strong.

I know of a little boy who was converted who had never heard the name of Jesus until he was thirteen years old. His mother would not let him hear the name of Jesus. I helped establish a mission there. That little boy came to our meeting. One of the men got it in his head that he wanted to talk to Henry Cloud, that was the little boy’s name. He took Henry out on the prairie and said, "Henry I feel I ought to talk to you about your soul." He told him that God would save him. That little boy gave his heart to Jesus Christ. That boy used to come to church leading a blind man. The other Indians would see him going to church and they would jeer at him and drive by and the dust would fly in his face. That little boy
stood firm. Just think how Jesus took that little boy and made him a Christian and he is a power tonight. Mrs. Roe came along and adopted him, he graduated from college and is now establishing a school for young Indian men who want to be leaders among the Indians. Think how that little boy when he first heard of Jesus, the first time, he gave his heart to Jesus. And you with all your opportunities, the Sunday School where you get instruction about Jesus. If you are lost you are lost over all the opportunities. That little boy used to take tobacco and go with his father and throw it out on the river, because they worshipped the river. When we tried to have meetings and asked the people to come to the front and accept the Savior those medicine men would follow them up to the front and fight with them and talk against us. Once there was an Indian girl who wanted to be a Christian. And the people told her, "If you want to be a Christian you have to have blonde hair and blue eyes. You can not go to heaven, you will be a wanderer all alone." They would come right up to the altar and talk against us and our religion. And we would stand there and preach with peace and love. Never get angry at them. I tell you it takes the grace of God to do it. When a man dies they think the spirit stays there for four days. They sit up with it. They feast and they tell that spirit tales of deeds of prowess that they have done and
of the horses that they have stolen. They entertain him. Then a
man comes in and tells them the journey of the soul. He says, "Spirit
listen to me." He imagines the soul is there. "The first day
of the journey you will come at night to an old woman. She will say,
'What requests did my people make of you when leaving the world?'
Then they ask for nice furs and other things. "There in a basket
will be some seed and she will ask you to eat of them. Don't eat of
those seed for they are the seed for your people. She will say you
have a wise head if you don't eat those seeds. Then you will come
to a tall soldier. First you will see some men and you ask them
where to find the soldier who will guide you to the land of the
setting sun. The last steps will be covered up, if you miss them
you will be lost. You will see the devil and hell. But if you
follow the soldier he will guide you." Then they see the sun
rising. And the medicine man says, "I see the father awaits your
approval." And then they cry and the soul commences its journey.
Is that not hideous? Just to think they know nothing of the land
of the setting sun. All such foolishness as that. Just think of
what a beautiful religion we have. -- In my Father's house there
are many mansions. -- It brings tears to our eyes to think the
Indians don't know about Jesus. Think of that, I hope some of you
will be missionaries to the heathens. One thing struck me, I was
out working with the Indians. It was out near Mt. Scott. The banks
were very steep, you could hardly see the tops of the timber. Out of the dark valley at sundown I heard a crying. A high voice. A woman's voice crying. She was mourning for her dead. She would put on her oldest clothes and for a month mourn every night for her dead child or husband. She did not know where they were. That heathen mother pouring out her grief. I don't hear that cry much now. Because we have gone over there with the Bible. They know now that when Jesus comes he will bring the loved ones back. Is it not wonderful what Jesus has done? Now they have the same hope we have. I have heard of some Indian women who would lay their finger on a piece of wood and cut off the first joint. Their hearts hurt so, and they thought if they cut off a piece of the finger they could not feel the heart pain so much. They had no comforter like we have in Jesus. Thank God that we live in a Christian land. I have a friend, I suppose he was about the first one I baptized. His name was Thunderbolt. One day his mother-in-law threatened to kill him. She came with an axe in her hand. And some one came and told him to run. But Thunderbolt said, "We are men we can not run." And he just sat there. She rubbed that axe over his neck. He paid no attention. She pulled out her little knife and said, "I am going to kill you." She rubbed the blade of that knife over his neck. And he never paid any attention to her. She said, "I say I am going to kill you look at me." And he just sat there. Then she put her finger
