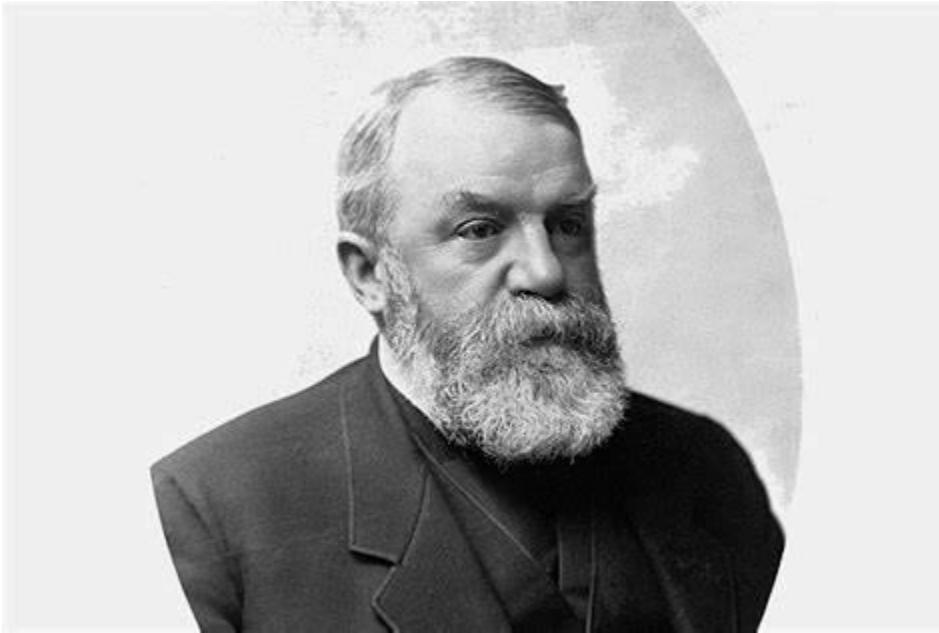


**Soul on Fire:
The Teachings and Life of Dwight L. Moody**
By

Jason Burns



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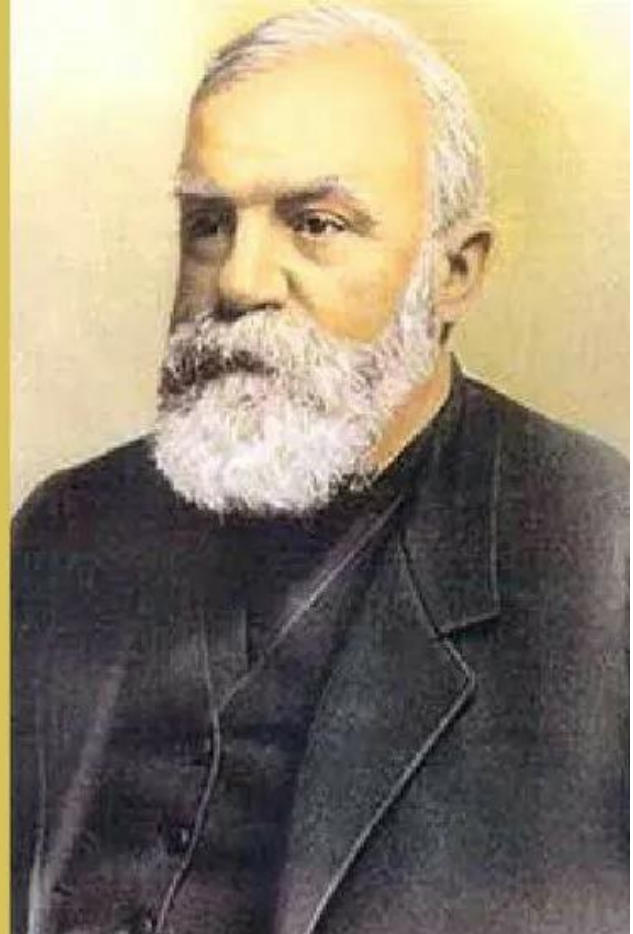
Appendix 1

Appendix 2

Appendix 3.

"If I could relive my life, I would devote my entire ministry to reaching children for God!"

Dwight L. Moody



1. Early life

Dwight L. Moody was born on February 5, 1837, in Northfield, Massachusetts, into a modest family that would ultimately shape his character and faith. He was the sixth child in a family of seven, born to Edwin J. Moody and Betsey Holton Moody. The family faced numerous challenges, particularly following the premature death of Dwight's father. Edwin J. Moody, a small farmer and stonemason, passed away when Dwight was

only four years old, leaving Betsey Moody to raise the remaining children alone.

Despite the scarcity of resources, Betsey demonstrated remarkable resilience. Only a month after Edwin's death, she gave birth to fraternal twins—a boy and a girl—adding to the burden of motherhood during an already challenging time. The loss of her husband placed tremendous strain on the family, yet Betsey, an untiring matriarch, worked various jobs, including the relentless tasks associated with managing a farm, to provide for her nine children. Her unwavering commitment to her children instilled in Dwight a deep sense of dedication and a desire for self-improvement.

As a child, Dwight exhibited a keen interest in the world around him but faced early academic struggles. His limited formal education was due in part to the family's financial hardships, requiring him to help with farm chores and work in local businesses to support the household. His mother prioritized her children's moral and spiritual education, and this environment laid the groundwork for Dwight's future endeavors in ministry.

Dwight's early exposure to spirituality came through the influence of his mother and the local church. Betsey Moody was devoted to her faith, instilling in her children the values of Christian living and moral integrity. Despite his early struggles, Dwight was remarkably resilient and curious, often found listening closely to sermons and religious teachings.

At the age of 17, in 1855, Dwight moved to Boston to seek his fortune. It was in this bustling city that he encountered significant life events that shaped his spiritual journey. Living in Boston exposed him to new ideas and people, one of whom was a Sunday school teacher who would have a profound impact on his life. This teacher encouraged Dwight to cultivate his faith and develop his spiritual gifts.

The story of Dwight L. Moody's early life is one of struggle, resilience, and eventual triumph. From a humble beginning, marked by loss and adversity, he would rise to become one of the most influential evangelists in American history. Moody's formative years provided him with the moral foundation, work ethic, and determination necessary to impact the world profoundly.

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MR. MOODY PREACHING IN THE GREAT OPERA HOUSE, HAYMARKET, LONDON.

2. Civil War

Dwight L. Moody's life and ministry unfolded against the backdrop of the American Civil War (1861-1865), a time of profound national turmoil and transformation. Born into a family marked by hardship, Moody's experiences during this tumultuous period would deeply influence his faith and ministry, shaping him into an evangelist known for his energy and commitment to serving others.

In the years preceding the war, Moody had moved to Chicago, where he began to immerse himself in the city's burgeoning urban culture. He started his

own Sunday school in 1858, in a dilapidated building once owned by a saloon-keeper. This unconventional choice of venue was symbolic of Moody's approach to ministry: he believed in reaching out to the impoverished and marginalized members of society. His first attempts, including reading Bible stories to children who often struggled with literacy, exemplified his radical faith and willingness to use any means necessary for the service of God.

A remarkable account from one of his early meetings illustrates Moody's commitment and the humble beginnings of his ministry. As described by a contemporary observer, "The first meeting I ever saw him at was in a little old shanty... the first thing I saw was a man standing up with a few tallow candles... holding a negro boy and trying to read to him the story of the Prodigal Son." Such moments not only captured the essence of his efforts but also highlighted the profound need for spiritual guidance during a time when societal divisions were starkly visible (Bliss, 1982).

As the Civil War raged on, the nation became engulfed in conflict that tested its moral and spiritual foundations. Moody found himself increasingly drawn to the spiritual needs of

soldiers and families affected by the war. He organized a variety of outreach initiatives, focusing on the welfare of the troops. He conducted prayer meetings, shared the gospel in camps, and sought to provide comfort to those facing the grim realities of battle and loss.

Moody's Sunday schools grew significantly during this period; within a year of their inception, the average attendance swelled to over 650, supported by 60 volunteers from various churches. This rapid development not only reflects Moody's dynamic leadership but also the increasing recognition of his work amidst the chaos of war. By November 25, 1860, his efforts garnered the attention of the nation's political leaders, including President Abraham Lincoln, who visited one of Moody's Sunday school meetings and spoke to the attendees, highlighting the importance of faith during challenging times (Sweeney, 2010).

As war casualties mounted and cities became battle-shattered landscapes, Moody's ministry became a beacon of hope. He sought to bridge the divides created by the war, focusing on the unity of purpose found in faith. His work emphasized love, compassion, and the need for redemption,

which resonated with many who were struggling to find meaning amid destruction.

Dwight L. Moody's experiences and actions during the Civil War not only marked a critical period in his life but also solidified his role as a national figure in American Christianity. Through his dedication and innovative methods of outreach during such trying times, he exemplified the transformative power of faith in action. His journey during this turbulent era would lay the groundwork for his later work as a prominent evangelist, whose legacy would extend far beyond the conflict that shaped his formative years.

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Chicago: The Bible Institute Colportage
Association.**



3. Chicago and the postwar years

The years following the Civil War marked a significant turning point in Dwight L. Moody's life

and ministry, particularly in the vibrant city of Chicago. In 1858, Moody established a Sunday school that quickly became a refuge for the children of a rapidly industrializing city. The Sunday school was not merely a place for religious education; it became a community hub for those in need. The growth of this congregation necessitated the establishment of a permanent home, prompting Moody to found the Illinois Street Church in 1864. This church became a beacon of hope during a time of social upheaval, serving as a testament to Moody's vision of inclusive ministry (Sweeney, 2010).

By the late 1860s, Moody had become an influential figure in Chicago's religious landscape. His energetic preaching style and charismatic personality attracted many, and his Sunday school flourished. In June 1871, attending an International Sunday School Convention in Indianapolis, he met the talented gospel singer Ira D. Sankey. Their partnership would soon prove transformative; Sankey became an integral part of Moody's evangelistic efforts, using music to enhance Moody's messages and reach even larger audiences (Bliss, 1982).

