

CHRISTIAN HISTORY

Issue 25: Dwight L. Moody: 19th c. Evangelist

Colorful Sayings From Colorful Moody

Moody's common sense and quick wit led to many pithy sayings. A sampling.

On Prayer:

We ought to see the face of God every morning before we see the face of man.

If you have so much business to attend to that you have no time to pray, depend upon it that you have more business on hand than God ever intended you should have.

A man who prays much in private will make short prayers in public.

Some men's prayers need to be cut short at both ends and set on fire in the middle.

Keep short accounts with God.

On the Gospel:

God never made a promise that was too good to be true.

If you can really make a man believe you love him, you have won him; and if I could only make people really believe that God loves them, what a rush we would see for the kingdom of God!

God hates sin, but he loves the sinner.

Law tells me how crooked I am; grace comes along and straightens me out.

As I go into a cemetery I like to think of the time when the dead shall rise from their graves. ... Thank God, our friends are not buried; they are only sown!

On Christian Living:

It is better to be a little too strict than too liberal.

I thought when I became a Christian I had nothing to do but just to lay my oars in the bottom of the boat and float along. But I soon found that I would have to go against the current.

Character is what a man is in the dark.

I believe the religion of Christ covers the whole man. Why shouldn't a man play baseball or lawn-tennis? ... Don't imagine that you have got to go into a cave to be consecrated, and stay there all your life. Whatever you take up, take it up with all your heart.

Excuses are the cradle ... that Satan rocks men off to sleep in.

Forgiveness is not that stripe which says, "I will forgive, but not forget." It is not to bury the hatchet with the handle sticking out of the ground, so you can grasp it the minute you want it.

My friends, you are no match for Satan, and when he wants to fight you just run to your elder Brother, who is more than a match for all the devils in hell.

When a man thinks he has got a good deal of strength, and is self-confident, you may look for his downfall. It may be years before it comes to light, but it is already commenced.

On the Bible:

It is easier for me to have faith in the Bible than to have faith in D.L. Moody, for Moody has fooled me lots of times.

I am glad there are things in the Bible I do not understand. If I could take that book up and read it as I would any other book, I might think I could write a book like that.

On Service:

The reward of service is more service.

When a man gets up so high (spiritual mountaintop) that he cannot reach down and save poor sinners, there is something wrong.

If there had been a committee appointed, Noah's ark would never have been built.

If this world is going to be reached, I am convinced that it must be done by men and women of average talent. After all, there are comparatively few people in the world who have great talents.

On Himself:

I suppose they say of me, "He is a radical; he is a fanatic; he only has one idea." Well, it is a glorious idea. I would rather have that said of me than be a man of ten thousand ideas and do nothing with them.

On his not enlisting in the Civil War: There has never been a time in my life when I felt that I could take a gun and shoot down a fellow-being. In this respect I am a Quaker.

I know perfectly well that, wherever I go and preach, there are many better preachers known and heard than I am; all that I can say about it is that the Lord uses me.

[Doctors] are called devils by the faith healers. Do you ask what I would do if I were ill? Get the best doctor in town, trust in him, and trust in the Lord to work through him.

Life is very sweet to me, and there is no position of power or wealth that could tempt me from the throne God has given me.

Some day you will read in the papers that D.L. Moody, of East Northfield, is dead. Don't you believe a word of it! At that moment I shall be more alive than I am now. I shall have gone up higher, that is all—out of this old clay tenement into a house that is immortal; a body that

death cannot touch, that sin cannot taint, a body fashioned like unto his glorious body. I was born of the flesh in 1837. I was born of the Spirit in 1856.* [* Editor's Note: When Moody said this, later in life, he apparently misspoke, for it is well documented that his conversion took place in 1855.] That which is born of the flesh may die. That which is born of the Spirit will live forever.

—compiled by Mary Ann Jeffreys

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