

# **MR. MOODY'S BIBLE CLASS**

A Twelve-Part Study in the Doctrines of the Christian Faith

by

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Mr. Moody's Bible Class" was a special feature published in *The Ladies' Home Journal*, a popular women's magazine of the 1890s. For twelve months beginning in November 1896, evangelist D.L. Moody published Bible studies that defined the principles of the Christian faith and encouraged readers to engage in daily Scripture reading.

Mr. Moody designed these studies for both individual reflection and group discussion. Whether you're studying alone or with others, take time to read the Scripture passages referenced and answer the reflection questions honestly before God.

These studies are ideal for personal devotions, small group Bible studies, Sunday school classes, or anyone seeking to deepen their understanding of foundational Christian doctrine.

The Scripture quotations are from the King James Version of the Holy Bible.

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## **LESSON SIX**

# **THE ASSURANCE OF SALVATION**



# THE ASSURANCE OF SALVATION

Doubt and unbelief mean destruction to any business, and a man who loses confidence in his own affairs finds failure awaiting him in a short time. Uncertainty disqualifies a person from work and usefulness in every sphere of life. It was uncertainty and doubt that caused the recent state of depression in our business interests. Financiers and economists differed in their views regarding the political causes of this feeling of insecurity, but they generally agreed that the reverses were directly attributable to the lack of assurance in business circles. Confidence is essential to success in every pursuit of life.

"Confidence is essential to success in every  
pursuit of life."

And this same truth is no less evident in spiritual things as in temporal affairs. The only Christian life that is useful to the Church of God and to fellow believers is one that is assured of its own salvation. Distrust

and unbelief mean sadness and anxiety for any soul; but joy and rest come with the certain knowledge of forgiveness and favor with God.

## CHRIST'S LIFE ON EARTH

The greater part of Christ's public life was spent in teaching His disciples that service for others was one of the fundamental principles of His kingdom. It is therefore absolutely necessary that every Christian should know with certainty that salvation is assured before he can hope to have a share in the building up of God's kingdom on earth, or realize the blessings He bestows. For what man can hope to convince the world of what he is not quite sure of himself? It is like the blind leading the blind when a man who is not sure of his own position in relation to God seeks to induce another to be like himself. It is the man who is confident of his cause who exerts influence among his fellows—such have been the great explorers, victorious generals and prosperous merchants.

"What man can hope to convince the world of what  
he is not quite sure of himself?"

I do not believe that it is the will of God for any Christian to ever be in doubt regarding his condition. And undoubtedly it is the privilege of all Christians to know assuredly that their salvation is secure. He who has already given so much for this world will not willingly allow any regenerate soul to lose the joy of his salvation.

## "HAVE ALL OF GOD'S CHILDREN ASSURANCE?"

The answer to this is "no." There are many who dishonor their Master throughout their lives by constantly doubting Him and His promises. They have a weary, gloomy Christian experience, and by their appearance they give the impression that, instead of entering into the joy of the Lord, they have entered His misery. Such lives repel rather than attract, and have little, if any, influence. Nevertheless, no true child of God is denied assurance, provided there is conformity to His will.

"There is no true child of God to whom  
assurance is denied."

Many persons are deprived of assurance because they cling to something they know deep down in their hearts to be contrary to the will of God. There are many Christians whose lives are so engrossed with this world that they have no time to give to their spiritual needs—lives so devoted to earthly treasures that they fail to lay up treasures above. There is seldom a joyful assurance among such professing Christians; and it can hardly be expected that there should be, as they not only fail to appropriate the promises of Scripture, but in many instances do not know that they even exist. How then may a person know assuredly that he is a Christian?

The Apostle John, writing to the early Church, devoted an entire letter to just this subject. Doubtless he foresaw the lack of assurance on the part of many in coming ages, for in closing his first Epistle he writes:

“These things have I written unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God; that ye may know that ye have eternal life, and that ye may believe on the name of the Son of God.”