under his chin and lifted his face up. He just looked at her. He gave her such a hard look that she ran screaming out of the place. One day his wife got angry at him. She hit him with a pole and he never paid any attention to her. She got so mad she went out and hitched up the wagon and was going off to live all alone. He said to the children, "Go and help her." She said, she didn't want any help. She went away but after a time she came back. That is the kind of courage that man has got. One day he went out to arrest a horse thief. He was the Indian sheriff. The first thing you knew that man pulled out a gun and Thunderbolt never even put his hand on his pistol and the thief had his gun right on him. That man gave his heart to Jesus. I hope you will give your heart to him that you may be transformed. He had a son named Frank, he couldn't say Frank so he called him Pank. One day I went back there and I heard that Thunderbolt's boy had gone into the other world. I went to him and I said, "Thunderbolt I hear Pank is dead, my heart is in the dust." That means, I am sad. He said, "My heart in the dust? No, Pank is dead and he has gone to be with Jesus. He up there sitting with Jesus. It is all right. I don't cry." The tears had been wiped away because he trusted in Jesus. Now Pank had been carried by the angels into the Master's presence. That is what Jesus does for folks. Just to think that Indian had that comfort and you have it not. He can not talk to you with comfort. The
transforming power of Jesus. There was a big woman who weighed about three hundred pounds, and she was as bad as she was big. She got to drinking and it ruined her. Sometimes she would be dead drunk on the side of the road. We carried the Gospel to those people. We preached to them on the prairie, went to their homes and talked under the night sky. One day that big woman got mad at a man. She knocked him down with her fist and knocked one eye out of his head. That is to show you what an awful old woman she was. One time Mrs. Roe and I were delayed going to a meeting. And when we got there, there was that big Indian woman going in to the meeting. She said, "Pray for me." And we prayed the Lord to save her soul. One year from that time she gave her heart to Jesus. She stood up and gave her testimony. She said, "You all know me, you know I am the worst Indian in this tribe, you have a better chance than I have. If I am saved Jesus can save you. I am worse than you. A shadow crossed my path. My father and mother were better than I, they died without this good thing. And I got it." Such humility, such a testimony. She is now a Christian woman. Fighting the battle with those old sins. But fighting a good fight and we can see her coming right out. It is wonderful what Jesus has done for that marred life. I don't care how great a sinner a man may be if they will let the Savior come into their hearts they are changed. He will make them a vessel, a channel of his power. I once saw a man making a vessel. He took the wet clay and
threw it on a revolving disk. And after a while I saw the vessel coming out of that disk. It is just wonderful. So Jesus when your heart is unhardened can take your life and mold it. Make your life a blessing to other souls. You know some people say children don't understand religion. I know of a little Indian girl, Lucy Long. She was a mean little girl, she would stick pins in anybody and mar up the furniture and that kind of a mean girl. She gave her heart to Jesus. That was a marred life made new. I believe in Jesus. I know what is the trouble with sinners they don't want to take Jesus in. Let Jesus come in, Jesus can save you. I am not ashamed of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Jesus has such wonderful power. Little Lucy gave her heart to Jesus. She wanted to be received into the church. But her father said, "No sir, she does not know what she is talking about I will not let her be baptized." Some folks have no faith in children being saved. I know that is the time for them to be saved. I have told you of the man who came to me and asked me to pray for his son. He said, "He wanted to come and I stood in his way, now I can't get him to come." He made a mistake I tell you. If children want to come in let them come. I would rather be on the side of letting them come in too early than waiting until it is too late. Lucy's father said she did not know what she was talking about. So we went to Lucy and said, "Lucy your father thinks you are not old enough to join the church. Lucy you just live it. Show the world that you do know, live
