

XIX.II. ROBERT MURRAY M'CHEYNE, CHERISHING COMMUNION WITH GOD - The Nineteenth Century (pt.2)

Two questions and answers:

QUESTION 1. What is Church History?

ANSWER. Church history is the story of how Jesus has built his church for his own glory and his peoples' good. **Matthew 16:18** "I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it."

QUESTION 2. Why should we study Church History?

ANSWER. We should learn church history because it is the amazing story of Jesus conquering the nations through his Gospel. **Revelation 6:2** "[Christ] came out conquering, and to conquer."

Q. ARE YOU READY FOR CHURCH HISTORY?!

Today we are going to look at the Nineteenth Century for the second time. But before we do that let's remember what we learned last time.

Q. Can anyone tell me something Brett taught you last time about the nineteenth century?

RECAP

In the Nineteenth Century, though fake Christian movements arose the church stood firm through bold preaching and sacrificial missions.

Who can tell me the

NINETEENTH CENTURY (pt.1) MEMORY VERSE.

- "And Jesus came and said to them, 'All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age'" (Matthew 28:18-20).

NINETEENTH CENTURY (pt.1) MEMORY QUOTE.

- "The Gospel is like a caged lion. It does not need to be defended, it just needs to be let out of its cage" (Charles Haddon Spurgeon).

Now, today I am going to teach you about the Nineteenth Century PART 2 (1,800-1,900).

What happened in the Nineteenth Century (1,800-1,900) that shows us how Christ built His church as He continued to conquer the nations?

I. ROBERT MURRAY M'CHEYNE (1813-1843).

Everyone say, "Robert Murray M'Cheyne."

In the Nineteenth Century, God used Robert Murray M'Cheyne to display the preciousness of communion with God.

HISTORY

- **(i) M'Cheyne was born on May 21, 1813, in Edinburgh, Scotland.**
- **(ii) He grew up in a home that emphasized high moral standards, but in his own words was "devoid of God".**
- **(iii) In 1831, when he was 18, his brother suddenly died.** On his death bed his brother found peace in Christ. And seeing this, M'Cheyne's heart was pierced and Jesus saved him too.
- **(iv) Four months later, he enrolled in the Divinity Hall of Edinburgh University to prepare for the ministry.**
- **(v) In 1836, he was ordained and called to pastor St. Peter's Church,** where he faithfully labored until his death.
- **(vi) He died at the age of 29 on March 25, 1843 from typhus fever,** contracted while visiting sick church members. Before death he said, "I have been too anxious to do great things. The lust of praise has ever been my besetting sin; and what more befitting school could be found for me than that suffering alone, away from the eyes and ears of man?"
- **(vii) He died young, never married, and published no books.** We would probably have never known about this faithful servant of Christ Jesus if not for his friend Andrew Bonar who published a biography about his life.

PRACTICE

I) ROBERT MURRAY M'CHEYNE WAS EARNEST IN HIS MINISTRY

- **Everyone say, "M'Cheyne was earnest"**
 - **M'CHEYNE:** "I would rather beg my bread than preach without success"

- **ANDREW BONAR:** "In the case of a faithful ministry, success is the rule; want of it the exception. For it is written: 'In doing this thou shalt both save thyself and them that hear thee (1 Tim. 4:16). Mr M'Cheyne expected it, and the Lord exceeded all his hopes.

II) ROBERT MURRAY M'CHEYNE WAS AN EXAMPLE TO HIS FLOCK

- **Everyone say, "M'Cheyne was a good example"**
 - **M'CHEYNE:** "The greatest need of my people is my own holiness,"

III) ROBERT MURRAY M'CHEYNE WAS DEVOTED TO COMMUNION WITH GOD THROUGH PRAYER

- **Everyone say, "M'Cheyne was devoted to prayer"**
 - **M'CHEYNE:** I ought to pray before seeing any one [in the morning]. Often when I sleep long, or meet with others early, and then have family prayer, and breakfast, and forenoon callers, often it is eleven or **twelve o'clock** before I begin secret prayer. This is a wretched system. It is unscriptural. Christ rose before day, and went into a solitary place. David says, 'Early will I seek Thee; You shalt early hear my voice.' ... In general, it is best to have at least one hour *alone with God*, before engaging in anything else... I ought to spend the best hours of the day in communion with God... The morning hours, from six to eight, are the most uninterrupted, and should be thus employed.

IV) ROBERT MURRAY M'CHEYNE WAS DEVOTED TO COMMUNION WITH GOD THROUGH READING HIS BIBLE

- **Everyone say, "M'Cheyne was devoted to read his Bible"**
 - **M'CHEYNE:** "I love the word of God, and find it the sweetest nourishment to my soul."
 - M'Cheyne developed a plan to read through the entire Bible in a year (you can easily find and use it today). He divided the Scriptures into reading times with the family and privately so that you would read through the entire Bible every year (and the New Testament twice).