However, just a few months later, in October 1871, disaster struck when the Great Chicago Fire ravaged the city. The inferno destroyed Moody's church, his house, and the homes of many congregants. The devastation was extensive; families fled the flames, often escaping with little more than the clothes on their backs. Reflecting on the calamity, Moody famously remarked that he "saved nothing but his reputation and his Bible" (McBee, 1992). The fire not only tested Moody's faith but also served as an impetus for him to extend his reach, emphasizing the role of community and support in rebuilding.

In the aftermath of the disaster, Moody emerged as a resilient figure, determined to assist those affected by the fire. His efforts during this period were fundamental in providing solace and aid to the displaced. Wealthy Chicago businessman John V. Farwell, who had been a supporter of Moody's work, urged him to make Chicago his permanent home and offered to build a new house for him and his family. However, following the fire and buoyed by newfound fame, Moody faced a pivotal decision. The growing demand for his ministry extended beyond Chicago to cities like New York and Philadelphia. Ultimately, he opted for a tranquil farm in Northfield, Massachusetts,

deciding to return to his roots where he would find peace amid the chaos and pressures of fame (Sweeney, 2010).

Despite relocating, Moody's impact on Chicago remained significant. His work fostered a climate of evangelical fervor, engaging countless individuals and transforming lives. Moody's commitment to outreach continued, with initiatives aimed at providing education, humanitarian aid, and spiritual guidance not only during disasters but as a part of a sustained church effort.

As time went on, Moody solidified his remarkable reputation, encouraging the establishment of similar Sunday schools across the nation. His innovative approach to evangelism and education influenced generations. Throughout this turbulent yet formative period in Chicago's history, Moody emerged as a central figure of hope and resilience, demonstrating the profound influence of faith in times of crisis. The lessons learned and relationships forged during these years would play a critical role in the development of the modern evangelical movement in America.

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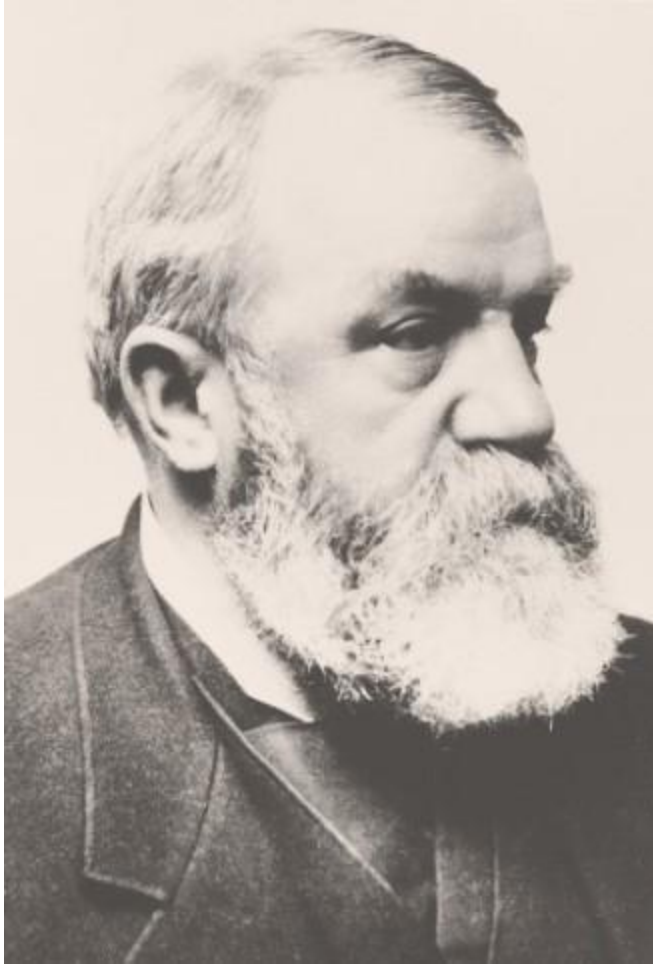
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4. Evangelistic travels

Dwight Lyman Moody's impact as an evangelist extended far beyond the borders of the United States, particularly during his landmark travels to the United Kingdom in the 1870s. These journeys marked a pivotal moment not only in Moody's own ministry but also in the broader landscape of evangelicalism in the 19th century.

Claiming a legacy as one of the greatest evangelists of his era, Moody's travels revealed an unparalleled ability

to connect with diverse audiences and deliver impassioned messages of faith.

In the spring of 1872, Moody embarked on his first major evangelistic tour of the United Kingdom. It was here that he truly emerged as a recognized figure in the realm of evangelism, preaching nearly a hundred times across various venues. His powerful oratory and passionate devotion resonated with large crowds, often filling venues that could accommodate between 2,000 to 4,000 attendees. His ability to draw such numbers was not merely a reflection of his charisma but also his sincere desire to reach the hearts of those seeking spiritual nourishment (Bloch, 2015).

One notable instance occurred in the Botanic Gardens Palace, where Moody attracted an audience that was estimated to range between 15,000 and 30,000 individuals. This monumental turnout not only illustrated the growing prominence of his ministry but also the deep hunger for spiritual revival that characterized Britain during this period. Moody himself reflected on these experiences, stating, "I never felt such a thirst for God; never felt such a spirit of prayer" (Sweeney, 2010).

During his travels, Moody formed meaningful connections with notable Christian figures of the time. In

Scotland, he received support and encouragement from Andrew A. Bonar, a prominent member of the Plymouth Brethren. These connections bolstered his reputation and reinforced the collaborative spirit of Christian evangelism. Furthermore, the esteemed London Baptist preacher Charles Spurgeon invited Moody to speak at his church, lending further credence to Moody's influence and reputation (Woolley, 1996). Spurgeon's endorsement not only enhanced Moody's profile but also symbolized a burgeoning alliance between American and British evangelicalism.

Upon returning to the United States, the momentum Moody had cultivated overseas continued unabated. He frequently attracted crowds ranging from 12,000 to 20,000, replicating the enthusiasm he had experienced in England (McBee, 1992). These large gatherings underscored the widespread appeal of his message and the way in which he galvanized people around themes of faith, redemption, and community.

Moody's prominence reached such heights that even President Ulysses S. Grant and members of his cabinet attended one of Moody's meetings, solidifying his status as a cultural and spiritual touchstone of the time. Such attendance by national leaders not only marked a

remarkable validation of Moody's significance but also reflected the intertwining of religion with the socio-political fabric of the nation during a time of change and reconstruction following the Civil War.

Throughout his evangelistic journeys, Moody employed various methods to engage with his audiences. He utilized music, often collaborating with Ira D. Sankey, whose gospel songs beautifully complemented Moody's messages. This combination of powerful preaching and moving music became a hallmark of Moody's ministry, creating an atmosphere that was not only emotionally resonant but also spiritually transformative.

Moody's evangelistic travels were not simply a collection of speaking engagements; they were a catalyst for spiritual awakening. His ability to draw large crowds and inspire them towards revitalization was a testament to his profound impact on 19th-century Christianity. As Moody continued on his path of fervent evangelism, he established a legacy that would endure long after his final meetings, influencing generations of Christians and shaping the world of evangelical outreach.

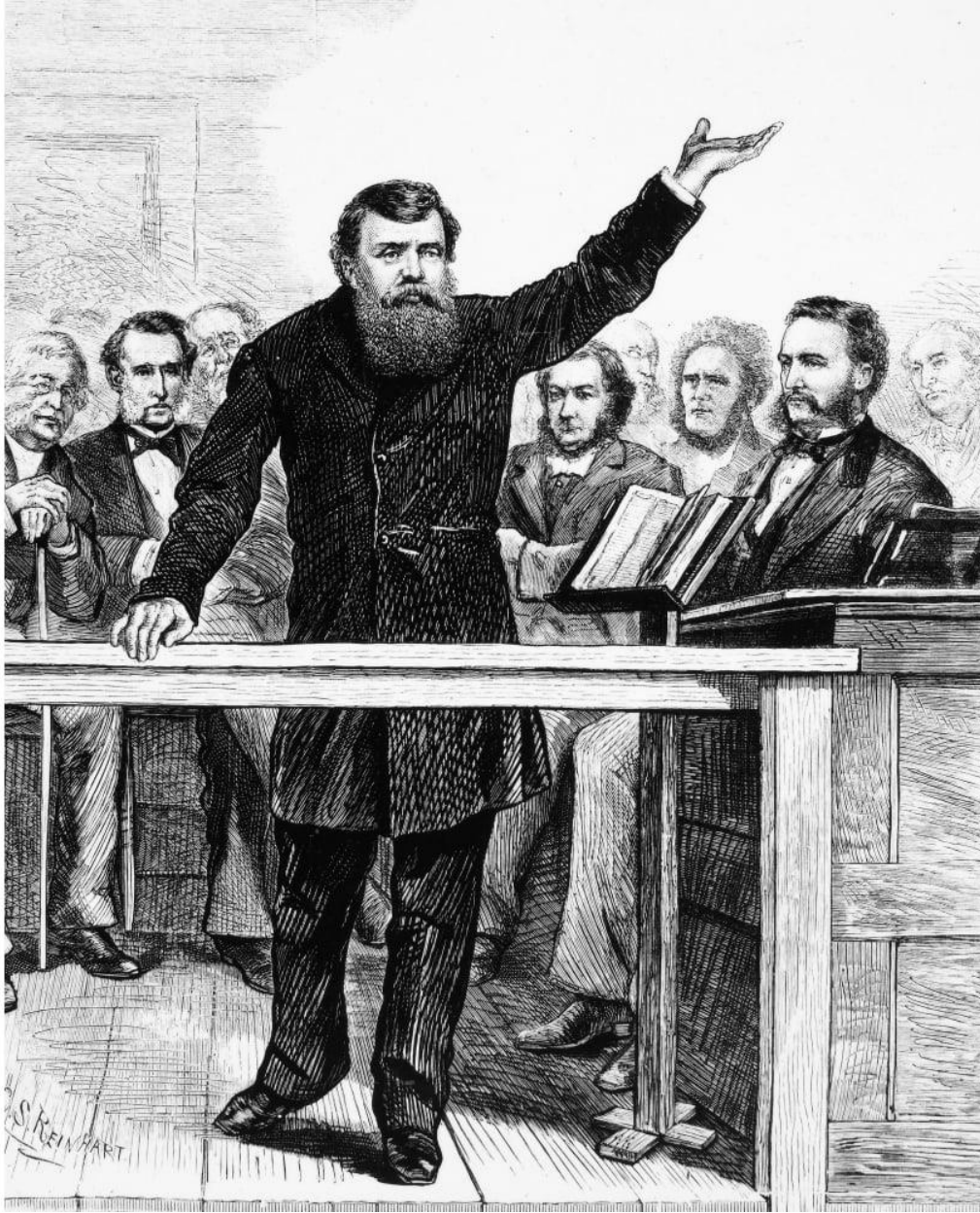
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5. International acclaim

