

THE BOOK WE TRUST • THE FATHER WE WORSHIP • THE SON WE FOLLOW • THE SPIRIT WE EMBRACE
THE SIN WE RATIONALIZE • THE GOSPEL WE PROCLAIM • THE ANGELS WE APPRECIATE • THE DEVIL WE ABHOR
THE CHURCH WE LOVE • THE FUTURE WE ANTICIPATE

WHAT WE BELIEVE



PRAYER

Our Father, we offer you our praise and affirm that You are the God of all truth.

Let us love Your Truth and be changed by it.

Give us the grace to apply ourselves to what You have revealed.

Give us, O Father, that balance between truth and love so that our lives would be a powerful witness to all whom we meet.

Let us grow in the faith that gives You pleasure.

We pray that our church will be a powerful witness in Chicago.

May many come to learn more of Your Grace offered to all who wish to receive it.

In the name of Jesus our Savior and Lord,
Amen.

WHAT WE BELIEVE

THE
MOODY
CHURCH

INTRODUCTION

“I shore love your preachin,” the Texan said to an evangelist, “no doctrin’ or nothin’”

Time was when believers were tortured, eaten by wild beasts, or burned at the stake for their doctrinal convictions. Theology was appropriately called “the Queen of the Sciences” because men and women believed that one’s understanding of God dwarfed all other pursuits. After all, what can compete with ultimate questions: Why is Christ qualified to be a Savior? Does baptism wash away sins? Does justification only take care of our past or also our future? Does God choose who will be saved? Once saved, can we be lost? What is the basis of assurance?

The crown has slipped onto the “queen’s” shoulder and it is our responsibility to help her retrieve it. But how can that be done in an age of feel-good sermons and needs-driven worship services? Ravi Zacharias perceptively asks, “How do we communicate the Gospel to a generation that hears with its eyes and thinks with its feelings?”

Our first responsibility is to affirm once and for all that doctrine is really a study of Truths that relate to everyday living, and lie at the core of everything that is precious to us. Doctrine, properly considered, is not theoretical, but intended by God to transform our lives and take us all the way to heaven.

This series of messages is intended to teach doctrine in such a way that it will be the spiritual meat that believers crave. A sermon without doctrine is a tree without roots, a building without a foundation. We must simply choose to “buy the truth and sell it not” as the author of Proverbs admonishes us (Proverbs 23:23).

The booklet you hold in your hands is an attempt at reclaiming the ground that theology has surrendered to psychology in our evangelical subculture. Let us intentionally see all of life through the lens of God’s Truth. Our goal is to bring the whole of life under the scrutiny of God’s Word. We must resist the temptation of extracting doctrine from the Bible, wrenching it from the context of ordinary living.

A church that honors doctrine honors God’s Word. And those who honor God’s Word find that they have the resources needed to interpret the whole of life from God’s perspective.

The “queen” awaits her coronation. Let each of us crown her in our own hearts by cherishing the doctrinal pillars upon which a successful life may be built.

Join us in studying those doctrines that have made the church great!

Pastor Lutzer
Fall 2006

WHAT WE BELIEVE

If every member and attender of The Moody Church were to become better steeped in the practical doctrines of the Christian faith, we might discover that...

The Moody Church is a trusted place where anyone can connect with God and others.

The Moody Church is a place where all who attend experience the presence of God.

The Moody Church is a place where anyone who is lonely, discouraged, hurting, and confused can find love, acceptance, hope, forgiveness, and encouragement.

The Moody Church is a place that affirms the uniqueness of Jesus Christ as the only way of salvation and the only One who can connect us with God.

The Moody Church is a place of “irresistible influence,” a church that changes our neighborhood, our city, our country, and the world.

The Moody Church is an equipping church that sends workers around the world for permanent and short-term mission assignments.

The Moody Church gives sacrificially to meet all of our ministry needs.

The Moody Church seeks God, inviting Him to lead us in the days ahead as we anticipate an expanding ministry in our community.

