

Alexander Moody Stuart**~Other Speakers S-Z: David Smithers:**

What Adam lost in the garden, through, Christ can be found on our knees! Clearly Alexander Moody Stuart was no stranger to this blessed truth. Day and night he enjoyed the paradise of fellowship with the Father through prayer. Agonizing, fervent prayer was his constant habit. "He often seemed to wrestle in prayer like Jacob at Peniel saying, "I will not let Thee go except Thou bless me."" As a result, his congregation was often more deeply affected by his public praying than by his preaching.

Mr. Moody Stuart always considered the weekly prayer meeting as the most vital and effectual service held in the church. "He prayed much both in public and in the family for seasons of revival, and constantly stirred up others to pray and labor for this, being fully aware of the general apathy in regard to it." He ministered with anointed men of God like W. C. Burns and Andrew Bonar during the Scottish Revival of 1839. He also prayerfully supported Brownlow North in the Ulster Revival of 1859.

It is said of Alexander Moody Stuart that when he preached he brought men face to face with God Almighty. Like M'Cheyne, he directed men to look at Christ ten times for every time they looked at themselves. He tenderly pleaded with men to embrace Jesus Christ as one who could be known, loved and trusted. All of this flowed out of his own intimate relationship with the Savior. Mr. Moody Stuart's Christianity was nothing less than a fervent and longing passion for Jesus.

He spent hours in prayer and instruction with his family and church. He labored for the lost and perishing with unceasing zeal. But it is obvious from his devotional diary that, "God was far more to him than all else, and all others." His diary reads, "During the night I usually awake every hour and a half or two hours, when I strike a light and read a few verses of the Bible, which seldom fail to bring delight and quickening, with food for meditation and prayer...Last night I read the words of Christ, 'Behold My hands and My feet, that is I Myself: handle Me and see.' What will it be to handle for ourselves and to kiss those blessed feet, with the prints of the nails that fastened Him to the cross for our redemption and resurrection?"

On another occasion he writes, "On awaking this morning Jesus Christ drew very, very near to me, in a way as never quite the same before. He manifested Himself to me with inconceivable lovingkindness and tenderness and holy intimacy. He moved and constrained me to answer, 'My Lord Jesus,' with the softening and the love of my whole heart."

As Mr. Moody Stuart gave himself to more prayer, he entered into an ever increasing hunger for the tangible presence of Jesus. He writes, "The hope of eternal life is surprisingly wonderful and glorious; to be with God and in God forever - The Father and the Son and the Holy Ghost. When a brief time of communion here is so satisfying to the whole heart and mind, and so fills the soul in its inmost recesses to overflowing, what must it be to be filled with the fullness of God throughout all eternity."

Mr. Moody Stuart considered a life spent in sacrifice and prayer as the natural response to Christ's unfailing love. He mourned the fact that "many are willing that Christ should be something, but few will consent that Christ should be everything." His whole ministry was shaped by long hours spent in prayer. He was faithful and loving husband because he had been touched by the Lover of his soul in prayer. He was a tender and patient father because he had an intimate knowledge of God the Father through prayer. He was a faithful pastor to his church because he had beheld the Good Shepherd in times of prayer. Is it not true that our weakness and failure often come from our desperate lack of knowing Christ in prayer? Oh that we would be a people driven by a consuming love and devotion for Jesus, ever longing for His Holy presence. God help us to be a people given to constant prayer.