

## **Rev. Benjamin Moody**

### **Transcription of obituary published in the Primitive Methodist Magazine by R.C.**

BENJAMIN MOODY was one of many capable men the mining districts of the North have contributed to the ranks of the ministry. Born on June 2nd, 1848, at an old farm, *Onstead*, near Chilton, in the county of Durham, he was the child of godly parents, his father having for many years been an acceptable local preacher in the Methodist New Connexion church. Soon after Mr. Moody's birth, his parents removed to Shincliffe, near the city of Durham, and nine years afterwards to Oakenshaw, where they lived for ten years. At the end of that time they returned to Shincliffe, where they continued to reside, and where Mr. Moody's father died only a few days after the demise of his son.

His parents being members of the Methodist New Connexion, Mr. Moody's early years were spent in connection with that church. He attended the Sunday school, at the age of eleven he gave his heart to God, and became a member of the juvenile class. When the family returned from Oakenshaw to Shincliffe, Mr. Moody was about nineteen. He then united himself with our church, and became a local preacher. It was soon seen that there was the making of a man in him. The late Rev. J. Matfin took deep interest in him, helped him in every way possible, and was so impressed with his fitness for the work, that he took the initiative in recommending him for the ministry.

In 1872 he entered the Theological Institute at Sunderland. The year following he commenced his ministry in Carlisle, and subsequently laboured on the following stations: —Sunderland, South Shields, Shotley Bridge, Alston, Berwick-on-Tweed, Newcastle-on-Tyne 1st, and Seaton Delaval, where he died on June 20th, 1892.

During the nineteen years covered by his ministry, he did much good work, and was instrumental in turning many to righteousness. While on all his stations he did well, it was in Newcastle, perhaps, where he was favoured with most visible success. Referring to services conducted at Ballast Hills, one of the Newcastle papers reported as follows: —'The Rev. B. Moody, assisted by Mr. W. Atkinson (now Rev. W. Atkinson, Australia, and son of the Rev. J. Atkinson), commenced a fortnight's Revival Services at Ballast Hills, which have been a great success. Processions have been sustained in the streets, night after night. A meeting has also been held each afternoon at 2.30, specially for women, and has been well attended. Almost every night inquirers have sought the counsel and prayers of the church on soul matters, and many of them have professed to find peace through faith in Christ. The converts include several married people, two of whom are respectively sixty and sixty-four years of age. Three drunkards also besides others have signed the Gospel Temperance Pledge. A catechumen class also receives several accessions of young persons who have got good during the services.' We give this extract as a sample of much that might be given of a like kind.

Extracts from his diary would show that this was a work in which he greatly delighted, and for the success of which he greatly yearned. He was eminently qualified for such work. He was a man of well-built physique, had a good voice and musical, was an excellent family visitor; had a firm grasp of evangelical truth, and a passion for soul-saving. He had thus all the essential requisites for an efficient evangelist. And much as Mr. Moody did for, the church of which he was, for nearly a score of years, an able minister, he would have done more and better had he been set apart to such work, instead of having had committed to him the official management of men. The friction and fret incident to such management tell unfavourably on some men: and perhaps Mr. Moody might have rendered longer as well as better service had he been saved from such.

However that may be, Mr. Moody was a good man and true, was a faithful minister of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, and threw himself with great *abandon* into the work of raising men to the enjoyment of a higher life. Nor did he neglect to qualify himself for his high vocation. He was a diligent student, who ordered his time well. The Bible was his *chief* book: and to know it well, he made himself fairly well acquainted with the languages in which it was originally written.

He was human, and was, therefore, not faultless. He had in considerable measure the brusqueness characteristic of the class from which he sprang. A strong man himself, he was somewhat impatient of weakness in others, especially if those were of the class called *invertebrate*. He was not an adept at rounding the corners of life; and without doubt a larger suavity added to his many powerful qualities, would have been no disadvantage. 'Those who knew him well, however, recognised that behind his somewhat brusque exterior was a kindly heart. Hence his power to attach to himself other hearts— abundant evidence of which is found in numerous letters from ministers and others, (especially the members of his society class) on the occasion of his death.

On January 1st, 1892, Mr. Moody wrote in his diary, 'I am glad I am still alive, and considerably improved in my physical frame; though not yet seemingly fully free from the effects of influenza I had in Heaton a year and nine months ago.... May God give me many souls this year. Whether the lingering effects of the influenza above referred to had any influence in accelerating the heart affection of which he died, we cannot say; but before half the year on which he was then entering had passed, he had been gathered to his fathers. He had often expressed a wish to die in harness. In this he had his desire. On the evening of the day on which he died, he had preached at West Cramlington; and only a short time after his return home, he passed away to be for ever with the Lord.

On the day of his interment, a largely attended service was held in the Seaton Delaval chapel, at which the Rev. W. Johnson delivered an address, and who subsequently preached a memorial sermon in the same place of worship. At Shincliffe, where the remains of Mr. Moody were laid to rest, a service was held at the grave, at which the Rev. R. Clemitson gave an address to a large concourse of friends. Both services were conducted by the Rev. W. Johnson.

In Mrs. Moody, Mr. Moody had an admirable partner, and much sympathy is felt for her and the two dear boys in their sad and sudden loss. The officials and members of the Seaton Delaval station have been most kind, and considerate, and numerous letters of condolence have been sent by ministers and others.

By the death of Mr. Moody a good man in our Israel has fallen, and fallen in the prime of life. But we sorrow not as those who have no hope. His life-work ended, he has gone to the land where the shadows pass away.

'Soldier of Christ, well done!  
Praise be thy new employ:  
And while eternal ages run,  
Rest in thy Saviour's joy.'

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## References

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