In the third chapter of this Epistle the aged evangelist calls attention to five important truths bearing upon the experience of the Christian. They serve as guideposts pointing to the truth, and in these days when there is so much that is false, both in life and teaching, it is always needful to give careful heed to their direction. I will now take them up, not in the order in which they are written, but as we come to them in our Christian life.

### THE STARTING POINT IN THE NEW LIFE”

The starting point of the regenerate soul must be faith in the atoning sacrifice.

“Ye know that He was manifested to take away our sins; and in Him is no sin.”

With this knowledge every Christian begins his new life.

The second step is that of assurance. And here is the test:

“My little children, let us not love in word, neither in tongue, but in deed and in truth. And hereby we know that we are of the truth, and shall assure our hearts before Him.”

Oh, for an active love for one another! Less of church dissension and less of criticism. I have never known a Christian whose heart was full of brotherly love and whose life was spent for others, to lack assurance of peace with God.

Still again on this subject he writes:

“We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren,” and as a sort of negative direction or warning he adds the solemn statement:

“Whosoever hateth his brother, is a murderer: and ye know that no murderer hath eternal life abiding in him.”

Another test of true discipleship is conformity to God's will, and the presence of the Spirit in our hearts. “And hereby we know that He abideth in us,” he writes, “by the Spirit which He hath given us.” If there is not the same Spirit in the Christian that there was in Christ, the Christianity is false. It may be present in even the smallest degree, but in quality it must be the same. There must be love, not for the lovable only, but for the unlovable; there must be forgiveness for our enemies, even if they do not ask it of us. As we expect to be forgiven our trespasses, so must we forgive those who trespass against us.

“If there is not the same Spirit in the Christian that there was in Christ, the Christianity is false.”

And the last great truth which the Apostle gives the believer refers to the life beyond. To be sure, we are sons of God here below, but we are so fog-bound by our humanity and so weak in our spiritual sight that “it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when He shall appear, we shall be like Him; for we shall see Him as He is.”

## LIVES OF TRUSTFUL OBEDIENCE

It is a very helpful study to note how those who have been obedient to the voice of God, even in the remotest ages, have experienced clear assurance. Men say they want more light, but those who live up to what they have will always have more given them. Let no man seek added responsibility who is not faithful to that already entrusted. The prophet Daniel has disclosed the secret of his power. He tells us that “the people that do know their God shall be strong, and do exploits.” (Daniel 11:32) Now if you will consider the lives of the early patriarchs and prophets, you will inevitably find that they were men who knew their God.

Abraham, who became the founder of the greatest family and race this world has ever seen, obeyed the voice of God as he heard it. (Hebrews 11:8) It called him to go against every human inducement and to act contrary to every dictate of his own wisdom. His obedience to God was folly to the world. It was in violation of the strongest human ties. It meant exile from his fatherland, with all its fond associations; it meant the sacrifice of society; and it even demanded separation from the loved ones of his father's house. Nor was he a young man, fired with a youthful love of adventure, for already he had lived seventy-five years with those whom he knew and loved. But through that act of obedience God blessed him, and so cherished the faithful servant that the Apostle James tells us that “he was called the friend of God.”

Moses, the great law-giver and leader, who had no fear of the most powerful throne of his day and despised its luxury, held frequent communion with the Lord. In closing the record of his service he is described as one “whom the Lord knew face to face.” (Exodus 33:11)

Job, even in the darkness of sorrow and adversity, can cry out, “I know that my Redeemer liveth.” (Job 19:25)

David, “a man after God's own heart,” knew his Lord as a loving shepherd whose tender compassion was ever mindful of him. (1 Samuel 13:14)

Daniel, “a man greatly beloved,” was accustomed to calling upon his Lord with every assurance of answer to his prayer. (Daniel 10:11, 19)

The lives of all those Old Testament heroes were lives of trustful obedience to a personal God. They were not deceived by fancy nor led astray by merely idle speculation. The prophets and patriarchs were men of strong assurance in their own salvation, and of confidence in God that He would present them “faultless before the presence of His glory with exceeding joy.” (Jude 1:24)

“I saw that life was one long voyage against the undercurrent of my old nature.”

