R. G. Lee at the 1948 SBC

Southern Baptist Historical Library and Archives

Updated September, 2012
Summary
Main Entry: Southern Baptist Convention Sermon Collection

Date Span: 1845 – 1988

Abstract: Collection consists of files on each convention. More recent years include a manuscript of the sermon and a biographical sketch, in addition to the sermon title, a synopsis of the sermon, and a description of the proceedings of the convention.

Size: 2 linear ft. (4 boxes)

Collection #: AR 638

Historical Sketch
In 1949, Dr. Porter Routh, Executive Secretary of the Southern Baptist Convention, conducted a study of Southern Baptist preaching as reflected in the Convention Sermons. The collection, from 1846 to the present, contains sermon manuscripts and scattered biographical data that he acquired for the study. Several photographs of convention sermon preachers were removed and filed in the Archives Photograph Collection. In addition to Dr. Routh’s material, the collection contains information on convention sermons and proceedings from various newspaper accounts beginning in 1845. Some files are more complete than others. With the exception of 1882, 1884, and 1889, manuscripts of the early sermons are not available.

Scope and Content Note
When the Baptists in the South split from those in the North to form their own convention in 1845, the issue was slave ownership, but the purpose was missions. From the beginning, according to records of the proceedings, the Annual or Convention Sermon was an important part of the meeting. It was preached on the first night by a preacher or an alternate appointed the previous year, and its emphasis was foreign missions. (A home, or domestic mission, sermon was preached the second night.)

The organizational proceedings in 1845 record that “brethren T. W. Snydor, W. Curtis, and I. T. Hinson were appointed by a committee to nominate a Brother and an alternate to preach the Annual Sermon at the meeting the next year. After consultation, they proposed Bro. B. Manley as the preacher and Bro. R. Fuller as the alternate, and the brethren were appointed to perform the service.” Proceedings in 1846 record that Bro. R. Fuller delivered the sermon “according to appointment” and “to a large and attentive audience.”
In 1849, there were two Convention Sermons. The Convention met at the appointed time in Nashville, but attendance was so small, due to a cholera epidemic, that it adjourned and reconvened later in the month in Charleston, SC. Neither the appointed preacher (Rev. W. B. Johnson) nor the alternate (Rev. B. Manley) were present in Nashville, so Rev. J. S. Baker was selected and preached the first evening. When they reconvened in Charleston, Rev. Johnson delivered his Convention Sermon on Foreign Mission Enterprise.

During the Civil War and Reconstruction years (1860s and 1870s), the emphasis of the Convention Sermons shifted from foreign missions to the spiritual needs of the day. In 1868, for example, the topic of the sermon by T. E. Skinner was “Forgiveness and Brotherly Love.”

The collection is arranged chronologically and contains 2 linear feet of material. The first folder contains some of Dr. Routh’s correspondence related to his study. Of special interest is a copy of the Religious Freedom Declaration in 1866.

Arrangement
Arranged chronologically by convention year

Provenance

Preferred Citation
Southern Baptist Convention Sermon Collection, Southern Baptist Historical Library and Archives, Nashville, Tennessee

Access Restrictions
None

Subject Terms
Baptists – Sermons
Sermons, American
Preaching

Related Materials
Southern Baptist Convention Press Kit Collection, AR 375. Southern Baptist Historical Library and Archive

