



# D. L. Moody

JOHN POLLOCK





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# D. L. Moody

*Moody Without Sankey*



JOHN POLLOCK

**CHRISTIAN FOCUS**





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## CHIEF DATES IN MOODY'S LIFE

- 1837: 5 February, Birth at Northfield, Massachusetts  
1854: Goes to Boston  
1855: 21 April, Conversion  
1856: Goes to Chicago  
1858: Founds a Sunday School  
1860: Gives Up Business. Works for YMCA  
1861-5: Lay Chaplain in Civil War  
1862: Marries Emma Revell  
1866: President, Chicago YMCA  
1867: First Visit to Britain  
1870: Meets Sankey  
1871: Chicago Fire; Spiritual Crisis; His 'Pentecost'.  
1873-5: First British Campaign  
1875: Settles at Northfield  
1876: Builds Chicago Avenue Church  
1876-7: Campaigns in Chicago, New York, Boston, etc.  
1880: Founds Northfield Seminary for Girls  
Founds Northfield Conference  
1881: Founds Mount Hermon School for Boys  
1882: Cambridge University Mission  
1883-4: Second London Campaign  
1885: Helps Found Student Volunteers  
1889: Founds Moody Bible Institute  
1891-2: Further Missions in Britain; Visits Palestine  
1899: His Last Campaign, and Breakdown at Kansas City  
22 December, Death at Northfield







## FOREWORD

Nearly a century after his death D L Moody remains a towering figure. The influence of his evangelism is still felt; the institutions he founded in America continue to flourish; his place in history is secure. But it is his personality that commands attention: rugged, delightful, compassionate, a man of total integrity, with a supreme gift for bringing Christianity before the whole range of contemporary hearers, and putting them to work for God.

When I began to delve into D L Moody's original letters in the archives at Chicago and at Northfield, Massachusetts, I had little knowledge of his story or character beyond an awareness of a massive and unusual American who crossed and recrossed the story of British religion in the nineteenth century and strongly marked his own country. As I read through letter after letter in his unpunctuated, misspelt scrawl, and waded through the great bulk of printed material, I could not fail to be impressed by the astonishing events of his swift rise to fame and power: in 1873 he landed at Liverpool utterly obscure, in 1875 he sailed away with Scotland, Ireland and England at his feet. And the more I read, the more I enjoyed this warm-hearted, strong-willed, genial heavyweight.

I did not get, as it were, on Christian-name terms with him at all easily. Dwight Lyman Moody never liked his first name and would not let his wife use it. Most of the family called him 'D L'. In public he was never Dwight L Moody – it was always 'D L Moody and Ira D Sankey'. Perhaps this should have warned a biographer!





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There were so many sides to him. He was extraordinarily difficult to capture within the covers of a book.

Moreover, a life crammed with action, documented by piles of manuscript and millions of words of print demanded discrimination if this book was to stay within reasonable compass. I sought to focus on Moody's development, a most intriguing quality being his capacity for growth right until the end; to get under the skin, understand his motives in the context of their day; and to convey the contagion of personality and the impact of actions as nearly as they were felt by his contemporaries.

When this book was first published, more than thirty years ago, the *New York Times* was kind enough to say: 'By the time a reader has finished this book he has the impression that he knows Moody, has heard him and even shaken hands with him'. This was certainly my aim, to bring to life a unique figure who 'put one hand on Britain and the other on America and lifted them both nearer to God'.

John Pollock  
Rose Ash  
Devonshire  
August 1995





## INTRODUCTION

Every Christian should read 'D. L. Moody: Moody *without* Sankey'. I have read it at least a half dozen times! No one can read this book without getting tremendously excited, motivated and deeply moved by God. It is one of the few books that I say is 'must' reading for every Christian.

This book records the life story of one of the greatest heroes of the Christian faith. Such books thrill me because they reveal how God can and does use ordinary men like D L Moody to accomplish great tasks. Ordinary people whose lives shared these particular characteristics: personal holiness, sensitivity to God, much prayer and in-depth study of God's Word, humility, a consuming passion for the salvation of the lost, and a definite indication of the power of God in their lives.

The influence upon society of men like D L Moody is still felt today through their converts, their writings, their courageous stand for the authority of the Word of God, and their personal relationship to Jesus Christ.

Unfortunately, we do not study church history and the heroes of the faith wrapped up in that history as we should, do we?

I remember in school wondering how certain teachers could make something so exciting as history so boring, especially church history! Church history is people, ordinary people used mightily by God – people like D L Moody. It is the stimulating and far-reaching events that impacted the lives of these people.





## D. L. MOODY

In *D. L. Moody*, author John Pollock gives us one of the most accurate and detailed studies of Moody's life ever made. Here is the story of a man who rose from poverty with only a minimum of education to bring two continents to repentance. Here's the story of a warm-hearted, unpretentious heavyweight who rose from obscurity to work with as much ease among ragamuffins as he did among millionaires, royalty, and the ecclesiastical and political leaders of the world.

