

MR. MOODY'S BIBLE CLASS

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

by

Dwight Lyman Moody

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 TEN

THE RESURRECTION OF THE DEAD

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From my study window this morning I look across the old Connecticut valley away into the distant hills of Vermont. So clear is the atmosphere that mountains which lie far in the distance seem to be near at hand. Everywhere the works of Nature are praising God. And yet a few hours ago a dense mist enveloped the valley, and objects only a few paces away were indistinct, and many of them which I now see clearly were shrouded in mystery. But as the sun began to burn away the fog and mist the clouds were lifted and the scenes I love so fondly were again clearly visible. It has seemed to me that the Apostle Paul must have had the recollection of some such scene in his mind when he wrote to the early Corinthian Church:

“Now we see through a glass, darkly, but then face to face: now I know in part; but then shall I know even as also I am known.” (1 Corinthians 13:12)

So many things now seem so mysterious, but when the mists pass away we see God's purposes and plans as He regards them.

And this is why the doctrine of the Resurrection has been so precious to the Church in all ages, for it is the lifting of the mists, and the glorious awakening to the eternal fellowship of the Church with her visible and glorified Master.

THE RESURRECTION AN UNQUESTIONED FACT

The Resurrection of Jesus Christ is one of the best-attested facts in history. The late Charles H. Spurgeon (the renowned British Baptist preacher, 1834-1892) called attention to the fact that few other events in history are so well attested.

The signing of famous treaties, the births of princes, the remarks of cabinet ministers and the deeds of assassins have not been so widely witnessed as the rising of Jesus Christ from the tomb. A thousand years before the very birth of Christ the Psalmist had prophesied that He should not remain in the grave (Psalm 16:10), and repeatedly Christ Himself had foretold His death and Resurrection to His Apostles:

“The son of man must suffer many things, and be rejected of the elders, and of the chief priests, and scribes, and be killed, and after three days rise again.” (Luke 9:22)

THE FIRST WITNESSES OF HIS RESURRECTION

Let us consider a few of those who witnessed His rising from the dead and His appearance among men.

First of all, the representatives of the Roman government, the guard stationed at His grave. It has always seemed strange to me that

Christ's enemies seemed to have had a better memory than His friends. They were the ones who remembered His words of promise that He should rise again on the third day from the dead. It was the chief priests themselves—Christ's enemies—who petitioned Pilate for the guard, and so unwittingly secured those pagan soldiers as witnesses to the very event they sought to prevent. (Matthew 27:62-66)

I see the small group stationed by the tomb. A great stone has been rolled across the opening, secured and sealed with the Imperial signet of Rome. No such task has ever been assigned to these rough soldiers before. They doubtless jeer and ridicule the very words of promise which mean salvation to all of humanity.

For how could such a one, who has hung upon the cross and shed His very heart's blood, return again to life? Had He been one of their gods, these soldiers reason, never would He have borne the insult and humiliation of flogging and scourging, much less have died at the hands of cruel men.

DEATH AND THE GRAVE CONQUERED

No doubt these Roman soldiers scoff at the superstition of the Jewish race. They wonder at the length to which Pilate will go in indulging these people. Little do they realize the Divinely-appointed mission they are to fulfill. And as they thus spend the weary watches at the sacred tomb the night hours draw to a close. But before the first rays of breaking dawn light up the eastern sky, suddenly there shines about them a celestial glory, for the angel of God descends and rolls back the stone, and, overcome by fright, they fall back as dead men. Meanwhile the very foundations of the earth tremble as in that supreme moment the arch enemy of man and Nature is vanquished. Death and the grave

are conquered at last, and He who is the first fruits of them that slept breaks the bands of hell and comes forth leading captivity captive. (Ephesians 4:8) In these pagan soldiers we do then find the first witnesses of the Resurrection.

THE LITTLE BAND OF FAITHFUL WOMEN

The next witnesses that are recorded were a small band of women. We know their names, but little else about them, except that they were faithful followers of His. Probably they were not prominent figures in the city of Jerusalem, but they were devoted to the Master, and their names have been cherished and respected by the Church in every age since. After all, the names that truly live in history today, the lives that still exert an influence among men and women, are not those whom society called great, or men honored for power. They are the lives of those who have shown devotion to Jesus.

And after that time, according to the testimony of the Gospel writer Luke, He was seen by His disciples, “by many infallible proofs,” forty days, “and speaking of the things pertaining to the Kingdom of God.” (Acts 1:3) So many witnesses are there to the Resurrection of Jesus Christ that it has become an established historical fact.

IN DREAD OF DEATH AND THE GRAVE

But what most concerns us is the relation which Christ's Resurrection has to our death and future life. So many people live in a fearful dread of death and the grave, I believe, just because they do not study this doctrine. They speak of death and the judgment with a shudder, and their vision seems to be unable to pierce beyond.

