

Lessons from Church History (Part 2)

WEEK 9: Lessons from 19th Century Evangelicalism

J. C. Ryle (1816-1900)

- John Charles was born in Macclesfield in northern England to a wealthy family. His father (also John) was a member of Parliament and owned 2 banks.
- Ryle slowly changed his views of the Christian faith while attending Oxford while sitting under solid Bible preaching. By age 21, he was convinced of his salvation. His family rejected his newfound faith.
- In 1841, John Ryle's banks failed, and the family went bankrupt. The family estate (Henbury) was worth \$22.5 million. J C Ryle's yearly income was \$675k. They lost everything. They spent the next 20 years paying off the remaining debt, living in abject poverty.
- Ryle said if he had not been a Christian at the time of the bank failure, he said he would have likely committed suicide.
- In order to survive, Ryle took on the only work he could find, pastoring small country churches, one in Exbury and later in Winchester.
- He married Matilda Plumtre in 1845. They had one daughter. Shortly after, Matilda became ill and died. He married Jessie Walker in 1850. They had 5 children. Then Jessie died in 1860. Afterward, Ryle's oldest daughter, Georgina suffered mental illness and spent the rest of her life in asylums.
- He married Henrietta Clowes in 1861. They had a long and happy marriage. She died in 1889. Unfortunately, only one of his children embraced his evangelical faith.
- In 1880, at age 64, Ryle became the Bishop of Liverpool where he served 20 yrs until his death.
- Ryle was at the forefront of reviving Evangelical thought in the Church of England. He saw Evangelicalism as emphasizing the following distinctives:
 - The absolute supremacy of Scripture
 - The depth and prominence of human sinfulness
 - The paramount importance of the person and work of Christ as the sole means of salvation
 - The inward work of the Spirit in the hearts of men
 - The outward work of the Spirit in producing fruit consistent with a true profession of faith
- Ryle was best known for his writing. By 1888 he had printed between 200 and 300 tracts that sold 12 million copies. His books and tracts are widely read today.
- Ryle's major books:
 - *Expository Thoughts on Matthew* (1856)
 - *Expository Thoughts on Mark* (1857)
 - *Expository Thoughts on Luke* (1858)
 - *Expository Thoughts on John* (1865 (vol 1), 1869 (vol 2), 1873 (vol 3))
 - *Knots Untied: Being Plain Statements on Disputed Points in Religion, from the Standpoint of an Evangelical Churchman* (1874)
 - *Holiness: Its Nature, Hindrances, Difficulties and Roots* (1877, expanded in 1879)
 - *Old Paths: Being Plain Statements on Some of the Weightier Matters of Christianity* (1878)
 - *Practical Religion: Being Plain Papers on the Duties, Experience, Dangers, and Privileges of Professing Christians* (1879)

Lessons from Church History (Part 2)

Dwight L. Moody (1837-1899)

- Born the sixth of eight children to Edwin and Betsy Moody in Northfield, Massachusetts in 1837, Dwight's father Edwing died when he was only four years old. Dwight's education did not extend past the 5th grade.
- Ambitious from an early age, Dwight left home at age 17 to seek employment in Boston where his uncle reluctantly hired Dwight to work in his shoe store. Dwight's employment was conditional on attending Mt. Vernon Congregational Church every Sunday, including Sunday School.
- Dwight's life was forever changed when one day Mr. Edward Kimball, his SS teacher shared the Gospel with him at work – salvation in a shoe store. Dwight later moved to Chicago.
- Dwight began ministering at a local mission. There were more teachers than kids, but that changed when Moody applied his talents. Dwight was soon hired by Hendersons as a traveling salesman and saw skyrocketing success in both areas of his life.
- The local mission in Chicago grew to over 300 kids, even earning a visit from President Abraham Lincoln. But God was still transforming Dwight Moody. Mr. Henderson died in 1860 and Dwight's dreams of being a millionaire soon vanished. His heart was changed when he ministered to 17 girls of a dying teacher's Sunday School class.
- In 1862, Dwight married Emma Revell. They had a daughter and later two sons. The YMCA continued it's explosive growth, now ministering to over 1,000 kids. Fundraising with the skills of a salesman, Dwight built the Illinois Street Church which opened in 1864.
- During the Civil War, Moody evangelized and ministered to troops stationed outside Chicago, all the while maintaining the Mission Sunday School.
- In 1870, Moody met Emma Dyer, a principal and teacher at a nearby university. In 1886, this ministry relationship resulted in the Chicago Evangelization Society, which became the Moody Bible Institute.
- In June 1871 Dwight meet Ira Sankey, a gospel singer, and began working together. On Oct 8, 1871 the Great Chicago Fire consumed much of what Moody built. The Illinois Street Church and Mission Sunday School were destroyed, including Moody's house and most of those in the congregation.
- Moody was sought by supporters in New York, Philadelphia, and Chicago to re-establish in each of those cities, yet chose a quiet farm near Northfield, Massachusetts to better recover between lengthy peaching trips.
- In June of 1872 Moody traveled to Liverpool, England with his family and Ira Sankey. They toured throughout the United Kingdom and Ireland holding evangelism meetings and fueling the revival that was moving across the region. He was revolutionary in his evangelistic approach...
- When he returned to the United States in 1876, his popularity had grown such that crowds of 12,000 to 20,000 were regular occurrences. Moody held evangelistic conferences in New York, throughout New England, San Francisco, Vancouver B.C., and San Diego. It is believed he spoke to 100 million over the course of his life.
- Moody influenced cross-cultural missions after he met Hudson Taylor and began to support the China Inland Mission. He encouraged volunteers for overseas service.
- Moody's heart was always for the boys and girls schools of Mount Hermon he established in Northfield in 1879. These schools fed the student volunteer movement for foreign missions.
- Moody preached his last sermon on November 16, 1899 in Kansas City Missouri. Becoming ill, he returned home to Northfield, MA and passed on Dec 26, 1899 surrounded by his family.