WHAT WE BELIEVE

FALL SERIES 2006

Every fall, we as a church want to be unified in our exploration of Scripture. The sermons that I preach on Sunday morning form the basis of our studies in Sunday School and in most cases our Adult Bible Fellowship curriculum. This fall, we have chosen doctrinal studies to help us grow more quickly in our faith and understanding of what the Bible teaches.

The key to making the best of this series is to listen carefully to the messages and do the assignments as given. If you were to spend an hour a week working through the verses of Scripture and answering the questions, it would revolutionize your understanding of the Christian faith. What is more, you would better understand its coherence and uniqueness over and against the many religious options that tease our culture. I'd recommend that you do the study the week *before* the message is given so that you will be better prepared mentally and spiritually for the truths I hope to be sharing.

If you are the head of your family, you can also involve the children in these assignments. Yes, it is true that the study questions are geared for adults, but children can be introduced to these doctrines on their own level. The wise parent will “put the cookies on the lower shelf” as the saying goes, using age-appropriate illustrations.

Let me urge you to also attend Sunday evenings! As you peruse this booklet you will see that the evening is a continuation of the morning—it is an extension of the same subject. I hope I've chosen titles that will not only appeal to our members, but also to outsiders and those who are exploring the Christian faith.

As you know, we face special challenges in the days ahead. Take a walk around our new Christian Life Center and you will be greatly encouraged by the progress! Yet, as the two buildings are attached, our available room space will be greatly diminished. That means special challenges for all of our classes, but of course, these adjustments are manageable because we know that there is a brighter future. We are still hoping to move into our new building sometime next spring!

Please pray that all of our endeavors will be blessed of the Lord. We've been planning for the fall for many weeks and we desperately want to see God change our lives by exposure to His truth.

Your continued prayers for me are deeply appreciated.

Pastor Lutzer

WHAT WE BELIEVE

II TIMOTHY 3:16

Note: the word *plenary* means “entire” and the word *verbal* is a reference to the very words of Scripture.

Plenary Verbal Inspiration means that God so superintended the authors of Scripture that although they used their own background and style they nevertheless wrote His message to us without error in the original autographs.

KEY VERSE

All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness.

—II Timothy 3:16

QUESTIONS FOR YOUR STUDY

- What do the following figures of speech (comparisons, metaphors, etc.) say about the impact the Bible should have in our lives?
 - A mirror (James 1:22-25)
 - A sword (Ephesians 6:17, Hebrews 4:12)
 - A meal (Hebrews 5:14, I Peter 2:1-3 and Psalm 19:10)
 - A seed (Matthew 13:3-8)Do other figures of speech come to mind?
- List the benefits that come to those who meditate in the Scriptures (Joshua 1:8, Psalm 1).
- Recall a time when you were going through a severe trial and you were blessed by a passage of Scripture. Or, what passages have you heard or read most often?

THIS EVENING’S MESSAGE:

HOW WE GOT THE BIBLE—THE COLLECTION OF BOOKS, CANONICITY AND THE COUNCILS.

The evening service begins at 5:00 p.m.

JOHN 4:23-24

“Thou hast made us for Thyself and our hearts are restless until they find their all in Thee.”

—Augustine

Q: *What is the first duty of man?*

A: *To know God and enjoy Him forever.*

—The Westminster confession of faith

KEY VERSES

But the hour is coming, and is now here, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth, for the Father is seeking such people to worship Him. God is Spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truth. —John 4:23-24

QUESTIONS FOR YOUR STUDY

- Take the time to read Jeremiah 26:1-15 and discover:
 - (a) the conditions for true worship in the House of the Lord
 - (b) why the people wanted to kill Jeremiah.Relate the attitude of the people of Jeremiah’s time to our culture, our church and our own individual lives.
- Read Psalm 96, and list the different things for which God can be praised. Notice verse 8 as a necessary part of Old Testament worship.
- Read John 4:20-24 and list as many observations as you can about what worship means to God and what it should mean to us.