I well remember how in my native village in New England it used to be customary, as a funeral procession left the church, for the bell in the burying-ground to toll as many times as the deceased was years old. How anxiously I would count those strokes of the bell to see how long I might expect to live. Sometimes there would be seventy or eighty tolls, and I would give a sigh of relief to think I had so many years to live. But at other times there would be only a few years tolled, and then a horror would seize me as I thought that I, too, might soon be claimed as a victim by that dread monster, Death. Death and judgment were a constant source of fear to me till I realized the fact that neither shall ever have any hold on a child of God.

In his letter to the Romans the Apostle Paul has shown, in most direct language, that there is no condemnation for a child of God, but that he is passed from under the power of law (Romans 8:1); and in the Epistle to the Corinthians he tells us that “there is a natural body, and there is a spiritual body,” (1 Corinthians 15:44) “and as we have borne the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the Heavenly.” (1 Corinthians 15:49)

EXPERIENCES OF THE DRAGON FLY GRUB

There is a little book entitled “The Life Beyond”¹ that presents the truth of the Resurrection in a wonderful manner. It is an allegory, and claims to give the experiences of a little dragon fly grub. The little insect longs to know what is beyond the sphere of its little world. In vain it inquires of the fish that live in the same pond, but they have no experience in any other sphere, nor can any of its fellows satisfy its

¹ *The Life Beyond* (Fleming H. Revell Company, 1892) compiled from the writings of Mrs. Alfred Gatty (Margaret Gatty, English author, 1809-1873) and Mary Agnes Tincker (American Author, 1833-1907). A free digital copy is [available here](#).

anxious yearning. The only world it knows is a little meadow pond; all its experience is limited by the bounds of the surrounding banks.

At length the grub is overcome by a strange attraction upward, and gathering about it all its fellows it tells that it must leave them for the regions above, and promises to return to tell them what it has found to exist in the beyond, if, indeed, there may be anything above the bulrushes of their little pond.

And then quietly it disappears from the sight of its fellows and emerges into the bright sunlight of the greater world. Here it is transformed, and now with outstretched wings it darts here and there reflecting the brightness of the sun from its gorgeous body. But it does not forget the promises it has made to the friends it has left below. It tries to return to the world from which it has just been resurrected, but cannot now leave the atmosphere in which it lives. All it can do is to wait for them to come to where it now lives, a beautiful dragon fly.

And thus it is with those who have disappeared from our sight. Their love for us is not lessened because they are not able to commune with us, but they are waiting in the presence of the Master for that glorious moment when in their resurrected bodies they shall unite once more with those whom they have loved on earth..

THERE SHOULD BE NO FEAR OF DEATH

And what an inexhaustible store of comfort there is in the thought that the resurrected body will be free from all that mars it here on earth. Then will Jacob come forth from the tomb no longer leaning heavily upon his staff end (Genesis 47:31 and Hebrews 11:21). Paul will never again experience a thorn in the flesh. (2 Corinthians 12:7) The fevered

brow and wasted form will give place to health and strength, and the moan of the little sufferer will give place to the joyous song of the redeemed.

Why, then, should we ever be reminding ourselves of death when just beyond are strength and joy?

Alexander MacLaren (1826-1910; a Scottish Baptist minister and one of the most celebrated preachers and Bible expositors of the Victorian era) has well said, “The grave has a door on its inner side, and when the outer access is closed the inner portal opens on Heaven.”

But I imagine someone saying, “I do not understand how anyone can look upon death as anything but dark and awful. Are we not taught that death is an enemy, and does not the Psalmist tell of the dark valley of the shadow of death?” (Psalm 23:4)

Yes, the Psalmist does speak of the valley of the shadow of death, but he does not speak of its being dark. The truth is that there would be no shadow if there were no light, and it is because He is with us that death can only throw a shadow across our path. Nor is there a tomb so remote that the voice of the archangel will not reach it.

A WOMAN'S DEFIANT CHALLENGE

In the town of Hanover in Germany, I am told that there is buried a German Countess who denied the existence of God and ridiculed the idea of the Resurrection. To further show her contempt for Christianity she ordered that on her death her grave should be built up of solid masonry and covered by large stones bound together by iron clamps.

On this tomb was engraved her defiant challenge that through eternity this tomb should never be disturbed.

But one day the seed from some tree, either blown by the wind or carried by a bird, became lodged in a small crevice of the tomb, where soon it sprouted and began to grow. And then, as if Nature had seemed to mock the proud unbeliever, she quietly extended the delicate roots of that seedling under the massive blocks of stone and slowly raised them from their place. And now, although barely four generations are passed since that tomb was sealed, that most insignificant seedling has accomplished the very thing the Countess defiantly declared that even God could never do.

WHEN THE DISCIPLES LAST SAW CHRIST

Did you ever think of that last view the disciples had of the Master, and that He would return again to His church in the same manner in which He left it?