See recordings of the annual proceedings of the Southern Baptist Convention in the SBHLA archives
Container List
Box 1
1.1 Routh, Porter – Correspondence on acquisition of sermons.
1.2 1846 – President William B. Johnson, synopsis of his closing remarks.
1.4 1851 – Description of proceedings.
1.5 1853 – Brief synopsis of proceedings from Tennessee Baptist, May 13, 1853.
1.6 1857 – Brief account of proceedings from True Union.
1.7 1859 – Howell, R. B. C. Speech declining nomination for president after serving five years.
1.8 1861 – Brief account of proceedings from The Tennessee Baptist and synopsis of speech by President Richard Fuller.
1.9 1863 – Brief account of proceedings from Christian Index, May 26, 1863.
1.10 1866 – Brief account of proceedings from Christian Index, June 7, 1866. Includes copy of “Religious Freedom” declaration.
1.11 1867 – Brief account of proceedings from Tennessee Baptist, April 27, 1867. Includes synopsis of speech by Richard Fuller.
1.12 1868 – Skinner, T. E. “Forgiveness and Brotherly Love.” Includes brief account of proceedings from The Baptist, July 4, 1868.
1.13 1869 – Brief account of proceedings.
1.14 1870 – Brief account of proceedings from The Baptist, May 31, 1870.
1.15 1871 – Brief account of proceedings from The Baptist, May 20, 1871.
1.16 1872 – Brief account of proceedings from The Baptist.
1.17 1873 – Brief account of proceedings.
1.18 1874 – Brief account of proceedings.
1.19 1875 – Brief account of proceedings.
1.20 1876 – Lorimar, G. C. “Charity of the Times.” Brief synopsis of sermon from Western Recorder via The Baptist, June 3, 1876.
1.21 1877 – Brief account of proceedings from The Baptist, May 19, 1877.
1.22 1878 – Brief synopsis of proceedings.
1.23 1879 – Brief account from The Baptist.
1.24 1880 – Comments on situation at Southern Seminary related to Broaddus, Whitsett, and Toy from The Baptist.
1.26 1882 – Mell, P. H. “Faith As Opposed to Doubt.” Includes manuscript of sermon.
1.27 1883 – Broaddus, John A. Includes synopsis of sermon from Waco Examiner via The Tennessee Courier, May 24, 1883.
1.29 1885 – Curry, J. L. M. “Christ the Lawgiver and the Law Fulfiller.” Includes brief synopsis of sermon from Baptist Courier, May 14, 1885.
1.30 1886. Hawthorne, J. B. “Where is the God of Elijah?” Includes synopsis of sermon.
1.32 1888 – Ellis, F. M. “Christian Giving.” Includes brief synopsis of sermon.
1.33 1889 – Greene, J. P. “We Preach Christ Crucified.” Includes manuscript of sermon.
1.34 1890 – Carter, J. W. “Christ Liveth in Me.” Includes synopsis of sermon from *Fort Worth Gazette* via *Baptist Courier*, May 22, 1890.
1.36 1892 – Gambrell, J. B. “Call to Universal Conquest of the World.” Includes synopsis of sermon from the *Baptist Courier*.
1.37 1893 – Hatcher, William E. “Experience Worketh Hope.” Includes manuscript of sermon.
1.40 1896 – Stakely, Charles A. Includes manuscript of sermon and synopsis of sermon from the *Baptist Courier*, May 15, 1896.
1.41 1897 – Venable, R. A. “The Enthronement of Christ.” Includes biographical sketch and sermon as printed in *The Wilmington Messenger*, May 9, 1897.
1.42 1898 – Whitman, B. L. “The Foundations.” Includes sermon as reported in *Baptist Courier*, May 12, 1898, and in the *Norfolk Landmark*, May 7, 1898.
1.43 1899 – Truett, George W. “The Subject and Object of the Gospel.” Includes manuscript of sermon and biographical sketch.
1.44 1900 – Taylor, Joseph Judson. “Jesus Savior and King.” Includes manuscript of sermon and biographical sketch.

**Box 2**

2.1 1901 – Mullins, Edgar Young. “Kings and Priests Unto God.” Includes manuscript of sermon and biographical sketch.
2.2 1902 – McConnell, Fernando Coello. “The Doctrine of Missions.” Includes manuscript of sermon and biographical sketch.
2.5 1905 – Felix, William H. “Our Indebtedness to the World.” Includes manuscript of sermon and biographical sketch.
2.8 1908 – Battle, Henry Wilson. “God’s Everlasting Love.” Includes manuscript of sermon and biographical sketch.
2.12 1912 – Cody, Z. T. “The Call of the Cross.” Includes manuscript of sermon and biographical sketch.


