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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January 10, 1916.

"Why Sickness, Affliction, Trouble and Distress?"

It is impossible for any man to interpret the providence of God. None but God himself shall interpret it. There is one reason for sickness and trouble. That is for the Glory of God. John 11:4, "When Jesus heard that, he said, This sickness is not unto death, but for the glory of God, that the Son of God might be glorified thereby." - For the glory of God. We are his to use as he sees best. Because we are disciples of Jesus is no reason that we are to be exempt from human ills, rather that we shall have them. To think that when we are sick and in trouble, that God is angry with us. It is the natural way to think. We come to the conclusion that he is neglecting us when the contrary may be true. It may be the token of special love... "As many as I love I rebuke," says Jesus. Psalm 73, It is good for us to be able to say when in the midst of affliction that God is good. I remember when I was sick, having hemorrhages, one day a lady came to see me. But when she came into the door and saw me looking so pale and emaciated, she just gasped and shook and looked scared and finally gasped out the words, "God is good." Well it didn't seem just the time to say it. But I smiled back at her, I suppose it was a sickly sort of a smile, but I knew that I felt down in my heart that God was good. God gives us Christians the understanding grace so that in the midst of trouble we can say, "God is good." I remember one time we were having some great meetings and one morning when I came down to breakfast, and I said, "Jacobi the Lord is certainly wrestling with us." There had been 2000
souls born into the kingdom within one month. And Jacobi said to me, "Thank the Lord that he thinks enough of you to wrestle with you."

There is nothing worse than when a man has suddenly become rich to hear that man begin to praise his own works. There is nothing more offensive than a self-made man when he becomes a braggart. Psalm 73:8 "They are corrupt, and speak wickedly concerning oppression; They speak loftily." Ps. 73:17. "Until I went into the sanctuary of God, then understood I their end." I tell you we can learn a lot of things in the House of God. You certainly cannot grow unless you are faithful in religious duties. The first duty is to read the Word of God. You certainly ought to give fifteen minutes a day to God's Word. Another duty is to pray. Another duty is to assemble in the House of God, both morning and night and at prayer meetings. What a blessing it would be if you would all go to prayer meeting. People would come in and say here is a live work. Thereby you grow. "Until I went into the sanctuary of God, then I understood their end." What praise comes out of the prophets heart. "My flesh and my heart faileth but God is the strength of my heart." But it is good for me to draw near to God." "I have put my trust in the Lord God that I may declare all thy works." What beautiful understanding.

