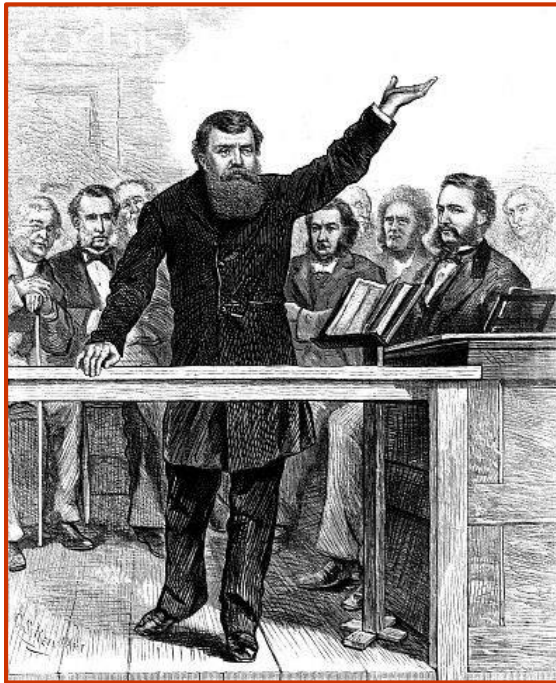


Out of Hard Times, Fame

Life began in hard times for Dwight L. Moody. He was born in 1837, and when he was four years old, his father, Edwin Moody – a small farmer and stonemason – died at the age of 41.

Dwight's father and mother, Betsey Moody, had five sons and a daughter before Dwight's birth, with twins (a boy and a girl) born one month after Edwin's death. His mother struggled to support the family, but even with her best efforts, some of her children had to be sent off to work for their room and board. Dwight, too, was sent off, where he received cornmeal porridge, and milk three times a day.

When Moody turned 17, he moved to Boston to work in an uncle's shoe store. One of the uncle's requirements was that Moody attend the Congregational Church of Mount Vernon. In April 1855, Moody was converted to evangelical Christianity when his Sunday school teacher, Edward Kimball, talked to him about how much God loved him. His conversion sparked the start of his career as an evangelist.



In June 1871, Moody met Ira D. Sankey, a gospel singer with whom he began to cooperate and collaborate. Four months later, the Great Chicago Fire destroyed Moody's church building, as well as his family dwelling and the homes of most of his church members.

Moody, reporting on the disaster, said about his own situation that he "saved nothing but my own reputation and my Bible." Moody's chapel was rebuilt within three months as the Chicago Avenue Church.

In 1872, Moody's fame began to spread, sparked in large part by a successful trip to England, where he spoke to audiences ranging from 15,000 to 30,000. Returning to the U.S., crowds of 12,000 to 20,000 were common. His evangelistic meetings took place from Boston

to New York, throughout New England, and as far as San Francisco, along with other West Coast towns from Vancouver to San Diego.

He founded the Moody Church, Northfield School and Mount Hermon School in Massachusetts, the Moody Bible Institute and Moody Publishers. He preached to more people in the 19th century than anyone else in the world.

(more)

It was in 1873 that a friend in England challenged him with the following statement: “The world has yet to see what God can do with a man fully committed to him.” Moody’s reply was, “With God’s help, I aim to be that man.”

That challenge certainly motivated Moody, but it wasn’t altogether accurate. For the world had already seen what God would do with a man fully committed to Him. Daniel, taken from Jerusalem to Babylon by Nebuchadnezzar, immediately impressed his pagan captors. His physical appearance, his wisdom and his unswerving commitment to his God elevated him to a place of influence, all without compromising his beliefs.

Noah, Joseph, Paul – all were ordinary people whom God used to do extraordinary things.

Will today’s world see extraordinary things done for God? All it takes is a person like Daniel or Dwight L. Moody – that is, a person like you – fully consecrated to God.

For the eyes of the Lord run to and fro throughout the whole earth, to show Himself strong on behalf of those whose heart is loyal to Him (2 Chronicles 16:9 NKJV).

– Beecher Hunter