THIS EVENING’S MESSAGE:

THE TRINITY IN THE BIBLE AND HISTORY

The evening service begins at 5:00 p.m.

PHILIPPIANS 2:5-11

Theologians use the Greek word *kenosis* to describe what happened when Jesus became incarnated. The word is used in Philippians 2 and is translated in the ESV as “[He] made Himself nothing.” Another translates it, “[He] emptied Himself.” This phrase has challenged the minds of theologians throughout the centuries. It raises questions such as: What did it mean for Jesus to be made nothing? Of what did He empty Himself? Was He still fully God after this humiliation of becoming flesh?

KEY VERSES

Have this mind among yourselves, which is yours in Christ Jesus, who, though He was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, but made Himself nothing, taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men. And being found in human form, He humbled Himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross. Therefore, God has highly exalted Him and bestowed on Him the name that is above every name, so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father. —Philippians 2:5-11

THIS EVENING’S MESSAGE:

PRESENT CONTROVERSIES ABOUT JESUS

QUESTIONS FOR YOUR STUDY

- The New Testament presents Jesus as divine—what difference would it make if He weren’t divine?
- Give reasons why the incarnation is so difficult to understand. What has often puzzled you about God becoming a baby?
- What lessons does Paul want us to apply in light of the humiliation of Jesus? Read Philippians 2:1-5 carefully and apply it to your life and those of others.
- In what ways can we become like Jesus and in what ways is that impossible?

The evening service begins at 5:00 p.m.

GALATIANS 5:16-18

Sometimes the Holy Spirit is spoken of as the “forgotten member of the Trinity” because to our own detriment we seldom speak of Him.

“The difference between a religion of mere letter and form and one of life and power lies in knowing the Holy Spirit.”

—Dr. R.A. Torrey, pastor of The Moody Church

KEY VERSES

But I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the flesh. For the desires of the flesh are against the Spirit, and the desires of the Spirit are against the flesh, for these are opposed to each other, to keep you from doing the things you want to do. But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under the law. —Galatians 5:16-18

QUESTIONS FOR YOUR STUDY

There are four ministries of the Holy Spirit to believers that can be remembered by the acronym FIBS. Using the verses below, try to define the purpose of each of these ministries and the difference they should make in our lives.

- Filling (Ephesians 5:18)
- Indwelling (I Corinthians 6:19-20)
- Baptizing (I Corinthians 12:13)
- Sealing (Ephesians 4:30)

THIS EVENING’S MESSAGE:

EXPERIENCING THE FRUIT OF THE SPIRIT

The evening service begins at 5:00 p.m.

EPHESIANS 2:1-3

In Paul's writings, it is clear that we are not sinners because we sin, but rather we sin because we are sinners! As Luther pointed out, our whole nature is corrupt, thus we need a salvation that not only forgives us, but changes our status in the sight of God.

In former times people actually feared sin and even hated it, and fled from it. "Today the word is used in dessert menus, 'Peanut Butter Binge' and 'Chocolate Challenge' are sinful; lying is not," says James Hunter. Without a fresh understanding of the radical nature of sin, we will never understand the radical nature of grace.

KEY VERSES

And you were dead in the trespasses and sins in which you once walked, following the course of this world, following the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that is now at work in the sons of disobedience—among whom we all once lived in the passions of our flesh, carrying out the desires of the body and the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, like the rest of mankind. —Ephesians 2:1-3

THIS EVENING'S MESSAGE:

WHAT SIN DOES TO YOUR SOUL

QUESTIONS FOR YOUR STUDY

In the Bible sin is characterized in many different ways. Read the following passages and try to understand what each description means.

- Sin brings death (Romans 5:12)
- Sin blinds us (II Corinthians 4:4)
- Sin deceives us (Hebrews 3:13)
- Sin entangles us (Hebrews 12:1)
- Sin defiles us (Hebrews 12:15)
- Sin is like a disease (Isaiah 1:6)
- Sin enslaves us (John 8:34)

The evening service begins at 5:00 p.m.