Dwight L. Moody's ministry transcended national boundaries, earning him a legacy of profound international influence, particularly among the Swedish Mission Friends, known as Missionsvänner. Even though Moody never visited Sweden, spoke a word of Swedish,

or had direct ties to the Scandinavian region, his work resonated deeply among Swedish Christians both in Sweden and the United States. As a figure of revival, he became a beacon of hope and inspiration, influencing thousands of believers through the written word and fervent ministry where local congregations sought to emulate his methods and spirit (Carlsson, 2020).

The news of Moody's large-scale revival campaigns in Great Britain between 1873 and 1875 spread swiftly across Europe and reached Sweden, making “Mr. Moody” a household name among Mission Friends. His dynamic preaching style and messages of hope appealed to many who were yearning for spiritual renewal during a time of social change. His sermons were widely translated and published in Sweden, leading to a surge of enthusiasm among believers. They were disseminated through books, newspapers, and colporteur tracts, fostering what came to be known as Sweden's "Moody fever" from 1875 to 1880 (Lundgren, 2016).

This "Moody fever" was characterized by fervent prayer meetings, increased church attendance, and a revitalized commitment to evangelism within Swedish communities. The accessibility of Moody's writings allowed influential messages of revival to circulate,

including his thoughts on personal holiness, faith, and the necessity of conversion. His teachings emboldened a generation of Swedish evangelicals to take an active role in sharing their faith, leading to significant growth in home missions and other outreach efforts (Hägglund, 2012).

Despite not being of Swedish descent or directly engaged with the culture, Moody's impact within these communities signifies the universal appeal of his message and the ability of an evangelist to inspire faith across different cultures and languages. His growing popularity illustrated how a single evangelistic figure could create a ripple effect, encouraging the emergence of local leaders and fostering new movements.

On November 16, 1899, Moody preached his final sermon in Kansas City, Missouri, unaware that his life and influence were nearing an end. Friends and colleagues had recently noted his rapid weight gain—adding around 30 pounds (14 kg) to his already substantial frame—an indication that something was amiss. Though his illness was never definitively diagnosed, speculation arose regarding congestive heart failure as a possible cause (McBee, 1992).

Following that last sermon, Moody returned home by train to Northfield, Massachusetts, where he spent his final days surrounded by family. He passed away on December 26, 1899, leaving behind a legacy that would resonate with many future generations of believers around the world. The Chicago Bible Institute quickly moved to fill the void left by his untimely death, with R. A. Torrey being appointed as his successor. Torrey, who had been a loyal collaborator and supporter of Moody's vision, took on the mantle of leadership, ensuring the continuation of the mission and the principles that Moody had championed throughout his life (Sweeney, 2010).

In the wake of his death, the influence of Dwight L. Moody continued to grow, inspiring movements across continents and encouraging believers to engage in personal evangelism and social outreach. His remarkable ability to convey the Gospel's blessings, regardless of cultural or linguistic barriers, stands as a testament to the unifying power of faith and the universal search for spiritual truth.

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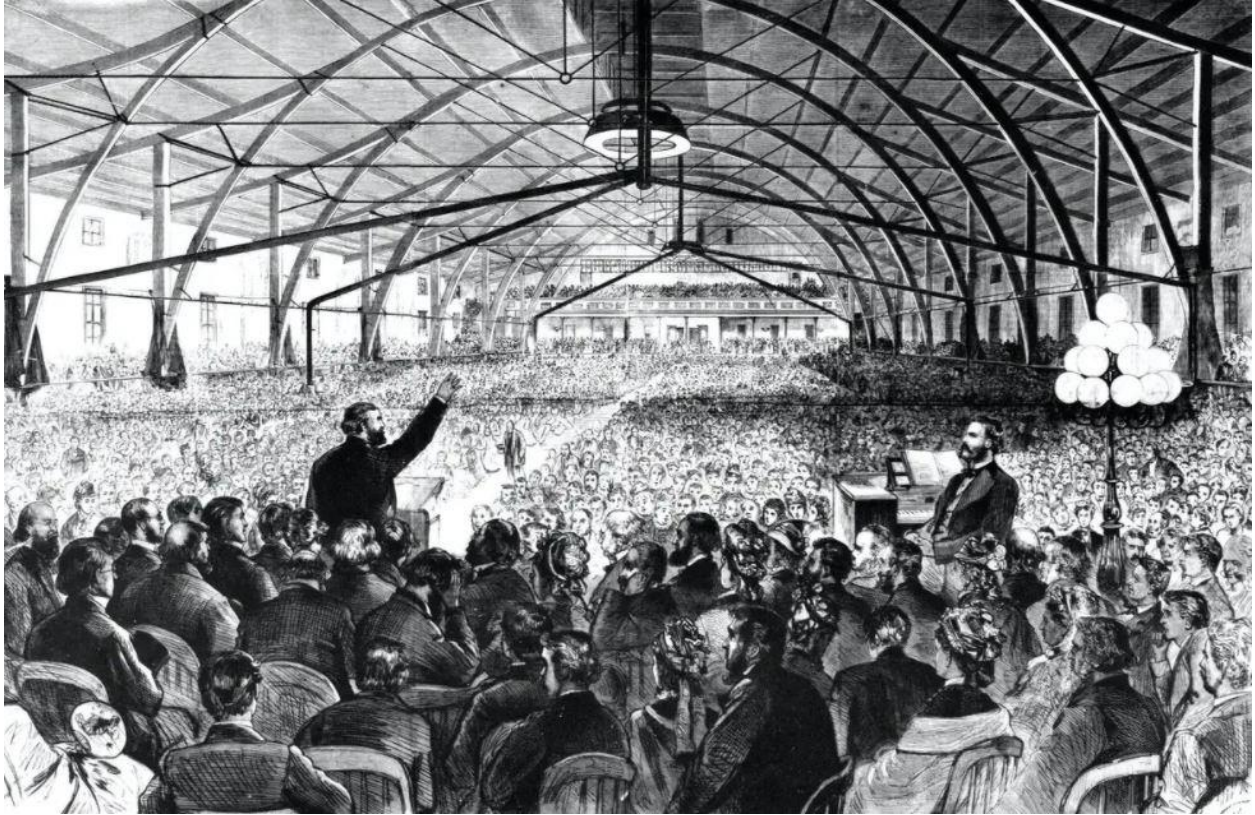
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6. Legacy

The legacy of Dwight L. Moody is both profound and lasting, transcending his own lifetime and shaping the trajectory of evangelical Protestantism in America and beyond. As James Findlay aptly describes, Moody was emblematic of the "businessman in clerical garb," a representation of the popular religious movement that took root in late 19th-century America. His appearance—bearded, robust, and donned in a dark business suit—contrasted sharply with the orthodox clerical attire of his predecessors. This visual presentation underscored his approach to

evangelism: relatable, accessible, and infused with an energy that resonated with thousands (Findlay, 2002).

Moody's contributions cannot be overstated; he is often credited with adapting the revivalist tradition to suit the urban and industrial context of his time. Before Moody, many evangelistic efforts were often relegated to rural areas or smaller towns. However, his ability to attract vast urban crowds demonstrated how revivalism could thrive within burgeoning cities—where growing populations hungered for spiritual guidance amidst rapid social changes. As Moody himself famously stated, “The church is not a museum for saints but a hospital for sinners,” which reflects his understanding of the church's role in an urbanized society (McBee, 1992).

One of Moody's most revolutionary contributions was his keen organizational ability. He transformed the chaos of revival campaigns into structured, well-orchestrated events, particularly evident in his British campaigns between 1873 and 1875. By employing methods including extensive advertising, strategic partnerships with local churches, and the use of music—most notably through his collaboration with Ira D. Sankey—

Moody created a blueprint for modern mass revivalism (Hägglund, 2012). His tactics set a precedent, leading future evangelists to mold their practices around his successful framework.

Another crucial aspect of Moody's legacy is his emphasis on lay participation in evangelism. Recognizing that many of the faithful were eager to share the message of Christ, he mobilized ordinary church members to take active roles in revival efforts. This democratically-minded approach not only broadened the reach of the Gospel but also fostered a sense of community engagement within the church, galvanizing many to contribute to the spread of Christianity in their local contexts (Lundgren, 2016).

After Moody's death in 1899, his influence continued to shape the evangelical landscape. The Chicago Bible Institute, which he founded, became a critical training ground for future evangelical leaders. R. A. Torrey, his handpicked successor, expanded upon Moody's vision, ensuring that his methodologies continued to influence evangelical education and outreach (Sweeney, 2010). Moody's emphasis on biblical literacy, personal piety, and community service permeated the curriculum, which emphasized not only the spiritual

formation of students but also their practical training to engage with an increasingly complex world.

Furthermore, Moody's impact is evident in the ongoing legacy of mass evangelism. Modern movements—such as those led by Billy Graham and later, organizations like the Alpha Course—exhibit the same fervor for outreach and revival that characterized Moody's own campaigns. Evangelists of the 20th and 21st centuries often cite Moody as a foundational figure whose methodologies and passion for the Gospel inspired them to engage with society in transformative ways (Findlay, 2002).