V) ROBERT MURRAY M'CHEYNE WAS A MAN MARKED BY HUMBLE SINCERITY

- **Everyone say, "M'Cheyne was sincere"**
 - M'Cheyne was going to be separated from his congregation for a time and another man came to care for the flock in his absence.
 - **M'CHEYNE:** "I hope you may be a thousand times more blessed among them than ever I was. Perhaps there are many souls that would

never have been saved under my ministry, who may be touched under yours”

- The Lord was pleased to answer his prayers and a great revival broke out while he was away.
- **ANDREW BONAR:** “He had no envy at another instrument having been so honored in the place where he himself had labored with many tears and temptations. In true Christian magnanimity, he rejoiced that the work of the Lord was done, by whatever hand.”

RECAP

In the Nineteenth Century, God used Robert Murray M'Cheyne to display the preciousness of communion with God.

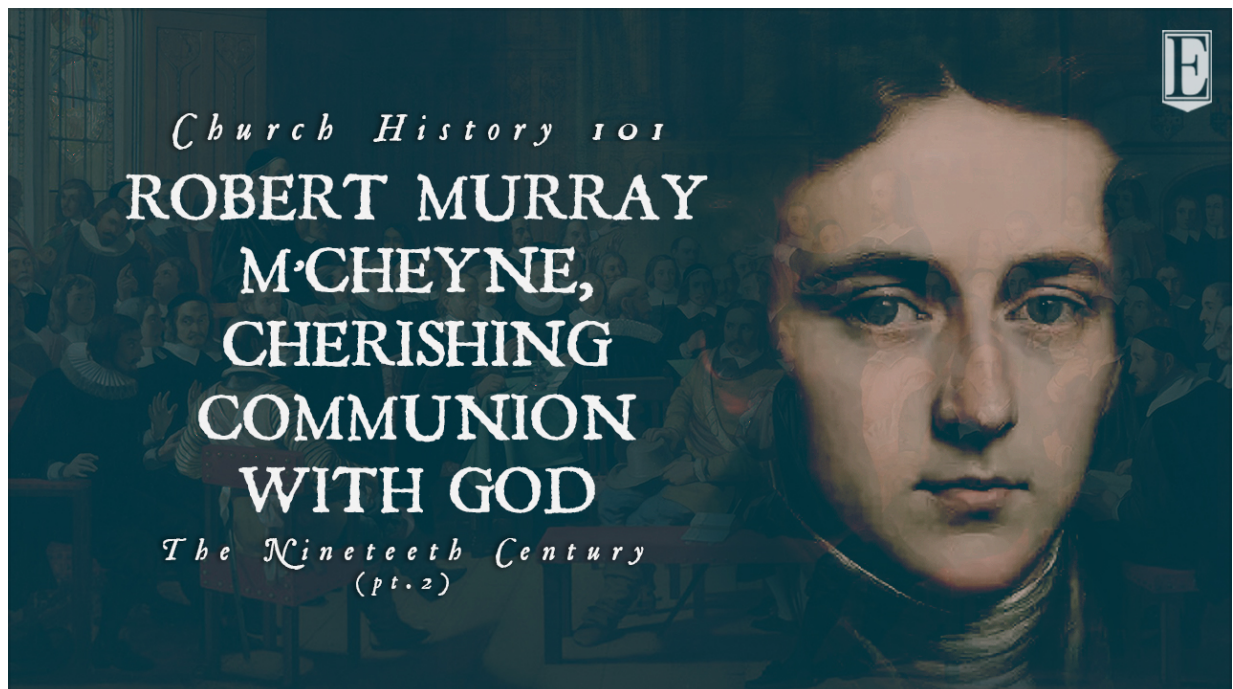
NINETEENTH CENTURY (pt.2) MEMORY VERSE.

- “I rise before dawn and cry for help; I hope in your words.” **(Psalm 119:147)**

NINETEENTH CENTURY (pt.2) MEMORY QUOTE.

- “I love the word of God, and find it the sweetest nourishment to my soul.” **(Robert Murray M'Cheyne)**

IMAGES





Robert Murray M'Cheyne, Cherishing Communion with God - The Nineteenth Century (pt.2)

In an age of theological controversy and spiritual awakening, Christ raised up Robert Murray M'Cheyne, a young Scottish pastor whose brief life burned with an intense love for communion with God. Through M'Cheyne's earnest ministry, exemplary holiness, devotion to prayer and Scripture, and humble sincerity, Christ displayed the preciousness of walking closely with Him.