EPHESIANS 2:8-9

The Gospel is “Good News” and entails what God did for us in the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus. This Gospel is not something we can do for ourselves, but only a gift we can receive by faith.

Being right about the Gospel is more important than say, whether Iran might attack Israel and begin World War III. Salvation deals with eternal destinies; accepting or rejecting God’s plan leads us to heaven or hell, bliss or endless torment.

“Looking at the wound of sin will never save anyone. You must look at the remedy”—D.L. Moody

KEY VERSES

For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, not a result of works, so that no one may boast. —Ephesians 2:8-9

QUESTIONS FOR YOUR STUDY

Just as sin has various negative descriptions, so the Gospel is described in many positive ways. Read these passages trying to better understand what each means. The Gospel does the following:

- It raises us from the dead (Ephesians 2:4-5)
- It reconciles us to God (Romans 5:10, II Corinthians 5:18)
- It brings freedom from sin (John 8:35-36)
- It creates within us a new nature (II Corinthians 5:17)
- It gives us the assurance of heaven (I John 5:13)
- It exalts us as heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ (Romans 8:16-17)

THIS EVENING’S MESSAGE:

THE ECLIPSE OF THE GOSPEL IN TODAY’S CHURCH

The evening service begins at 5:00 p.m.

HEBREWS 1:14

Many Americans are obsessed with angels, believing them to be more helpful and accessible than God. These misconceptions lead to many deceptions and misinterpretations. God warns us to not enter the spirit world because we are not qualified to know friend from foe. Many people who think they have been “touched by an angel” might well be mistaken.

“Angels are still bright, although the brightest fell.”

—William Shakespeare

KEY VERSE

Are they not all ministering spirits sent out to serve for the sake of those who are to inherit salvation? —Hebrews 1:14

QUESTIONS FOR YOUR STUDY

As you grapple with the existence and purpose of angels, answer these questions as best you can from the Scriptures:

- The Bible teaches that angels are personal beings—what do you think this means? And what are the implications for understanding angels? (Matthew 28:5, Luke 1:11-20, I Peter 1:12)
- List all the differences you can between angels and man. (Isaiah 6:2-3, Hebrews 1:5-14, Revelation 15:1)
- What does Revelation 22:8-9 teach us about angels and their interaction with men?
- List all of the times you can think of where angels appeared in the Bible. Identify the purpose of each encounter.
- Since angels are sent to help us, can you think of an experience that led you to believe that an angel might have been sent to help you?

THIS EVENING’S MESSAGE:

GUARDIAN ANGELS, CRYSTALS AND YOU

The evening service begins at 5:00 p.m.

I PETER 5:8

The devil is presented in Scripture as a powerful evil being who can influence the human mind. He is angry with us because he knows we will eventually have privileges that are greater than he had before the fall! For example, to be an heir of God and joint-heir with Christ can only be true of redeemed humans.

“The satanically managed man does not appear abominable, but is simply a man who is self-governed and has no need for God.”

—Oswald Chambers

KEY VERSE

Be sober-minded; be watchful. Your adversary the devil prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour.

—I Peter 5:8

QUESTIONS FOR YOUR STUDY

Take the time to carefully answer these questions based on the passages listed as well as others with which you are acquainted.

- Based on John 8:44, I John 3:8, Revelation 12:10, I Timothy 4:1-3, and similar verses, what are the evils that Satan does?
- What does Acts 5:1-5 teach us about Satan’s ability to influence our thoughts? Does this absolve us of responsibility for our actions?
- What are some of the characteristics of demonic possession as seen in Mark 5:1-13?
- Read Ephesians 6:10-20 to prepare for Satan’s attacks.

THIS EVENING’S MESSAGE:

FACING DEMONIC INFLUENCES

The evening service begins at 5:00 p.m.

EPHESIANS 5:25-28

The word *church* comes from the Greek word *ecclesia*, which literally means “called out ones.” We are called out from the world to represent God on earth. A church is not just any group of believers, but rather believers who are organized to administer the ordinances, worship, and serve together.