In reflecting on Moody's legacy, it is vital to acknowledge not merely his organizational skills or his remarkable ability to reach the masses, but also his indomitable spirit and his relentless pursuit of souls for Christ. His life and work brought millions into the fold of faith, and as his biography states, "He regarded every encounter, every meeting, as a divine appointment," reminding believers of the eternal significance of their everyday interactions (McBee, 1992).

Ultimately, the legacy of Dwight L. Moody is one of radical transformation—spanning culture,

methodology, and the very heart of evangelical faith. His life's work continues to resonate today, reminding the global church of the urgent call to share the love of Christ in ever-evolving contexts.

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7. Prevailing Prayer—What Hinders it?

This book had an influence on D L Moody

Prevailing Prayer—What Hinders It? by founding author and prayer advocate E.M. Bounds is an insightful examination into the transformative power of prayer and the various barriers that can obstruct its effectiveness. Published by Diggory Press (ISBN 978-1-84685-803-1), this book is an essential read for anyone looking to deepen their understanding of prayer's role in a believer's life and ministry.

E.M. Bounds, known for his passionate advocacy for prayer, brings to light the numerous hindrances that can disrupt our communication with God. The book delves into both personal and institutional obstacles that

impede a vibrant prayer life. From the distractions of modern life and spiritual apathy to the weight of unconfessed sin, Bounds carefully articulates these challenges while offering practical solutions rooted in Scripture.

One of the standout features of this book is Bounds' ability to combine theological depth with practical application. He provides readers with a clear framework to identify and overcome the barriers to prevailing prayer. The chapters are structured in a way that allows readers to digest the information easily, making profound insights accessible to both seasoned prayer warriors and those new to the discipline.

Bounds emphasizes the necessity of a sincere heart when approaching God in prayer, illustrating that it is not merely the act of praying that is significant, but the attitude and faith with which one approaches the divine. His emphasis on the importance of faith lays a solid foundation for understanding how persistence and devotion can break through the hindrances to effective prayer.

The writing style is engaging and thought-provoking, encouraging readers to reflect on their own prayer practices and the barriers they may face. Bounds

references biblical examples and personal anecdotes that resonate with the reader, making the material relatable and impactful. The call to action woven throughout the text serves as both a challenge and an encouragement, prompting believers to examine their own lives and seek a deeper, more meaningful prayer experience.

While the book draws from historical context and Biblical principles, it is also firmly rooted in contemporary relevance, addressing issues that modern believers encounter in their spiritual lives. This dual emphasis enables readers to connect the timeless truths of prayer with the unique challenges of today's world.

Critically, readers might note that the book presupposes the reader's familiarity with Biblical scripture and spiritual disciplines. While this may resonate with committed Christians, newcomers may find some concepts complex. However, Bounds' unapologetic approach to prayer emphasizes that the journey towards overcoming hindrances begins with a sincere heart and a desire to grow.

Overall, Prevailing Prayer—What Hinders It? serves as an encouraging and enlightening resource for anyone seeking to strengthen their prayer life. E.M. Bounds'

passionate appeal for a deeper commitment to prayer is both inspiring and practical, equipping readers to confront the barriers that may hinder their connection with God. This book is highly recommended for individuals or small groups looking to cultivate a more powerful and impactful prayer life, making it a valuable addition to any Christian library.



8. *Secret Power*

This is another book that had a major impact on D L Moody.

Secret Power, authored by the influential prayer advocate E.M. Bounds and published by Diggory Press (ISBN 978-1-84685-802-4), is a compelling exploration of

the profound relationship between prayer and spiritual empowerment. In this enlightening work, Bounds emphasizes that the true source of a believer's strength lies not in self-reliance or human efforts but in the dependency on prayer and the divine presence of the Holy Spirit.

The book is meticulously crafted, featuring Bounds' signature style blending fervent passion with theological insight. He presents prayer not merely as a ritualistic act but as an avenue for divine power that enables believers to impact their world meaningfully. The concept of "secret power" refers to the hidden strength available to Christians who earnestly seek God, and Bounds articulates this idea with clarity and conviction.

One of the notable strengths of Secret Power is its grounding in scripture. Bounds masterfully interweaves biblical references throughout the text, providing readers with a foundation for understanding the significant role of prayer in accessing divine power. His examination of figures from the Bible—such as Jesus, the apostles, and early church leaders—serves as exemplary models of how effective prayer life fuels extraordinary spiritual accomplishments.

Bounds also highlights the importance of holiness and personal integrity as prerequisites for experiencing the power of prayer. He argues that a believer's character and moral life directly influence their ability to connect with God. This call to holiness adds a layer of accountability that challenges readers to reflect on their own lives and strive for greater spiritual purity.

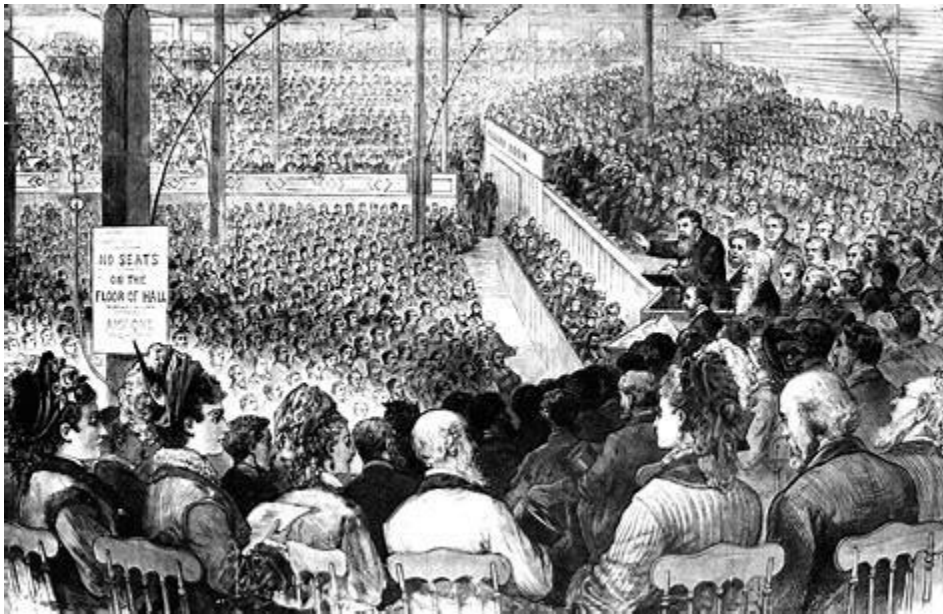
The tone of the book is both encouraging and challenging. Bounds passionately implores readers to cultivate a disciplined prayer life, revealing that persistent, fervent prayer can lead to remarkable changes in one's spiritual journey. He emphasizes that prayer is not merely about asking for things but engaging in a life-altering dialogue with God that transforms the believer from the inside out.

While the book is rich in spiritual insights, it is essential to note that it assumes a certain level of familiarity with Christian doctrine and practice. Newer believers may find some theological concepts complex, but Bounds' earnestness and clarity help make these challenging ideas more approachable.

Secret Power could serve as an excellent resource for individual readers, small groups, or church studies seeking to deepen their commitment to prayer. Bounds' passionate writing encourages a transformative act of

faith rather than a passive understanding of prayer. By the end of the book, readers are left with a sense of urgency and an invitation to experience the secret power that comes from a close relationship with God through prayer.

In conclusion, Secret Power is a deeply inspiring and practical guide for Christians who desire to tap into the divine resources available to them through prayer. E.M. Bounds' timeless wisdom and fervor for prayer make this book a vital addition to any believer's library, encouraging a richer, more powerful prayer life that can lead to profound spiritual impact and personal transformation. Highly recommended for those seeking to unlock the "secret power" of prayer in their lives.



9. Also, A Life for Christ—What a Normal Christian Life Looks Like

In exploring the question of what constitutes a "normal" Christian life, we must turn our attention to the transformative power of faith and the guiding influence of Scripture. As I, D.L. Moody, have experienced throughout my ministry, a normal Christian life is one deeply rooted in a personal relationship with Jesus Christ, manifested through love, obedience, and a fervent commitment to share the Good News with the world.

The Foundation of Faith

At the heart of a normal Christian life lies the essential belief in Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord. It is through this faith that we become new creations (2 Corinthians 5:17), transformed by His grace. This transformation is not merely a change in behavior, but a radical rebirth that alters our desires, priorities, and perspectives. A normal Christian life begins with the acknowledgment of our need for salvation and the acceptance of God's grace as the catalyst for change.

As the Apostle Paul reminds us in Ephesians 2:8-9, "For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, not of works, lest anyone should boast." This gift of grace sets the stage for

a life that seeks to glorify God and live according to His will.

Living in Relationship

A normal Christian life flourishes not in isolation but in relationship—with God and with others. Our relationship with God is nurtured through prayer, scripture reading, and worship. Prayer is the lifeline, a means of conversing with our Creator, expressing our joys, sorrows, and aspirations. In the quiet recesses of our hearts, we meet God, and it is in those sacred moments that He molds and shapes us into His likeness.

Furthermore, Scripture serves as our guide, illuminating our path and providing wisdom for daily living. Psalm 119:105 tells us, "Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path." As we immerse ourselves in God's Word, we begin to understand His character and desires for our lives.

Equally essential is community. A normal Christian life thrives in the context of fellowship with other believers. We are called to encourage one another, bear each other's burdens, and grow together in faith (Galatians 6:2). The early church exemplified this communal living, as they devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching, fellowship, breaking of bread, and prayer (Acts 2:42). In

sharing our lives with one another, we reflect the love of Christ.

A Life of Service

A hallmark of a normal Christian life is selfless service to others. As followers of Christ, we are called to emulate His example of humility and sacrifice. Jesus, the very Son of God, came not to be served but to serve (Mark 10:45). This sacrificial love compels us to look beyond ourselves, reaching out to those in need and extending grace to the hurting.