2.14 1914 – McDaniel, George White. “Southern Baptists at Kadesh Barnea.” Includes manuscript of sermon and biographical sketch.


2.18 1918 – Geistweit, W. H. “Thy Will Be Done.” Includes manuscript of sermon and biographical sketch.

2.19 1919 – Dodd, Monroe Elmon. “The Baptist Hour.” Includes manuscript of sermon and biographical sketch.

2.20 1920 – White, John E. “Achievements and Rewards.” Includes manuscript of sermon and biographical sketch.

Box 3

3.1 1921 – Winburn, H. L. “We Walk by Faith.” Includes report of sermon from Baptist Courier, May 19, 1921.


3.3 1923 – Bowers, R. G. Includes comments on sermon from Baptist and Reflector, May 31, 1923.


3.5 1925 – Broughton, Len G. “Ye Have Not Passed This Way Heretofore.” Report of sermon from Baptist and Reflector, May 21, 1925, and manuscript of sermon.

3.6 1926 – Brown, F. F. “Material Prosperity and Soul Prosperity.” Includes manuscript of sermon.


3.10 1930 – Lee, Robert Greene. “God’s Gospel.” Includes correspondence, manuscript of sermon, and biographical sketch.

3.11 1931 – Phillips, John W. “The Kingdom.” Includes manuscript of sermon.


3.14 1934 – Holcomb, T. L. “Heaven’s Interest in Our Earthly Pilgrimage.” Includes manuscript of sermon.
3.17 1937 – Cousins, Solon B. “How Far Will We Permit Our Religion to Carry Us.” Includes manuscript of sermon.
3.19 1939 – Webb, Perry F. “Sources of Strength.” Includes correspondence and manuscript of sermon.
3.20 1940 – White I W. R. “Apostolic Distinctiveness.” Includes manuscript as printed in Baptist Messenger, June 13, 1940.
3.22 1942 – Fuller, Ellis A. “All Things Must Needs Be Fulfilled.” Includes manuscript as printed in Western Recorder, May 28, 1942.
3.23 1943 – Convention sessions deferred due to World War II.
3.24 1944 – Buchanan, John H. “The Debt We Still Owe.” Includes manuscript of sermon.
3.25 1945 – Centennial Convention sessions deferred due to World War II.
3.29 1949 – Cox, Norman W. “A Seat in the Balcony.” Includes manuscript of sermon.
3.30 1949 – President’s Address. Lee, Robert Greene. Includes manuscript of address.

Box 4
4.1 1953 – Landes, James H. “The Upward Look.” Includes manuscript of sermon, correspondence, and manuscript of sermon entitled “A Labor Given.”
4.2 1954 – Murphy, Slater. “Advancing With Christ as Lord.” Includes manuscript of sermon.
4.4 1956 – Stagg, Harry P. “Man’s Weakness Against Evil.” Includes manuscript of sermon, correspondence, and copy of New Mexican Baptist, June 14, 1956.
4.7 1959 – Caudill, R. Paul. “Behold His Glory.” Includes manuscript and correspondence.


4.25 1977 – Self, William L. “For Such a Time as This.” Includes lengthy biographical sketch, Wieuca Road Baptist Church statistics (1964 and 1977), manuscript of sermon, and printout of sermon.

4.26 1977 – President’s Address. Sullivan, James L. “Let the Church Reach Out.” Includes manuscript of address.


4.30 1981 – Monroe, James L. “Great is Thy Faithfulness.” Includes brief biographical sketch and copy of printout of sermon.

4.34 1985 – Fuller, Charles G. “Too Much to Lose.” Includes brief biographical sketch and printout of sermon.
4.43 1994 – Boyles, Bobby – Convention Sermon – Press Story
4.51 2002 – Thomas, Claude. “When the kingdom is in our heart.” SBC Annual.