“A church is a hospital for sinners, not a museum for saints.”

—L.L.Nash

KEY VERSES

Husbands, love your wives, as Christ loved the church and gave Himself up for her, that He might sanctify her, having cleansed her by the washing of water with the word, so that He might present the church to Himself in splendor, without spot or wrinkle or any such thing, that she might be holy and without blemish. In the same way husbands should love their wives as their own bodies. He who loves his wife loves himself. —Ephesians 5:25-28

QUESTIONS FOR YOUR STUDY

The New Testament uses various metaphors to help us understand the church as a community. Read these passages and consider their meanings and implications.

- A flock of sheep (Luke 12:32; I Peter 5:1-4)
- A planted field (I Corinthians 3:5-9)
- A unified body (I Corinthians 12:12-31)
- A Holy Temple (Ephesians 2:19-22)

Bonus question: According to Revelation chapters 2 and 3, how carefully does Jesus watch what happens at The Moody Church?

THIS EVENING’S MESSAGE:

THE EARLY CHURCH, CHURCH MEMBERSHIP AND YOU

The evening service begins at 5:00 p.m.

REVELATION 1:7

There is disagreement among Christians as to whether the return of Jesus comes in two separate stages, or whether it is simply one event.

Pre-tribulationalism teaches that Jesus' return will take place in two stages: first, He will return to earth *before* the Tribulation (this is called the Rapture). Then He will return *after* the Tribulation to establish His Kingdom on earth (the glorious appearing).

Post-tribulationalism teaches that there will be only one coming: Jesus will return *after* the Tribulation. (At this point there is disagreement as to whether Jesus will establish His Kingdom on earth or whether the kingdom promises are being fulfilled right now. See below).

Pre-millennialism teaches that Jesus will establish His Kingdom *on earth* after He has returned. (Note: pre-tribulationalists and post-tribulationalists can both be pre-millennialists).

A-millennialism refers to those who believe that Jesus will return, but there will not be a kingdom on earth since Jesus already reigns in Heaven, fulfilling all the promises given to the Jews in the Old Testament.

Note: *Pre-millennialists* take God's Old Testament promises literally; *A-millennialists* spiritualize the promises in ways that would have confused the Old Testament prophets and saints.

KEY VERSE

Behold, He is coming with the clouds, and every eye will see Him, even those who pierced Him, and all tribes of the earth will wail on account of Him. Even so. Amen. —Revelation 1:7

QUESTIONS FOR YOUR STUDY

- Read these two passages and ask whether they speak of the same event (Matthew 24 and I Thessalonians 4:13-18).
(Note: pre-tribulationists believe I Thessalonians refers to the Rapture and Matthew 24 refers to Jesus' glorious return to establish the kingdom; Post-tribulationists believe they are the same event).
- Read Luke 1:32-33. Do you think Mary would have understood Gabriel to say that Jesus would rule in heaven, or would she have understood this to mean that Jesus would rule on a reestablished throne of David in Jerusalem where David ruled?
- What changes would you make in your life if you knew Jesus was going to return before the end of next year? (Mark 8:34-38, I John 2:28-29)

THIS EVENING'S MESSAGE:
ONE MINUTE AFTER YOU DIE

The evening service begins at 5:00 p.m.

SUNDAY EVENING MESSAGES

September 10	How We Got the Bible—The Collection of Books, Canonicity and the Councils
September 17	The Trinity in the Bible and History
September 24	Present Controversies About Jesus
October 1	Missions Sunday
October 8	Experiencing the Fruit of the Spirit
October 15	What Sin Does to Your Soul
October 22	The Eclipse of the Gospel in Today's Church
October 29	Guardian Angels, Crystals and You
November 5	Facing Demonic Influences
November 12	The Early Church, Church Membership and You
November 19	Why Thanks <i>Giving</i> Should Be Thanks <i>Living</i>
November 26	One Minute After You Die

Please join us Sunday evenings at 5:00 p.m.

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