Transformational service can manifest in many forms—whether through acts of kindness in our communities, involvement in missions, or simply being present for those who are lonely. Jesus taught us that when we serve the least of these, we serve Him (Matthew 25:40). When we align our lives with His priorities, we become effective witnesses to the world, reflecting His light and love.

The Power of the Holy Spirit

A normal Christian life is also characterized by the active presence of the Holy Spirit. Upon accepting Christ, we receive the Holy Spirit as our comforter and guide (John 14:16-17). The Spirit empowers us to live a life that honors God, producing fruit that reflects Christ's

character—love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control (Galatians 5:22-23).

Embracing the Holy Spirit's guidance enables us to walk in obedience, enabling us to resist sin and pursue righteousness. It is through the Spirit that we find strength in weakness, courage in fear, and hope in despair.

Conclusion

In conclusion, a normal Christian life is one that is infused with faith, rooted in a personal relationship with Jesus, characterized by love and service, sustained by community, and empowered by the Holy Spirit. It is a life that continually seeks to know God more deeply and to make Him known to others.

As I reflect on the life of Christ and His teachings, I am continually reminded that the normal Christian life is not measured by human standards but is defined by our willingness to surrender to God's will and purpose. May we daily seek His face, embrace His grace, and live out the extraordinary normality of a life devoted to Christ.



10. *The Way to God and How to Find it*

D.L. Moody's *The Way to God and How to Find It* is a profound and heartfelt exploration of the Christian faith that serves as both an invitation and a guide for those seeking a deeper relationship with God. Written in the late 19th century, this classic work continues to resonate

with readers who are on a spiritual quest, offering clarity and direction for those yearning to understand the path to salvation.

Overview

The book is structured simply yet effectively, making it accessible for readers of all backgrounds and levels of faith. Moody begins by addressing the fundamental questions about human existence and the need for a relationship with the Divine. He emphasizes that the search for God is not merely a theoretical exercise but a deeply personal journey that every individual must undertake.

Clear Message of Salvation

One of the book's most significant strengths is its clear and compelling message about salvation through Jesus Christ. Moody eloquently articulates the Gospel, explaining that humanity's separation from God due to sin can only be reconciled through faith in Jesus. He draws from Scripture to illuminate key passages and concepts, making the good news of Christ's sacrificial love approachable and understandable.

Moody writes with an earnestness that reflects his own passionate faith and desire to see others come to know

God. His assurance that salvation is a gift available to all who believe provides hope to those wrestling with despair or self-doubt. The universal invitation to grace is a central theme, reminding readers that God's love extends beyond societal barriers, offering redemption to everyone.

Practical Steps to Faith

In addition to articulating the theology of salvation, Moody provides practical insights on how individuals can actively seek a relationship with God. He discusses the importance of prayer, reading Scriptures, and participating in a community of believers. His emphasis on prayer as both a dialogue with God and a means of deepening one's faith is particularly impactful in the context of a busy modern life.

Moody also encourages readers to open their hearts to the workings of the Holy Spirit, urging them to be receptive to God's guidance. This practical approach serves to demystify what it means to find God, making the pursuit of a devoted life attainable for anyone.

Engaging Style and Accessibility

Moody's writing style is engaging and approachable, filled with illustrative anecdotes and real-life

applications that resonate with his audience. His ability to connect profound theological concepts with everyday experiences makes the book not only informative but also relatable. Readers will find themselves drawn into the narrative, feeling as though they are part of a heartfelt conversation with a wise and caring mentor.

Conclusion

The Way to God and How to Find It stands as a testament to D.L. Moody's legacy as one of the great evangelists of his time. His passion for soul-winning and his desire to lead others to Christ permeate every page of this work. For anyone seeking clarity on the path to God, this book serves as a valuable resource that combines theological depth with practical guidance.

In an age where spiritual questions abound, Moody's timeless insights continue to offer reassurance and direction. Whether you are a newcomer to the Christian faith or someone looking to deepen your spiritual journey, The Way to God and How to Find It invites you to embark on a transformative path towards a life fully surrendered to God. It is a must-read for those yearning to experience the fullness of God's love and grace.



sermon index

11. The Theology of D L Moody

D.L. Moody, one of the most significant evangelists of the 19th century, was a man whose life and ministry reflected a profound commitment to the teachings of Christ. His theology, while not formally organized like that of systematic theologians, can be discerned through his preaching, writings, and personal convictions.

Moody's theological framework was characterized by simplicity, practicality, and a deep pastoral concern for humanity's spiritual welfare. This chapter explores the key elements of Moody's theology, emphasizing his views

on salvation, the nature of God, the role of the Holy Spirit, and the significance of the Church.

1. The Nature of God

Moody held a firm belief in the sovereignty and love of God. He emphasized both God's majesty and His intimate desire for a relationship with humanity. Moody often referred to God as a loving Father, who desires to forgive and restore His creation to a right relationship with Him. As he stated, “God is more willing to forgive than we are to offend” (Moody, The Way to God). This insight reflects a blend of justice and mercy at the heart of Moody's theology.

Moody also emphasized God's omnipotence and omniscience, recognizing that God is actively involved in the affairs of the world and in the lives of individuals. This belief underscored his urgency in evangelism, as he viewed every person as a soul destined for eternity and in need of redemption.

2. The Doctrine of Man and Sin

Moody's view of humanity was grounded in the biblical narrative of creation and fall. He acknowledged the dignity of human beings as made in the image of God but also stressed the reality of sin's pervasive influence

(Genesis 1:26-27; Romans 3:23). He believed that sin separated humanity from God, creating an urgent need for redemption.

In his evangelistic efforts, Moody often highlighted the seriousness of sin and its consequences. He stated, “The law sends us to Christ to be justified, and Christ sends us to the law to be regulated” (Moody, The Way to God). This encapsulates his understanding of the need for moral law and the transformative power of Christ’s grace.

3. Salvation through Christ

Central to Moody's theology is the doctrine of salvation through faith in Jesus Christ. He preached a straightforward Gospel, emphasizing that salvation is a gift received through faith (Ephesians 2:8-9). For Moody, this gift was not only available but accessible to everyone, regardless of their past (Romans 10:13).

Moody’s emphasis on a personal relationship with Christ made his theological approach practical and heartfelt. He believed that true conversion involved a genuine encounter with the living Christ, resulting in transformation and a new life. This conversion experience was not merely intellectual assent but a heartfelt commitment that led to a changed life manifesting in good works and service.

4. The Role of the Holy Spirit

Moody held a robust belief in the Holy Spirit's active role in the life of the believer. He emphasized that after accepting Christ, individuals receive the Holy Spirit, who empowers them for holiness and service. He famously stated, "The Holy Spirit can go where I cannot, and do what I cannot" (Moody, The Spirit of God), reflecting his belief in the Spirit's omnipresence and transformative power.

Additionally, Moody advocated for a deeper experience of the Holy Spirit, sometimes referred to as the "baptism of the Holy Spirit." He believed that this experience empowered believers for evangelism and ministry. Moody encouraged Christians to be open to the Spirit's leading, emphasizing that spiritual growth and effectiveness in ministry depend on this divine enablement.

5. The Nature and Purpose of the Church

Moody viewed the Church as a vital instrument for spreading the Gospel and nurturing believers. He had a strong commitment to evangelism, believing that the Church's primary mission was to proclaim Christ and make disciples (Matthew 28:19-20). His own ministry reflected this conviction, as he organized revival

meetings and established institutions like the Moody Bible Institute to equip believers for service.

Moreover, Moody emphasized the necessity of community among believers. He often remarked that Christianity is not a solitary endeavor but a collective journey. As he put it, “I am glad to know that there is a time coming when we will all be in heaven together” (Moody, *The Way to God*). This communal aspect of faith is vital in Moody's theology, showcasing the importance of fellowship and mutual encouragement within the body of Christ.

Conclusion

D.L. Moody's theology, characterized by its simplicity, practicality, and pastoral concern, continues to resonate with believers today. His emphasis on God's love, the gravity of sin, the necessity of personal faith in Christ, the empowering presence of the Holy Spirit, and the mission of the Church remains relevant to contemporary Christians. Moody's life was a testimony that true theology is most authentically lived out through service, love, and an unwavering commitment to the Gospel. As he once said, “It is better to train up a child in the way he should go, than to repair a man when he is old” (Moody, *Thoughts on Soul Winning*), reflecting his understanding

of faith not only as a belief system but as a transformative journey shaping the hearts and minds of future generations.

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12. The Evangelistic method of D L Moody

D.L. Moody is a towering figure in the history of Evangelical Christianity, known for his dynamic preaching and innovative evangelistic methods. His approach combined fervent spiritual conviction, personal engagement, and practical strategies that led to the conversion of thousands. This chapter will explore the distinctive elements of Moody's evangelistic methodology, emphasizing his emphasis on personal relationships, the power of storytelling, the use of prayer, and the role of the church in evangelism.

1. Personal Evangelism

At the heart of Moody's evangelistic method was a commitment to personal evangelism. Moody believed that each believer was called to witness to their faith in their daily lives. He often stated that the most effective evangelism happened in one-on-one conversations rather than large public gatherings. His approach was rooted in genuine love and concern for individuals, often tailored to their unique circumstances and needs.

Moody famously said, “I will not let my faith be confined to the church – I will take it to the streets” (Moody, The Way to God). This belief drove him to engage with people from all walks of life, whether in homes, workplaces, or public gatherings. He established a natural connection

with individuals, often meeting them where they were at spiritually and emotionally.

2. The Power of Storytelling

Moody was a master storyteller, adept at using anecdotes and illustrations to convey profound spiritual truths. He understood that stories resonate with people, making complex theological concepts more relatable and easier to grasp. His sermons were often peppered with vivid narratives, which served to capture his audience's attention and foster an emotional connection to the Gospel message.