We are told that He led the small body of His followers out of the city of Jerusalem, down across the valley of Jehoshaphat, over the brook Kidron, by the garden of Gethsemane, with its memories of agonizing conflict, and out to Bethany. Often had they retired there to the home of Mary and Martha for rest and quiet in the days of His ministry. Here He bids them farewell, and instructs them to spread the Gospel which He entrusts to their care. And then, while still He speaks of things eternal, He quietly ascends from their sight into the realms of Heaven, where He lives and reigns for evermore at the right hand of God, His Heavenly Father.



READ MORE ABOUT ...

In this lesson Mr. Moody makes a bold claim: that the Resurrection of Jesus Christ is not merely a matter of faith, but of historical fact — witnessed, recorded, and attested by hundreds of eyewitnesses.

Study these passages to explore the Old Testament prophecies that pointed to a risen Messiah centuries before the empty tomb; to examine the historical evidence for the Resurrection that Moody found so compelling; to understand what Scripture teaches about the nature of our own resurrection bodies; and to anchor your heart in the same unshakeable hope that compelled the Apostle Paul to write, "O death, where is thy sting?" (1 Corinthians 15:55)

Having No Fear of Death:

- Psalm 23:4
- Isaiah 41:10
- John 11:25-26
- John 14:1-6
- 1 Corinthians 15:55-57
- Philippians 1:21
- 2 Timothy 1:10
- Hebrews 2:14-15
- Revelation 21:4

Prophecies of the Resurrection:

- Psalm 16:10
- Psalm 22:22-24

- Isaiah 53:10-11
- Hosea 6:2
- Acts 2:25-32

The Empty Tomb:

- Matthew 27:62-66
- Matthew 28:1-10
- Mark 16:1-8
- Luke 24:1-12
- John 20:1-18
- John 20:3-9

Eyewitness Testimony to the Resurrection:

- Acts 1:3
- Luke 24:13-49
- 1 Corinthians 15:3-7
- Acts 10:39-41
- 1 John 1:1-3

Christ's Resurrection:

- Acts 2:24
- Acts 17:30-31
- Romans 1:4
- Romans 14:8-9
- 1 Corinthians 15:12-23
- Ephesians 1:19-20

The Nature of the Resurrection Body:

- 1 Corinthians 15:35-44
- 1 Corinthians 15:50-58
- Philippians 3:20-21
- 1 John 3:2

The Resurrection of Believers:

- Daniel 12:2
- John 5:25-29
- John 11:21-27
- Acts 24:15
- Romans 6:4
- Romans 8:11
- 1 Corinthians 15:12-23
- 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18
- 1 Peter 1:3-9

The Ascension of Christ:

- Psalm 47:5
- Mark 16:19
- Luke 24:50-53
- Acts 1:6-11
- Ephesians 4:8-10
- Hebrews 4:14



PERSONAL APPLICATION

Mr. Moody does not ask us simply to believe in the Resurrection — he asks us to live as though it is true. For a man who confessed his own early fear of death, that was no small thing. It was the historical certainty of Christ's empty tomb, the testimony of hundreds of eyewitnesses, and the promise of his own future resurrection that slowly replaced fear with what Moody called "inexhaustible" comfort. The same evidence, and the same promises, are available to us today.

Use the following questions to examine honestly where your own faith in the Resurrection is strong — and where it still needs to grow. Then consider what difference a deep, daily confidence in the risen Christ might make in the way you live, the way you love others, and the way you face whatever lies ahead.

Mr. Moody opens the lesson by acknowledging that many people—including himself—have a natural fear of death. He argues that a deep, settled belief in the Resurrection is the cure for that fear.

How would you describe your own feelings about death? Has your faith in the Resurrection brought you peace, or is this an area where you still struggle to fully believe what you know to be true?

Mr. Moody presents the Resurrection not as a matter of blind faith but as a historically documented event supported by eyewitness testimony and physical evidence.

Does thinking about the Resurrection as a historical fact—rather than simply a theological belief—strengthen your faith? How might approaching it that way change the way you talk about it with others?

Mr. Moody describes a little book about a dragonfly grub who cannot imagine the world above the water's surface and suggests that our understanding of eternal life is as limited as the grub's understanding of the world above.

What assumptions or fears about death and resurrection do you hold that might simply reflect the limits of your earthly perspective rather than the reality of what God has prepared?

Mr. Moody draws a tender picture of the resurrection body, free from the thorns in the flesh (physical illness, grief, or weakness) that limit and pain us in this life.

Is there a particular burden or limitation in your own life that you find yourself longing to lay down? How does the promise of a resurrection body speak to that longing?

Mr. Moody closes with a vivid image: Christ ascending from the very valley where He was betrayed, leaving His followers with the promise that He will return in the same way. The disciples were told not to stand gazing into heaven, but to go and do the work they had been given.

What work has God given you to do while you wait—and are you doing it?

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ABOUT THIS EDITION

The core text of this Bible study—Mr. Moody's teaching on the resurrection of the dead—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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