Dwight L Moody was an evangelist to the masses. He was the pacesetter in methodology. It has been said that Moody travelled over a million miles in his lifetime and preached the gospel to over 100 million people.

In John Pollock's electrifying book we see some of the secrets to why God was able to use Moody with such incredible power: he was 100 per cent committed to reaching as many people as possible for Jesus Christ in his lifetime; he was in the deepest sense a man of prayer and student of the Bible; he did not question the authority of God's Word; he was incredibly humble; though he could have been financially a very successful businessman, he was free from the lust of money; he fully understood the meaning of Galatians 2:20 – 'no longer I, but Christ in me'.

God desires to use you and me with 'power from on high' just the way he used D L Moody. I believe that if you read this book with clear eyes and an open heart you will realise your accountability before God to help our generation hear the gospel and the voice of God.

Moody may have lived 100 years ago, but his life's story speaks to this generation with the same power that it did in the nineteenth century. The great city masses that Moody loved so much are with us on even a greater scale today, three generations later.

The consuming passion that Moody had for the salvation of the lost should inspire us today. His strategy – 'reach the big cities and you reach a nation' – is even more valid today because the centres of influence (such as the media) are housed in our metropolitan areas.





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As you can see, I have a natural interest in this man, D L Moody, because I feel our evangelistic team has profited immensely from his example. We are trying to follow in his footsteps by preaching the gospel to the masses in our generation.

Everywhere Moody went he delighted audiences, whether it was a mass rally or a personal interview with some head of state. University students were held spellbound by this man who only went to school from age 5 to 13. Corporate executives were touched by the authority and power that they saw in him. Street toughs were literally disarmed by this man's compassion for all people.

Moody was more than a humble Bible teacher. He had the genius of a military strategist. As Christians we are in a spiritual war and this book, I believe, can move the most educated Christian and the humblest believer to move out into the warfare with greater confidence, boldness and faith as we are directed to do in Ephesians chapter 6.

As I have studied the life of D L Moody, I have been impressed by three events that seem to have prepared him for his famous international campaigns.

First, in February 1868, Harry Moorhouse was invited to the pulpit at Moody's church. For seven nights he preached from the text, John 3:16, 'For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish, but have eternal life.' Night after night, Moorhouse gave proof from the Bible that God loves sinners. In private counselling, he told Moody, 'Teach what the Bible says, not your own words, and show people how much God loves them.'

This teaching shattered Moody's belief that God hates the sinner, as well as the sin. 'I never knew up to that time that God loved us so much,' said Moody. 'This heart of mine began to thaw out: I could not keep back the tears.'

A second incident occurred at the 1870 annual convention of the YMCA, an organization Moody was president of from 1866-69. During the 1870 meeting, Moody, while directing a prayer meeting that lacked enthusiasm, asked for a volunteer song. A 29-year-old delegate from Pennsylvania named Ira David





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Sankey stood up and sang, 'There is a Fountain Filled with Blood'. Moody was so impressed by Sankey's voice that he asked him to come to Chicago and help in the work of campaign evangelism. Sankey left his post office job in Pennsylvania and joined Moody in early 1871. They became an evangelistic team to God's glory.

The third incident took place on 8th October, 1871. While preaching at Farwell Hall, Moody asked the congregation to evaluate their relationship to the Lord and return the following week to make their decision for Christ. That crowd never regathered for within minutes the great Chicago fire erupted, destroying the entire city. This incident so devastated Moody that he vowed never again to close a meeting without inviting people to receive Christ as Saviour.

Among the thousands of anecdotes written about Moody, one that has remained with me over the years is the now-famous account of a meeting between young Moody and an evangelist named Henry Varley, who Moody met during his visit to the British Isles in 1872.

The story I remember was how Moody and Varley were sitting on a park bench in Dublin, I believe, and Varley remarked, 'Moody, the world has yet to see what God will do with a man fully consecrated to Him.'

The remark was made casually, and Moody did not comment, but for days the words burned inside him. 'The world has yet to see what God can do with and for and through a man who is fully consecrated to Him', Moody kept repeating to himself. 'Varley was referring to any man. He didn't say he had to be educated or scholarly. Just a man. Well, by the Holy Spirit in me I'll be that man.'

'The eyes of the Lord are toward the righteous, and His ears are open to their cry' (Psalm 34:15).

Moody later commented that Varley's remark and Charles H Spurgeon's preaching (which he also heard whilst in Britain) focused on something he had never realised before - 'It





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was not Spurgeon who was doing that work; it was God. And if God could use Spurgeon, why should He not use me?

After reading this book I believe you will realize how God can use you as well. God is not looking for established saints, scholars and super heroes necessarily. He simply wants to use ordinary people like you and me.

The requirement? Full consecration. Let the resurrected indwelling Lord Jesus use you by the Holy Spirit, to the glory of God the Father.

‘And whatever you do, whether in word or deed, do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him’ (Colossians 3:17).

Has the world yet seen what God can do through you?

Luis Palau  
Evangelist