Robert Murray M'Cheyne: A Life Marked by Communion with God

Robert Murray M'Cheyne was born on May 21, 1813, in Edinburgh, Scotland, into a home that emphasized high moral standards but, in his own words, was "devoid of God" (Bonar 1844, 1). In 1831, when he was eighteen, his brother suddenly died. On his deathbed his brother found peace in Christ. Seeing this, M'Cheyne's heart was pierced and Jesus saved him too (Bonar 1844, 5–7). Four months later, he enrolled in the Divinity Hall of Edinburgh University to prepare for the ministry (Bonar 1844, 12).

In 1836, he was ordained and called to pastor St. Peter's Church in Dundee, where he faithfully labored until his death (Bonar 1844, 23). He died at the age of twenty-nine on March 25, 1843, from typhus fever contracted while visiting sick church members. Before his death he said, "I have been too anxious to do great things. The lust of praise has ever been my besetting sin; and what more befitting school could be found for me than that suffering alone, away from the eyes and

ears of man?" (Bonar 1844, 145). He died young, never married, and published no books. We would probably never have known about this faithful servant of Christ Jesus if not for his friend Andrew Bonar who published a biography of his life (Bonar 1844, 156).

Practical Lessons from Robert Murray M'Cheyne

M'Cheyne's life teaches five enduring lessons about the preciousness of communion with God.

First, Robert Murray M'Cheyne was earnest in his ministry. He declared, "I would rather beg my bread than preach without success" (Bonar 1844, 78). Andrew Bonar reflected on his friend's expectation of fruit: "In the case of a faithful ministry, success is the rule; want of it the exception. For it is written: 'In doing this thou shalt both save thyself and them that hear thee' (1 Tim. 4:16). Mr M'Cheyne expected it, and the Lord exceeded all his hopes" (Bonar 1844, 89). His earnestness challenges us to labor for souls with holy expectation.

Second, Robert Murray M'Cheyne was an example to his flock. He wrote, "The greatest need of my people is my own holiness" (Bonar 1844, 112). He understood that a pastor's personal walk with God is the foundation of effective ministry. As Bonar observed, M'Cheyne's life became the most powerful sermon he ever preached (Bonar 1844, 134).

Third, Robert Murray M'Cheyne was devoted to communion with God through prayer. He resolved, "I ought to pray before seeing any one [in the morning]. Often when I sleep long, or meet with others early, and then have family prayer, and breakfast, and forenoon callers, often it is eleven or twelve o'clock before I begin secret prayer. This is a wretched system. It is unscriptural. Christ rose before day, and went into a solitary place. David says, 'Early will I seek Thee; Thou shalt early hear my voice.' ... In general, it is best to have at least one hour alone with God, before engaging in anything else ... I ought to spend the best hours of the day in communion with God ... The morning hours, from six to eight, are the most uninterrupted, and should be thus employed" (Bonar 1844, 156–157).

Fourth, Robert Murray M'Cheyne was devoted to communion with God through reading His Bible. He confessed, "I love the word of God, and find it the sweetest nourishment to my soul" (Bonar 1844, 167). M'Cheyne developed a plan to read through the entire Bible in a year, dividing the Scriptures into family and private readings so that the whole Bible was covered annually and the New Testament twice. This discipline nourished his soul and equipped his ministry.

Fifth, Robert Murray M'Cheyne was a man marked by humble sincerity. When he was to be separated from his congregation for a time and another man came to care for the flock in his absence, M'Cheyne wrote, "I hope you may be a thousand times more blessed among them than ever I was. Perhaps there are many souls that would never have been saved under my ministry, who may be touched under yours" (Bonar 1844, 189). The Lord was pleased to answer his prayers, and a great revival broke out while he was away. Andrew Bonar reflected, "He had no envy at another instrument having been so honored in the place where

he himself had labored with many tears and temptations. In true Christian magnanimity, he rejoiced that the work of the Lord was done, by whatever hand" (Bonar 1844, 201).

Conclusion: Christ's Victory in the Nineteenth Century

In the nineteenth century, God used Robert Murray M'Cheyne to display the preciousness of communion with God. Though his life was short, his earnest ministry, exemplary holiness, devotion to prayer and Scripture, and humble sincerity left an indelible mark on the church. As Andrew Bonar wrote, "His life was a living commentary on the words, 'He that believeth on me, as the Scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water'" (Bonar 1844, 234).

Let us learn from M'Cheyne: labor earnestly for souls, live as an example to the flock, rise early for prayer, feed daily on the Word, and walk in humble sincerity before God. May we prize communion with Him above all else, knowing that Christ continues to conquer the nations, building His church for His glory. Let us live boldly, knowing His kingdom advances, unstoppable, until it fills the earth. Amen.

Bibliography

Bonar, Andrew A. *Memoir and Remains of R. M. M'Cheyne*. Edinburgh: William Oliphant & Co., 1844.

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