

## **John Moore (1662 – 1726)**

### **The Christian's Monthly Record, 1888.**

John Moore was a Baptist Minister, Northampton. In writing to his friends in Yorkshire, he says, "It was amongst you that I drew my first natural breath, being born at Okeworth Hall, in the parish of Keighley, Yorkshire, in 1662. It was amongst you that I had my education in my childhood and youth, under the care of my religious parent, and by instruction and tutorage, chiefly and especially Mr. W. Hustler, of Bingley, Yorkshire. It was from amongst you that I took a damsel to wife, who, as a faithful consort and helpmeet, indeed hath ever since to this day been my companion, in my pilgrimage and removing from place to place in prosperity and in adversity. It was amongst you that I drew my first spiritual breath, being convinced of my undone state under sin and the law, as near as I can remember, in the sixteenth year of my age, and lying many years at the foot of Mount Sinai, often under the terrors of the law and under horror of conscience. But the Lord was pleased, at length, about the 25th year of my age, to speak comfort to my bewildered, troubled soul, more immediately by suggesting some precious absolute promises into my mind and partly by and under the ministry of that laborious and faithful minister of Jesus Christ, Mr. William Mitchell, whom I esteem very highly in love.

"The church at Rossendale, in Lancashire, where I was a member, was founded through the labors of those two eminent men of God in

their day and generation, William Mitchell and David Crossley. Mr Mitchell frequently preached at Rawden and Heaton, where he continued till his death. He was converted about the 19th year of his age. In reading, meditation, and prayer he was unwearied. He made an unusual progress in gospel knowledge, was mighty in prayer and savoury and edifying in his discourses. O the blessed warm and quickening opportunities we have had in those days within doors, on mountains, in fields, and in woods! He was twice apprehended upon the Conventicle Act. The second time he was taken near Bradford, and conveyed prisoner to the Castle at York, where he lay until the declaration of liberty of conscience was proclaimed, April 4th 1687. The work which it pleased God to put him and his colleague into was so great that they had about twenty several meeting places.

"Some sheltered spot the persecuted sought, By Heaven guided, here a refuge found, enclosed by woods and groves and hills around, To God they built a house, a house of prayer and paid their solemn vows and worship there. Far from alarm and persecuting hate, the precious flock within the building met; Heard from the pastor of a Saviour's love and learnt to live for heaven and joys above. Dilapidated walls and mouldering stone with ivy covered or moss overgrown, Bespeak the place still sacred.

"After I had met with and passed through several and various scenes and turns of providence in the course of my life and Christian progress in Yorkshire and Lancashire, it was my lot, in the 32nd year of my age, to be cast in the county of Northampton, in order, at first, to

serve as chaplain to Arthur Brooks, Esq., of Great Oakley; but it pleased God to visit that religious gentleman with a violent fever, whereof he died, within a month after I was received into the family; upon which I soon found that I could not stay long there, his lady being otherwise minded, as touching the worship and service of God. This being known, I had many invitations to preach the gospel in several places, being also solicited by the churches at Kimbolton and Kettering and by friends at Corbey [Corby] to go in order to abide with them; and also from the church of God at College Lane, Northampton, and I found my heart inclined to answer their desire; and accordingly I came with my family to this town in March, and upon declared approbation of my ministry I was called to the pastoral office on July 30th and was, with my wife, by virtue of a letter of dismissal from the church in Rossendale, received into communion on Oct. 30th, and ordained pastor in the presence of many witnesses on Dec. 3rd, 1700. And through the mercies of God I have continues to this day, serving the Lord, as I hope, will all humility of mind, passing through many reproaches, temptations, afflictions, distresses, through honour and dishonour, through evil report and good report. Notwithstanding all this I have sometimes thought that I could, in some measure, say with the apostle {2 Cor. I. 12}: Our rejoicing is this, the testimony of our conscience that, in simplicity and godly sincerity, not with fleshly wisdom, but by the grace of God, we have had our conversation in the world, and more abundantly to you-ward. Though I confess I am poor and unworthy, less than the least of all saints, and do count it a special privilege and happiness to be a doorkeeper in the

house of God; yet I dare appeal and bear record this day that I am pure from the blood of all, having not shunned to declare all the counsel of God, according to that capacity, light, and ability which God hath been pleased to give to me; the work of the ministry which Christ Jesus hath put me into rendering it my incumbent duty to build up the church as much as in me lies, upon that sure and only foundation which the Lord God hath laid in Zion, which is Jesus Christ, and to keep back nothing that may be profitable. To this end, after frequent hesitations and struggles in my own mind, I forced myself (in compliance with the repeated entreaties of some professing a cordial respect to me as well as profit by my ministry) to publish somewhat as a testimony of my respects to you and as an instance or taste of the doctrine which, through grace, I have in some measure learned, in the faith whereof I desire to live and die. I beseech you to bear with the plain style and unpolished dress where this is presented to you."

Mr. Moore presided over the Northampton church more than twenty-five years and entered into his rest Jan. 14th, 1726, aged 64. His labors were greatly blessed, as we find that 264 members joined the church during his pastorate. The godly Anne Dutton was one of his members. She writes concerning him: "The Lord my Shepherd led me by the ministry of his servant and under-shepherd, Mr. Moore, into fat, green pastures; the doctrines of the gospel were clearly stated and much insisted on in his ministry. The sanctuary streams ran clearly, and the Sun shone gloriously. I was abundantly satisfied with the fatness of God's house, made to drink of the river of his pleasure and in his light I

saw light." Dr. Gill says also of him: "Mr. John Moore, of Northampton, was an eminent preacher of the gospel, and minister of the Baptist denomination, of considerable abilities and learning, whom I had the honor to have personal knowledge of and acquaintance with."

Mr M. published in 1722 a small volume of choice and precious sermons now rarely to be met with. I might just say that many of the books left by Mrs. Dutton in the Gransden Library were formerly the property of her patron, Mr. Moore, and may still be seen there, with his autograph, scarce and valuable divinity. R.H.