In his preaching, Moody used everyday experiences, personal testimonies, and biblical parables to illustrate his points. He believed that a well-told story could pierce hearts and compel listeners to respond to the message of Christ. As he remarked, “I never saw a man who did not respond to a story – it is the greatest weapon of the evangelist” (Schmidt, D.L. Moody: The American Evangelist).

3. Prayer as a Foundation

Moody placed immense importance on prayer as an integral part of his evangelistic method. He believed that prayer was essential not only for personal spiritual

growth but also for effective ministry. Moody often convened prayer meetings, acknowledging that the power behind his evangelistic outreach was rooted in supplication and reliance on God.

He stated, “Every great movement of God can be traced to a kneeling figure” (Moody, How to Study the Bible). This conviction translated into his meetings, where he would lead the congregation in fervent prayer, asking for God’s presence and work among them. Moody understood that evangelism was not merely a human effort but required divine intervention to truly impact lives.

4. Utilization of the Church

While Moody was known for his large revival meetings, he continuously emphasized the role of the local church in evangelism. He believed that while mass gatherings could spark interest and provide an initial catalyst for faith, genuine discipleship and growth primarily occurred within the church community. Moody sought to equip churches to follow up with those who made decisions for Christ during his crusades.

He established institutions like the Moody Bible Institute to train and prepare future evangelists and church leaders, ensuring that sound biblical teaching and

effective outreach continued beyond his personal ministry. According to Moody, “The church is not the place to go for relief – it is the place to get the Gospel” (Moody, The Way to God).

5. Adaptability and Innovation

Moody was known for his willingness to adapt and innovate in his evangelistic methods. He embraced new technologies of his time, including the use of hymns, printed literature, and even outdoor meetings to reach a broader audience. His famous use of gospel music, including hymn writers like Ira Sankey, helped to create an inviting and uplifting atmosphere during meetings.

Moody’s adaptability was evident in his approach to sermons — he often modified his messages based on the audience’s reactions or the specific needs of the community he was addressing. This flexibility allowed him to remain relevant and effective, reflecting his understanding of the importance of context in evangelism. As he noted, “The Gospel addresses the need, not the theory” (Moody, The Spirit of God).

Conclusion

D.L. Moody’s evangelistic method remains a model for contemporary evangelism, blending personal

engagement with a reliance on prayer, storytelling, and church involvement. His approach was characterized by a deep love for people, an unwavering commitment to the Gospel, and an innovative spirit that allowed him to reach diverse audiences. Moody's legacy is a testimony to the transformative power of effective evangelism rooted in faith, compassion, and divine guidance. As he once stated, "We may have as much of God as we are willing to ask for" (Moody, How to Study the Bible), encouraging all evangelists to boldly seek God's leading and empowerment as they share the Good News.

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13. Lessons For Today

D.L. Moody's life and ministry serve as a powerful example of faith in action, offering invaluable lessons for today's Christian community. From his humble beginnings to becoming one of the most influential evangelists of the 19th century, Moody's legacy transcends his era, providing insights for modern believers on evangelism, faith, leadership, and the importance of service. This chapter will explore key lessons drawn from Moody's life and how they can be applied in today's context.

1. The Power of Personal Conviction

D.L. Moody's life was undergirded by a deep personal conviction of faith. He was transformed by his encounter with Christ, which ignited a passion for evangelism and

the desire to share the Gospel with others. Moody's understanding that personal salvation must lead to proactive sharing is a lesson for contemporary believers.

Many believers today struggle to articulate their faith or share their personal testimony. Moody's example reminds us that conviction fosters action. As he stated, "A man can preach no better than he prays" (Moody, The Way to God). This underscores the necessity of a genuine relationship with Christ that moves believers to act. The lesson for today is that authentic transformation in our lives should compel us to share our faith boldly and compassionately.

2. The Importance of Prayer

Moody placed a strong emphasis on the power of prayer as a foundational element of his ministry. He believed that prayer was essential for personal spiritual growth and for effective outreach. His life exemplified a commitment to prayer, both individually and corporately.

He famously remarked, "God does not expect the impossible from us. He wants us to expect the impossible from Him" (Moody, The Spirit of God). This perspective is critical for today's believers who often rely solely on their efforts without seeking divine assistance. The lesson here is that prayer should be viewed as a

source of strength rather than a last resort. It is through prayer that we align our hearts with God's purpose and invite His power into our endeavors.

3. Engaging with the Culture

Moody demonstrated an innate ability to connect with diverse audiences and adapt his message to meet people where they were. He understood the significance of cultural relevance in evangelism and sought to employ contemporary methods, such as using music and storytelling to engage listeners.

Modern believers are challenged to be culturally aware and sensitive in their interactions, just as Moody was. As he noted, "We must get people's heads and hearts in order to get them to accept Christ" (Schmidt, D.L. Moody: The American Evangelist). This lesson is especially pertinent as churches and ministries seek to reach a broadening demographic. Building relationships within varied social contexts allows for a more meaningful Gospel presentation.

4. The Unity of the Church

One of Moody's significant contributions was his emphasis on the unity of believers across denominational lines. He sought to bring together

Christians of different backgrounds for the common purpose of evangelism, recognizing that all believers are part of the body of Christ.

In a time where divisions often predominate, Moody's example urges today's church to pursue unity in mission over differences in doctrine. "We are all on the same road, though we may be in different trains" (Moody, How to Study the Bible), he said, advocating collaboration and mutual support among Christians. The lesson for today's context is clear: focusing on shared beliefs and purposes can strengthen church outreach and foster a more profound witness to the world.

5. Commitment to Social Responsibility

Moody's ministry included a strong emphasis on meeting the needs of the poor and marginalized. Recognizing that the Gospel is not just spiritual but has societal implications, he engaged in social issues as an extension of his evangelistic efforts. He founded the Chicago YMCA and established a school for underprivileged children, reflecting his belief that love for Christ should translate into action.

Modern believers are encouraged to view social responsibility as a vital aspect of their faith. As Moody articulated, "The Gospel is not an exclusive message. It

is the message of a Savior who is compassionate to the needs of all” (Moody, Thoughts on Soul Winning). The lessons of compassion and advocacy for justice remain relevant, urging Christians today to embody a holistic faith that speaks to both spiritual and physical needs.

6. Lifelong Learning and Growth

Moody was an advocate for lifelong learning, consistently seeking to grow in his knowledge of the Scriptures and his understanding of God’s will. Despite his successes, he remained humble and dependent on God’s guidance.

He asserted, “I never stop learning; I am always looking for a deeper understanding of God's Word” (Moody, The Spirit of God). In a rapidly changing world, this lesson is crucial. Believers are called to continually engage with Scripture, prayer, and community to adapt and grow in their faith, ensuring that they are equipped to face new challenges and opportunities.

Conclusion

D.L. Moody's life offers rich lessons for contemporary believers seeking to embody their faith in action. From cultivating a personal conviction to engaging compassionately with the world, Moody’s legacy inspires a holistic approach to Christian life and ministry. His

emphasis on prayer, cultural engagement, unity within the church, social responsibility, and lifelong learning remains essential for Christians today as they navigate the complexities of modern life. As we reflect on Moody's example, may we be inspired to embrace our calling with boldness, compassion, and a commitment to glorifying God through our lives and ministries.



14 A Great Leader

D.L. Moody stands out as one of the most influential Christian leaders in the 19th century, renowned for his evangelistic fervor and innovative ministry methods. His impact on evangelism, discipleship, and Christian education continues to resonate with believers today. This chapter explores Moody's remarkable leadership

qualities, including his vision, commitment to prayer, ability to communicate effectively, and focus on training others to carry on the mission.

1. Visionary Leadership

D.L. Moody was a visionary leader, driven by a profound sense of purpose. From his early days as a shoe salesman working in Chicago to becoming an acclaimed evangelist, Moody had a clear vision of reaching the lost and spreading the Gospel message. He worked tirelessly to fulfill this vision, initiating revival meetings and prayer gatherings in various cities across the United States and beyond.

His broader vision extended to global evangelism, believing that the message of Christ was meant for all people. His commitment to outreach and his understanding of the power of collective prayer led him to develop a network of supporters and collaborators. Moody stated, “The world has yet to see what God can do with a man fully consecrated to Him” (Moody, The Way to God). His visionary leadership encouraged many to step out in faith and pursue evangelism in their communities.

2. Commitment to Prayer

Prayer was at the center of Moody's leadership and ministry. He recognized prayer's essential role in seeking God's guidance and power for effective ministry. He often commented on the necessity of divine intervention, stating, “I am a business man; and I know one thing—there is no substitute for work; but to work without prayer is to work without God” (Moody, The Spirit of God).

Moody's commitment to prayer extended beyond personal devotion; he organized prayer meetings and sought to instill the importance of prayer in the lives of his followers. He believed that the transformation of individuals and communities began with earnest prayer, making it a key factor in his leadership style. By emphasizing prayer, Moody demonstrated that true leadership involves dependence on God and an invitation for the Holy Spirit to work through believers.

3. Effective Communication

One of Moody's defining leadership characteristics was his remarkable ability to communicate effectively. His charisma, authenticity, and engagement with his audience made him a powerful preacher. Moody understood the importance of connecting with people on their level, often utilizing relatable illustrations and stories in his sermons.

He believed that the Gospel needed to be presented plainly and simply, stating, “It is a great deal better to know how to speak than to be a learned man” (Moody, Thoughts on Soul Winning). His accessible communication style enabled him to reach diverse audiences, including those who might have been disinterested in formal religious settings. This lesson in communication is vital for contemporary leaders, highlighting the importance of engaging and understanding one’s audience while delivering the Gospel message.

4. Empowerment and Training of Others

Moody recognized that the task of evangelism could not be accomplished by one person alone. He dedicated much of his energy to empowering and training others to join the mission of spreading the Gospel. He founded the Moody Bible Institute in 1886 with the goal of equipping future leaders for ministry. Moody’s vision was to create a place where individuals could develop their spiritual gifts and prepare for service in various capacities.