it. Be faithful Lucy." She did live it and one year from that time we had a meeting. We were going to receive certain people. And I said, "Maybe there is somebody else here who wants to join the church. I saw old Albert Long get up and look around. I thought he was looking for his wife. But the interpreter said, "He is looking for his daughter." Lucy was sitting up in front on the ground with some other children. The man said, "Lucy come here." The father was looking for his daughter, he did not want to join church without her. He said, "Any religion that can change a child like the religion of Jesus has changed my child, there is something in it." That little child led him to God. A little child who could hardly read led that big man to Jesus. They were both baptized and joined the church. That is what Jesus can do. I know of another little girl whose father was a medicine man. I saw one of those Indian medicine men operate. Little Dorothy was dying she had terrible pain in her side. The English physician had done all he could. So the medicine man wanted them to let him try his way. He put his mouth to that sore. Then he would spit and scream like a beast. I tell you it was a fake, of all the fake things. A lot of it is superstition and ignorance. Etta's father was one of those medicine men. Little Etta and her mother wanted to be Christians. But he didn't want to be a Christian, it would cost him too much. Little Etta went away to school and developed tuberculosis. They took her home and they were very kind to
her but they could not save her. One day she was sitting by her father's tepee and she said, "This day I give my heart to Jesus, come with me my mother and my father." We preachers could not reach that heathen father but he could not refuse the plea of that child. That old father gave his heart to Jesus. "A little child shall lead them." One day I heard little Etta was dying. They did not leave their dying in the house, they were afraid of the spirit. So I looked all over for Etta. And found her in a tent out in the woods. When she heard I was going she sent the interpreter to tell me not to leave her. I went back and staid and comforted her the best I could but there was no change for better or the other way and I had a big field and I knew that I could not stay longer. So I went to her and said, "Etta I have to leave you. Don't be afraid, you gave your heart to Jesus. When you die Jesus is not going to leave you, he will be right with you. He will take you himself to his own beautiful world." That is the last I saw of that little Indian child. But I will see her again when I see Jesus. She will be there because she trusted him. I have seen the power of Jesus work so wonderfully. I want you to be a Christian. I tell you boys and girls I want you to give your hearts to Jesus. You consult your mother and father about joining the church. But no one has the right to stand between you and Jesus. Jesus will take away the
evil things out of your life. You will grow up to be a useful man and woman in his kingdom. I know a beautiful little girl she has beautiful eyes and golden curls. But she is as bad as beautiful. One day she came to her mother and said, "Mama I want to do right but there is something that makes me do wrong." She needed Jesus. One day an old Indian came to us who had been converted. He said, "My wife she talked against me. Something told me, "hit her." but another voice said, 'no you have been baptized don't you hit her! And I listened to that good voice and I did not hit her." That is Jesus. I guess he would have taken the tepee pole and reduced that old wife, but that little voice spoke to him and he did not hit her. Jesus makes you such good boys and girls and wives and mothers. He can not let you do what is wrong. I have a friend he said to me, "Wright I was an engineer drawing a big salary, and I got down and out with whiskey and lost my place. Now I am delivering mail." One day he was on the verge of delirium and he thought if he could only get past that last saloon he would be all right. He could not refuse liquor. Liquor ruins our men and women. I will be glad when it is wiped out of the state of Texas, out of the United States of America. One day that man saw two men putting up two signs, "Get right with God." One man came up to him and asked him, "Are you saved." And he said, "No I am not." And he started to cry.
The man said, "Don't cry, Jesus can save you." And right there and then he saved him. One day that man made up his mind to take a night train to the city and forget his wife and the children and everything else. Well strange to say, that train never did turn up. He stood there and he said it was the darkest night of his life. He could see his wife and child going away from him. Her father had told her not to live with him. But she clung to him. She cried and agonized before God. And out there in the dark he said, "God if you will take this curse out of my life, I will serve you until I die." God answered that prayer. He was saved. He said he never wanted another drink. When he saw me, he said, "Shall I pay my saloon debts?" I said, "Certainly as a Christian man pay your debts." The next time I saw him he was the head man of a mission. I helped him for two weeks preaching the Gospel. Jesus came into his heart. Boys give your hearts to Jesus. He will save you and make you a vessel of honor. God took that broken life and made it a vessel of honor. I have seen the same things among the savages. As long as God gives me the power to preach, I will preach of Jesus the Savior of sinners.