If you read four chapters of the Bible every day, you would do it all in a year. That is one way of keeping the whole Bible going and then read a special portion for yourself. Study some book. What did Joseph get for his faithfulness. He got prison. For trying to do right. For refusing temptation. What did he get? He got into prison.
times you have trouble, and you say, "I have served the Lord, and this is what I get." But the Lord exalted Joseph next to Pharaoh. God brought it to pass through his affliction. For his service he reaped a great victory. There is a hero of faith. There are heroes of faith today. Some of us would whine and complain. God won't use us. He thinks us to little. We would make a mess of it. He puts the burden of a child upon us. He treats us like small children and weak ones. But there are other people and there are children who can bear God's burdens. One day a society lady came to me, she wanted to show me one who had been the spiritual blessing to her life. You society ladies need help. There is the zone of neglect. You rarely ever go to church. You exhaust your bodies until you can't go to church on Sunday, you couldn't possibly go to Sunday School. So far as you are concerned there would be no prayer meeting. The church would be open only on certain occasions. And I say that unless you watch you shall lose your souls. Thank God, if he sends you a friend. If he sends affliction and trouble, and takes away your riches and luxuries. That is much better than if he should neglect you. It is to be feared, the silence of God. This society lady took me off the avenues into a little side street to a poor little dwelling. Into a poor little parlor and as she went out of the room, I heard the running of wheels. I saw a woman riding in an invalid chair. She had a high forehead and brilliant eyes. A brilliant soul, crippled and weak. But instead of sitting down and repining she was working making a living as a seamstress. A heroic soul. And this was the one who had been
the spiritual influence of this society woman's life. I sang a song for her and she said, "Mr. Wright I needed you, God sent you to me."
And I considered that I was honored. To bring a little ray of light to the soul fighting and having faith and trusting in the midst of her trouble. There are other heroes of faith and God makes them to be the channels of his power. Our bodies are his to use as he sees fit. What would we know of the resurrection if Jesus had never died?
We would never have heard that "He that believeth on me shall never die." We Christians never die. These bodies go into the earth, but our souls go to the Lord. We fall asleep in Jesus that is all.
"While in the body I am absent from the Lord." Our spirit goes to be with the living Savior. But we don't call our redemption complete until the redemption of our body. To live in a real body in real life with the real living Savior. We see Jesus face to face when we see God. The devil is on the throne of this earth. And as long as he rules you have trouble. We are never free from tribulation and sorrow. Jesus wants us to shine through affliction. Nothing daunted. We just rejoice nevertheless. No matter how poor or how rich, how sick or how well, we rejoice never the less.
When the sisters of Lazarus came to Jesus and said, "Thy loved one is sick." Jesus waited two days. It didn't seem like he loved him very much. He who had the power to raise him to life waited two days. It seemed hard. And when Jesus heard that he had died, he said, "I am glad for your sakes that I was not there, to the intent that ye may believe. Never the less, let us go to him." He had the power to
resurrect the body. Ah friends, so it was for the greater glory of God. The sister had said to him, "Don't open that tomb." And Jesus said, "Said I not unto thee if thou believe thou shalt see the glory of God." She didn't understand. That is why Jesus let him die. He couldn't have died while Jesus was in the presence. He is the Lord of life. After he was dead Jesus shows the resurrection power. James says, "My children count it all joy when ye fall into diver's temptations." We need patience. Hebrew, 10:36 - "For ye have need of patience, that, after ye have done the will of God, ye might receive the promise." Patience is one of the most beautiful gifts. It is hard to be patient. When I became a missionary to the Indians I had to be patient. But I learned it. One day after I had been at work among them for a year, we had gone to the church to have a meeting. The lady was ready to play. I had my sermon ready. The church was nice and clean. Oh it was a beautiful morning. But we waited and not one Indian came to hear the preaching. I went out and looking out to the western hills I could see a line of Indian women crossing the hill. They were going to a place where they gambled every Sunday and all day. They gambled their money and clothes away. All of the Indian women gamble. Whenever they used a card they gambled. You can understand how we preachers had to walk and talk. I knew that as long as I could see that line of Indian women crossing the hill there was something for me to do. But I said we will get them. It took patience. Not long after we had a prayer meeting at a spring. It was a camp meeting. We feed them at those
camp meetings. Talk about cost, it costs something to do God's work. For four days it cost us $160 for beef. On Saturday I gave them a double portion of beef to last through Sunday. I told them, "I don't work on Sunday, but now you have my beef and don't you leave me, you stick to me." But the majority of them stayed. On Sunday we preached and preached and finally I opened the way to Christ and it seemed like the head chiefs would fall over each other trying to get up there. It was because we had prayed for them. We loved them and wanted them to be saved. We had our eye on God not on the environments. We had had some little blessing here but don't let it mislead you. You have got to pray. I tell you you have to watch and pray. God brings us these terrible things to keep us humble and trustful. "Not by my power but by my spirit." The success we have comes by the faith in which we stand. You have got to a big pass when you can glory in affliction and persecutions. You have got a strong hold on God. And God will make you a channel of his power. I say that faith that stands the test glorifies God. You can not come to Jesus unless the spirit of God moves you. I want to say it is not physical completion. It is moral suasion. Our faith rests on something, on the Word of God. God ordains the end but he also ordains the means to that end. A moral suasion. "Through the sanctification of the Spirit, and belief of the truth." 2 The 2:13. People think more of their own opinions than they do of the Word of God. It is good to have heresies, 1 Cor. 11:19," For there must also be heresies among you, that they which are approved, may be made manifest among you." There must be heresies, it is absolutely
necessary. "That they which are approved may be made manifest." All the members of this church are not genuine Christians. Many are lost. Rejected in eternity. They show it by their life and actions. God gets rid of these people by letting some thing like Christian Science come along. With the promise to heal. It is a damnable heresy. It comes sweeping through a church and runs out the riff-raff. They don't know a living Christ. They have not gone far enough in their faith. They have refused Him. They are open to anything like Spiritism, Any kind of an"ism". Even Buddhism. Your intellect can not possibly hold against the onslaught of the devil. Then Christian Science comes along. You find a lot of them are spiritualists. "That they which are approved may be made manifest." That is, that we are children of God and don't need any of these"Isms." When the spirit of God is absent from the human soul then you are open to these things. Christian Science has a sifting effect. God's children stand the test. It is a forgone conclusion that we are going to be converted. We are servants of God. "Thou knowest all things in spite of my denials." Some real Christians fall into sin. They fall into sin but they do not lie down in sin. That is a characteristic of a Christian. "Lord I have sinned." Like Peter when he had the chance he confessed. "Thou knowest all things, thou knowest that I love you." If you Christians get into trouble by your sins. You are not going to lie down. That is the grand thing about it. You stand the test, come out of the temptation and are truly purified. It is for the glory
of God. God has his own purpose for it. Sometimes it is just ordinary happenings of life. We all get sick and die or die by accident. I tell you except ye repent ye shall fail. You are all going to die unless Jesus comes. When your hour comes you are going. Be ready for your death. In spite of doctrines and "Isms" and preachings, all must die. One generation after another. Seventy years from now there will another generation. Be ready to meet God. It is an ordinary happening of life. -- The judgment of God. Ananias was killed in his tracks for lying. I want to say to you there are such judgments in this day. My father once told me of an old drunken Indian who came to him and said, "You are always preaching about Hell and damnation". And my father said, "Now see that you don't experience it. That Indian went right around the corner and was killed. I have always had an idea that father felt God had spoken to him. Sooner than he had expected it. I call that judgement. One day some boys had some cattle out and were herding them. A fearful storm came. There was one little black jack tree near by. The lightening struck that tree. And one of the boys said, "Aim a little lower old man, you are aiming too high." Talking to God in that way. And the next lightening bolt struck that boy and killed him instantly. I tell you God knows you, he knows everything you say and think. Many of you have had warnings about your duty toward God. Because God is silent is no sign that he is not living. Take care, there is a God and his silence is to be feared. There is no regress from God.
The last explanation for sickness trouble and distress is because of chastisement. Some people go to communion unworthily. Regarding it as a kind of superstition. Making of a memorial feast a superstition. But you be careful. Sometimes we are sick for a reason. Because we need chastisement. Don't do what you know is wrong. If you know how to go right. Go right. If we judge ourselves, we would not be judged. "I will guide you with mine eye." God is not going to let you be. God don't loose his own. Try to live a Christian life, you have got it in you. It is the natural thing to do.