He famously declared, “It is the job of a good leader to make others better” (Schmidt, D.L. Moody: The American Evangelist). This commitment to developing others reinforced the idea that leadership is not about personal

accolades; instead, it's about fostering growth and enabling others to realize their potential. Moody's approach serves as a powerful example for today's leaders, reminding them to invest in the next generation of believers.

5. Resilience and Perseverance

Moody faced numerous challenges throughout his life and ministry, including personal loss, setbacks, and criticism. However, his resilience and perseverance were hallmarks of his leadership. Moody faced obstacles head-on, relying on his faith and the power of prayer to overcome adversity.

He was known for his ability to bounce back from difficulties and to maintain an unwavering faith in God, famously stating, "Character is what you are in the dark" (Moody, *The Life of D.L. Moody*). This perspective on resilience emphasizes the importance of inner strength and authenticity in leadership, reminding contemporary leaders that perseverance through trials can lead to profound growth, both personally and ministerially.

6. A Legacy of Service

D.L. Moody's leadership was characterized by a spirit of service. He understood that true leadership involves

serving others and placing their needs above one's own. This principle drove him to engage in various humanitarian efforts, including establishing schools, orphanages, and ministries aimed at serving the less fortunate.

Moody's commitment to service exemplifies the call to be the hands and feet of Christ in the world. He asserted, "You cannot be a good Christian if you cannot be a good servant" (Moody, The Spirit of God). In today's context, this lesson remains significant; effective leaders prioritize the needs of others and lead by example, reflecting Christ's servant heart in their ministries.

Conclusion

D.L. Moody's leadership journey illustrates vital principles that remain relevant for contemporary Christian leaders. His visionary commitment to evangelism, dedication to prayer, effective communication, empowerment of others, resilience in the face of challenges, and spirit of service all contribute to his lasting legacy. Moody reminds us that great leadership involves more than influence and authority; it centers around faithfulness to God's calling, a heart for serving others, and a desire to see lives transformed by the Gospel. As we reflect on D.L. Moody's life, we are

encouraged to embody these qualities in our own leadership endeavors, making a lasting impact in our churches and communities.

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Appendix 1

The Need To Confess Our Own Sins

By D. L. Moody

“If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness” (1 John 1:9).

“He that covereth his sins shall not prosper: but whoso confesseth and forsaketh them shall have mercy” (Prov. 28:13).

“Confess your faults one to another, and pray one for another, that ye may be healed...” (Jas. 5:16).

I think we, as Christians, have a good many sins to confess.

If you go back to the Scripture records, you will find that the men who lived nearest to God and had most power with Him were those who confessed their sins and failures. Daniel confessed his sins and those of

his people. Yet there is nothing recorded against Daniel. He was one of the best men on the face of the earth, yet his confession of sin was one of the deepest and most humble on record. Brooks, referring to Daniel's confession, says:

“In these words you have six circumstances that Daniel uses in confessing of his and the people's sins; and all to heighten and aggravate them. First, ‘We have sinned’; secondly, ‘We have committed iniquity’; thirdly, ‘We have done wickedly’; fourthly, ‘We have rebelled against Thee’; fifthly, ‘We have departed from Thy precepts’; sixthly, ‘Neither have we hearkened unto Thy servants the prophets, which spake in Thy name to our kings, our princes, and our fathers, and to all the people of the land’ (Dan. 9:5-6).

“These six aggravations which Daniel reckons up in his confession are worthy of our most serious consideration.”

Job was no doubt a holy man, a mighty prince, yet he had to fall in the dust and confess his sins (Job 42:6). So you will find throughout the Scriptures. When Isaiah saw the purity and holiness of God, he beheld himself in God's true light, and he exclaimed, *“Woe is me! for I am undone; because I am a man of unclean lips...”* (Isa. 6:5).

I firmly believe that the church of God will have to confess her own sins before there can be any great work of grace. There must be a deeper work among God's believing people. I sometimes think it is about time to give up preaching to the ungodly and preach to those who profess to be Christians. If we had a higher standard of life in the church of God, there would be thousands more flocking into the kingdom.

So it was in the past when God's believing children turned away from their sins and their idols: the fear of God fell upon the people round about. Take up the history of Israel and you will find that when they put away their strange gods, God visited the nation, and there came a mighty work of grace.

Judgment Must Begin with Us!

What we want these days is a true and deep revival in the church of God. I have little sympathy with the idea that God is going to reach the masses by a cold and formal church. The judgment of God must begin with us! (1 Pet. 4:17). You notice that when Daniel got that wonderful answer to prayer recorded in the ninth chapter, he was confessing his sin. That is one of the best chapters on prayer in the whole Bible. We read:

"While I was speaking, and praying, and confessing my sin and the sin of my people Israel, and presenting my supplication before the Lord my God for the holy

mountain of my God; yea, whiles I was speaking in prayer, even the man Gabriel, whom I had seen in the vision at the beginning, being caused to fly swiftly, touched me about the time of the evening oblation. And he informed me, and talked with me, and said, O Daniel, I am now come forth to give thee skill and understanding” (Dan. 9:20-22).

So also when Job was confessing his sin, God turned his captivity and heard his prayer (Job 42:10). God will hear our prayer and turn our captivity when we take our true place before Him and forsake our transgressions. It was when Isaiah cried out before the Lord, *“I am undone,”* that the blessing came; the live coal was taken from the altar and put upon his lips; he went out to write one of the most wonderful books in the Bible.

It was when David said, *“I have sinned”* (2 Sam. 12:13), that God dealt in mercy with him. *“I acknowledged my sin unto Thee, and mine iniquity have I not hid. I said, I will confess my transgressions unto the Lord; and Thou forgavest the iniquity of my sin”* (Psa. 32:5). *“I acknowledge my transgressions: and my sin is ever before me. Against Thee, Thee only, have I sinned, and done this evil in Thy sight...”* (Psa. 51:3-4; notice how similar David’s confession is to that of the prodigal son in Luke 15:21).

God Is No Respecter of Persons

There is no difference between the king and the beggar when the Spirit of God comes into the heart and convicts of sin.

Richard Sibbes quaintly says of confession: “This is the way to give glory to God: when we have laid open our souls to God, and laid as much against ourselves as the devil could do that way, for let us think what the devil would lay to our charge at the hour of death and the day of judgment! He would lay hard to our charge this and that – let us accuse ourselves as he would, and as he will ere long.

“The more we accuse and judge ourselves, and set up a tribunal in our hearts, certainly there will follow an incredible ease (1 Cor. 11:31). Jonah was cast into the sea, and there was an ease in the ship (Jonah 1:15). Achan was stoned and the plague was stayed (Josh. 7:25-26). Out with Jonah, out with Achan; and there will follow ease and quiet in the soul, and your conscience will receive wonderful ease!”

Thomas Fuller says: “Man’s owning his weakness is the only stock for God thereon to graft the grace of His assistance.”

**Confession Implies Humility, and This, in God’s Sight,
Is of Great Price**

If this confession of sin is deep among believers, it will be so among the ungodly also. I never knew it to

fail. I am now anxious that God should revive His work in the hearts of His children so that we may see the exceeding sinfulness of sin!

Let us pray God to search our hearts. If it is a right eye, let us pluck it out; if it is a right hand, let us cut it off; that we may have power with God and with man (Matt. 5:29-30).

Unconfessed sin is unforgiven sin, and unforgiven sin is the darkest, foulest thing on this sin-cursed earth.

You cannot find a case in the Bible where a man has been honest in dealing with sin, but God has been honest with him and blessed him. The prayer of the humble and contrite heart is a delight to God (Psa. 51:17; Isa. 57:15). There is no sound that goes up from this sin-cursed earth so sweet to His ear as the prayer of the man who is walking uprightly (Prov. 15:8).

Let me call attention to that prayer of David, in which he says: *“Search me, O God, and know my heart: try me, and know my thoughts: and see if there be any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting”* (Psa. 139:23-24).

I wish all my readers would commit these verses to memory. If we should all honestly make this prayer once every day there would be a good deal of change in our lives.

***“Search Me”* – Not My Neighbor!**

It is so easy to pray for other people, but so hard to get home to ourselves. I am afraid that we who are busy in the Lord's work are very often in danger of neglecting our own vineyard (Song 1:6). In this psalm, David got home to himself!

There is a difference between God searching me and my searching myself! I may search my heart and pronounce it all right, but when God searches me, as with a lighted candle, a good many things will come to light that perhaps I know nothing about.

“Know My Thoughts”

God looks at the thoughts. Are our thoughts pure? Have we in our hearts thoughts against God or against His people – against anyone in the world? If we have, we are not right in the sight of God. Oh, may God search us, every one! I do not know any better prayer that we can make than this prayer of David.

I think, if God searches us, we will find a good many things in our lives for us to confess. If we are tried and tested by God's law, there will be many, many things that will have to be changed.

Let us pray to God to search us and try us to see if there be any evil way in us. If these holy and good men in the Bible felt that they were faulty, should we not tremble and endeavor to find out if there is anything in our lives that God would have us get rid of?

Once again, let me call your attention to the prayer of David contained in Psalm 51: *“Have mercy upon me, O God, according to Thy lovingkindness: according unto the multitude of Thy tender mercies blot out my transgressions. Wash me thoroughly from mine iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin. For I acknowledge my transgressions: and my sin is ever before me. Against Thee, Thee only, have I sinned, and done this evil in Thy sight.... Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean: wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow. Make me to hear joy and gladness; that the bones which Thou hast broken may rejoice. Hide Thy face from my sins, and blot out all mine iniquities. Create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a right spirit within me. Cast me not away from Thy presence; and take not Thy Holy Spirit from me. Restore unto me the joy of Thy salvation; and uphold me with Thy free Spirit. Then will I teach transgressors Thy ways; and sinners shall be converted unto Thee”* (vv. 1-4, 7-13).

A friend of mine told me some years ago that he repeated this prayer as his own every week. I think it would be a good thing if we offered up these petitions frequently; let them go right up from our hearts!