## A PERSONAL RELATION WITH CHRIST

Nor were the early disciples of the Church less positive in their writings. Paul would never have been able to undergo the sufferings

and hardships he experienced with a joyous and victorious spirit if he had not been able to say:

“I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that He is able to keep that which I have committed unto Him against that day.”

And so it was with all the other Apostles. There was a personal relationship with Christ which left no uncertainty in their minds regarding their love for Him and their trust in His word.

One question which troubles many Christians is the fact that they have yielded to temptation since they have professed Christ. They believe that their past sins are blotted out, but they are in doubt regarding their present condition. Now God has made provision for the sins of the believer. Every one of Christ's Apostles sinned, even when in the company of Christ. The Apostle John, after years of usefulness and communion with Christ, still realized the possibility of sinning, not willingly, perhaps, but through the deceitfulness of his own nature. In the Epistle already quoted he writes to those to whom God has used him to reach:

“My little children, these things write I unto you, that ye sin not. And if any man sin we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous.” (1 John 2:1)

“In every regenerate man there are two natures.”

## DO WE HEED GOD'S PROMISES?

A poor old widow, living in the Scottish Highlands, was called upon one day by a gentleman who had heard that she was in need. The old lady complained of her condition and remarked that her son was in Australia and doing well.

“But does he do nothing to help you?” inquired the visitor.

“No, nothing,” was the reply. “He writes me regularly once a month, but only sends me a little picture with his letter.” The gentleman asked to see one of the pictures that she had received, and found each one of them to be a draft for ten pounds.

That is the condition of many of God's children. He has given us many “exceeding great and precious promises,” of which we either are ignorant of or which we fail to appropriate. Many of them seem to be pretty pictures of an ideal peace and rest, but are not appropriated as practical helps in daily life. And not one of these promises is more neglected than the assurance of salvation. An open Bible places them within reach of all, and we may appropriate the blessing which such a knowledge brings.

“He has given us many ‘exceeding great and precious promises.’”

How Christians can live in an atmosphere of distrust is a mystery to me. Christianity without assurance is a lifelong burden and anxiety. It adds no joy to life, and affords no consolation in sorrow.

Compare such a life of distrust in God with the glorious confidence in His loving mercy and tender care. What a contrast! The one a stumbling-block to the world, and the other a bright and shining light for God. I have met people whose very presence in a social meeting gave a sort of chill, and others I have known who literally carried with them in the darkest day a halo of cheerfulness and encouragement. The first live in Bunyan's "Doubting Castle,"<sup>1</sup> the latter live in a constant communion with a loving Heavenly Father.

## WHAT MADE THE DIFFERENCE

I was standing with a friend at his garden gate one evening when two little children came by. As they approached us he said to me, "Watch the difference in these two boys." Taking one of them in his arms he stood him on the gatepost, and stepping back a few feet he folded his arms and called to the little fellow to jump. In an instant the boy sprang toward him and was caught in his arms. Then turning to the second boy he tried the same experiment. But in the second case it was different. The child trembled and refused to move. My friend held out his arms and tried to induce the child to trust in his strength, but nothing could move him. At last my friend had to lift him down from the post and let him go.

"What makes such a difference in the two?" I asked. My friend smiled and said:

"The first is my own boy and knows me; but the other is a stranger's child whom I have never seen before." And there was all the difference.

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<sup>1</sup> In John Bunyan's *The Pilgrim's Progress* (1678), Doubting Castle is where the pilgrim Christian is imprisoned by Giant Despair and nearly dies from doubt—even though he carries the key of Promise that could free him. Bunyan uses this episode to show how believers can imprison themselves in doubt despite having God's promises available to them.