If we have been proud, or irritable, or lacking in patience, shall we not at once confess it? Is it not time that we began at home, and got our lives straightened out? See how quickly the ungodly will then begin to

inquire the way of life! Let those of us who are parents set our own houses in order and be filled with the Holy Spirit; then it will not be long before our children will be inquiring what they must do to get the same Spirit!

I believe that today, by its lukewarmness and formality, the Christian church is making more nonbelievers than all the books that nonbelievers ever wrote. I do not fear nonbelievers' lectures half so much as the cold and dead formalism in the professing church at the present time! One prayer meeting like the disciples had on the day of Pentecost would shake the whole nonbelieving fraternity!

What we want is to get hold of God in prayer! You are not going to reach the masses by great sermons. We want to "move the Arm that moves the world." To do that, we must be clear and right before God.

"For if our heart condemn us, God is greater than our heart, and knoweth all things. Beloved, if our heart condemn us not, then have we confidence toward God. And whatsoever we ask, we receive of Him, because we keep His commandments, and do those things that are pleasing in His sight" (1 John 3:20-22).

Appendix 2

D. L. Moody's Final Call To Seek God For Revival

By D. L. Moody

The following excerpt is from the last call that D. L. Moody issued – an invitation in 1899 to the General Conference of Christian Workers:

"Many thoughtful men have come to feel strongly that the hope of the church today is in a deep and widespread revival. We are confronted with difficulties that can be met in no other way. The enemy has come in like a flood – it is time for those who believe in a supernatural religion to look to God to lift up a standard against him. Oh, for a revival of such power that the tide of unbelief and worldliness that is sweeping in upon us shall be beaten back; that every Christian shall be lifted to a higher level of life and power, and multitudes of perishing souls be converted to God! Why not? God's arm is not shortened, nor His ear heavy. I believe the sound of the going in the tops of the mulberry trees may already be heard.

"The history of revivals proves that such a work must begin at the house of God. Who can doubt that if somehow the church could be thoroughly aroused – not a mere scratching of the surface of our emotions, but a deep heart-work that shall make us right with God and clothe us with power in prayer and service – [we] would witness the mightiest movements of the Holy Spirit since Pentecost?

"Let us 'break up our fallow ground,' seek a fresh anointing of the Spirit, and then move forward, expecting great things of God...."

Appendix 3.

"Thy Will Be Done"

By D. L. Moody (1837 – 1899)

An essential element in prayer is *submission*. All true prayer must be offered in full submission to God. After we have made our requests known to Him, our language should be, "*Thy will be done*" (Matt. 6:10). I would a thousand times rather that God's will should be done than my own. I cannot see into the future as God can; therefore, it is a good deal better to let Him choose for me than to choose for myself. I know His mind about spiritual things. His will is that I should be sanctified; so I can with confidence pray to God for that, and expect an answer to my prayers. But when it comes to temporal matters, it is different; what I ask for may not be God's purpose concerning me.

As one has well put it: "Depend upon it, prayer does not mean that I am to bring God down to my thoughts and my purposes, and bend His government according to my foolish, silly, and sometimes sinful notions. Prayer means that I am to be raised up into feeling, into union and design with Him; that I am to enter into His

counsel, and carry out His purpose fully. I am afraid sometimes we think of prayer as altogether of an opposite character, as if thereby we persuaded or influenced our Father in heaven to do whatever comes into our own minds, and whatever would accomplish our foolish, weak-sighted purposes. I am quite convinced of this, that God knows better what is best for me and for the world than I can possibly know; and even though it were in my power to say, 'My will be done,' I would rather say to Him, 'Thy will be done.'"

It is reported of a woman, who, being sick, was asked whether she was willing to live or die, that she answered, "Which God pleases." "But," said one, "if God should refer it to you, which would you choose?" "Truly," replied she, "I would refer it to Him again." Thus that man obtains his will of God, whose will is subjected to God.

Mr. Spurgeon remarks on this subject, "The believing man resorts to God at all times, that he may keep up his fellowship with the Divine mind. Prayer is not a soliloquy, but a dialogue; not an introspection, but a looking toward the hills, whence cometh our help. There is a relief in unburdening the mind to a sympathetic friend, and faith feels this abundantly; but there is more than this in prayer. When an obedient activity has gone to the full length of its line, and yet the needful thing is not reached, then the hand of God

is trusted in to go beyond us, just as before it was relied upon to go with us. Faith has no desire to have its own will, when that will is not in accordance with the mind of God; for such a desire would at bottom be the impulse of an unbelief which did not rely upon God's judgment as our best guide. Faith knows that God's will is the highest good, and that anything which is beneficial to us will be granted to our petitions."

Pray for Personal Submission

In view of the difficulty of bringing our hearts to this complete submission to the Divine will, we may well adopt Fenelon's prayer: "O God, take my heart, for I cannot give it; and when Thou hast it, keep it, for I cannot keep it for Thee; and save me in spite of myself."

Some of the best men the world has ever seen have made great mistakes on this point. Moses could pray for Israel, and could prevail with God; but God did not answer his petition for himself. He asked that God would take him over Jordan, that he might see Lebanon; and after the forty years' wandering in the wilderness, he desired to go into the Promised Land; but the Lord did not grant his desire. Was that a sign that God did not love him? By no means. He was a man greatly beloved of God, like Daniel; and yet God did not answer this prayer of his. Your child says, "I want this or that," but you do not grant the request, because you know that it will be the ruin of the child to

give him everything he wants. Moses wished to enter the Promised Land; but the Lord had something else in store for him. As someone has said, God kissed away his soul, and took him home to Himself. “God buried him” – the greatest honor ever paid to mortal man.

Fifteen hundred years afterward God answered the prayer of Moses; He allowed him to go into the Promised Land, and to get a glimpse of the coming glory. On the Mount of Transfiguration, with Elijah, the great prophet, and with Peter, James and John, he heard the voice come from the throne of God. *“This is My beloved Son; hear ye Him.”* That was better than to have gone over Jordan, as Joshua did, and to sojourn for thirty years in the land of Canaan. So when our prayers for earthly things are not answered, let us submit to the will of God, and know that it is all right.

Elijah was mighty in prayer; he brought fire down from heaven on his sacrifice, and his petitions brought rain on the thirsty land. He stood fearlessly before King Ahab in the power of prayer. Yet we find him sitting under a juniper tree like a coward, asking God that He would let him die. The Lord loved him too well for that; He was going to take him up to heaven in a chariot of fire. So we must not allow the devil to take advantage of us, and make us believe that God does not love us because He does not grant all our petitions in the time and way we would have Him do.

As Moses takes up more room in the Old Testament than any other character, so it is with Paul in the New Testament, except, perhaps, the Lord Himself. Yet Paul did not know how to pray for himself. He besought the Lord to take away “the thorn in the flesh.” His request was not granted; but the Lord bestowed upon him a greater blessing. He gave him more grace. It may be we have some trial – some thorn in the flesh. If it is not God’s will to take it away, let us ask Him to give us more grace, in order to bear it. We find that Paul gloried in his reverses and his infirmities, because all the more the power of God rested upon him. It may be there are some of us who feel as if everything is against us. May God give us grace to take Paul’s platform and say: “*All things work together for good to them that love God.*” So when we pray to God we must be submissive, and say, “Thy will be done.”

In the Gospel of John we read: “*If ye*” (that “if” is a mountain to begin with), “*If ye abide in Me, and My words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you*” (15:7). The latter part is often quoted, but not the first. Why, there is very little abiding in Christ nowadays! You go and visit Him once in a while; but that is all. If Christ is in my heart, of course I will not ask anything that is against His will. And how many of us have God’s Word abiding in us? We must have a warrant for our prayers. If we have

some great desire, we must search the Scriptures to find if it be right to ask it. There are many things we want that are not good for us; and many other things we desire to avoid are really our best blessings. John Bunyan blessed God for that Bedford jail more than for anything else that happened to him in this life. We never pray for affliction; and yet it is often the best thing we could ask.

Afflictions Turned into Blessings

Dyer says: “Afflictions are blessings to us when we can bless God for afflictions. Suffering has kept many from sinning. God had one Son without sin; but He never had any without sorrow. Fiery trials make golden Christians; sanctified afflictions are spiritual promotions.”

Rutherford beautifully writes, in reference to the value of sanctified trial, and the wisdom of submitting in it to God’s will: “Oh, what owe I to the file, to the hammer, to the furnace of my Lord Jesus, who hath now let me see how good the wheat of Christ is that goeth through His mill and His oven, to be made bread for His own table! Grace tried is better than grace; and it is more than grace; it is glory in its infancy. I now see that godliness is more than the outside, and this world’s passments and their bushings. Who knoweth the truth of grace without a trial? Oh, how little getteth Christ of us, but that which He winneth (to speak so)

with much toil and pains! And how soon would faith freeze without a cross! Why should I start at the plough of my Lord, that maketh deep furrows on my soul? I know that He is no idle husbandman; He purposeth a crop. Oh that this white, withered lea-ground were made fertile to bear a crop for Him, by whom it is so painfully drest, and that this fallow ground were broken up!”

We may close our remarks on this subject by a reference to the words of the Prophet Jeremiah, in Lamentations, where he says: *“The Lord is good unto them that wait for Him, to the soul that seeketh Him. It is good that a man should both hope and quietly wait for the salvation of the Lord. It is good for a man that he bear the yoke in his youth. He sitteth alone and keepeth silence; because He hath borne it upon him. He putteth his mouth in the dust; if so be there may be hope. He giveth his cheek to him that smiteth him, he is filled full with reproach. For the Lord will not cast off forever; but though He cause grief, yet will He have compassion according to the multitude of His mercies. For He doth not afflict willingly nor grieve the children of men.... Who is he that saith, and it cometh to pass, when the Lord commandeth it not? Out of the mouth of the most High proceedeth not evil and good? Wherefore doth a living man complain, a man for the punishment of his sins? Let us search and try our ways,*

and turn again to the Lord. Let us lift up our heart with our hands unto God in the heavens” (3:25-41).

– Taken from *Prevailing Prayer* by D. L. Moody.