My friend was equally able to prevent both from falling, but the difference was in the boys themselves. The first had assurance in his father's ability and acted upon it, while the second, although he might have believed in his ability to save him from harm, would not put his belief into action.

“The first had assurance in his father’s ability  
and acted upon it.”

And so it is with us. We hesitate to trust ourselves to that loving One whose plans for us are far higher than any we have ourselves made. He, too, with outstretched arms, calls us, and if we would but listen to His voice we would hear that invitation and promise of assurance as He gave it of old:

“Come unto Me, all ye that labor, and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.” (Matthew 11:28)



## READ MORE ABOUT ...

Mr. Moody teaches that assurance is the privilege of every believer, yet many Christians live in doubt rather than appropriating God's "exceeding great and precious promises."

Study these passages to discover the biblical tests of genuine assurance, the promises you can claim, and the examples of those who lived in confident faith.

- The Apostle John's letter to the early Church in 1 John (the First Letter of John)..
- Jesus' teachings that service is fundamental to His kingdom in:
  - Mark 10:43-45
  - Matthew 20:26-28
  - John 13:12-17
  - Matthew 25:31-46
  - Luke 22:25-27
  - Matthew 23:11
- John's teaching that love proves we have passed from death to life:
  - 1 John 3:10-18
  - 1 John 4:7-8, 20-21
  - John 13:34-35
  - 1 John 2:9-11
- Conformity to God's will as evidence of true discipleship in:
  - 1 John 2:3-6
  - 1 John 3:6-10
  - Matthew 7:16-20
  - Galatians 5:22-23

- How the Spirit confirms our adoption and gives us assurance in:
  - Romans 8:14-16
  - 1 John 3:24
  - 1 John 4:13
  - Ephesians 1:13-14)
  - Galatians 4:6
  
- God's provision for the believer's post-conversion sin:
  - 1 John 2:1-2
  - 1 John 1:8-9
  - Hebrews 7:24-25
  - Romans 8:33-34
  
- God's ongoing forgiveness and advocacy for believers who sin:
  - 1 John 2:1-2
  - 1 John 1:8-9
  - Hebrews 7:24-25
  - Romans 8:33-34
  
- How believers can know with certainty that their salvation is secure:
  - John 10:27-29
  - Romans 8:38-39
  - Philippians 1:6
  - 1 John 5:11-13
  - 2 Timothy 1:12
  - Hebrews 10:22
  
- Paul's faith during intense hardships in:
  - 2 Corinthians 12:9-10
  - 2 Corinthians 4:16-18
  - Philippians 4:11-13

## PERSONAL APPLICATION

Mr. Moody teaches that "it is the privilege of all Christians to know assuredly that their salvation has been achieved," yet many believers live imprisoned in "Doubting Castle," experiencing "a weary, gloomy Christian experience" instead of joyful confidence in God's promises. Like the Scottish widow who possessed bank drafts but treated them as pretty pictures, we often fail to appropriate the assurance God freely offers.

Use the following questions to examine whether you possess genuine assurance, to test the evidence of salvation in your life, and to identify the promises you need to claim.











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## ABOUT THIS EDITION

The core text of this Bible study—Mr. Moody's teaching on the new birth and regeneration—was originally published in *The Ladies' Home Journal* in 1897. As a work published over 125 years ago, Mr. Moody's original text is in the public domain and free for anyone to use. Scripture quotations are from the King James Version, also in the public domain.

## ABOUT THIS TEXT

This edition faithfully preserves D.L. Moody's original teaching. We have made minimal edits for modern clarity—correcting obvious errors, updating a few archaic terms, and adjusting occasional grammatical inconsistencies—while keeping Mr. Moody's voice and meaning completely intact.

## WHAT'S NEW IN THIS EDITION

This 2025 edition includes:

- Updated formatting for modern readers
- Reflection and study questions
- Organized Scripture references
- Introductory paragraphs to sections titled “Mr. Moody’s Bible Verses,” “Read More About ...,” and “Personal Application”

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