

# **THE INNER LIFE OF CHRIST**

being a compendium of books by

**William G. Blaikie**  
**&**  
**Robert Law**

# **Glimpses of the Inner Life of Christ**

**by**

**William Garden Blaikie, D.D., LL.D.**

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# Chapter First

## *HIS DEVOTION TO THE FATHER'S WORK*

“Wist ye not that I must be about my  
Father’s business?”—Luke ii. 49.

**I**T is surely not without a purpose that, in St. Luke’s narrative, the memorable saying of Christ’s childhood stands mid-way between two statements of His growth and progress. A few verses before (ver. 40) we read that “the child Jesus grew and waxed strong in the spirit, and the grace of God was upon him;” a few verses after (ver. 52), “Jesus increased in wisdom and stature, and in favour with God and man.” If there be a purpose in this arrangement, must it not be to teach us that it was as the result of the process referred to in the earlier verse that the saying in the temple was uttered; while, as the result of the continued progress noticed in the other verse, the whole life followed that is recorded in this Gospel. The direction in which He was growing, is significantly indicated in the memorable utterance of the Child, “I must be about my Father’s business;” the mature fruit of the process is displayed to us in the whole transactions of His public life, beautifully summed up in the words of His closing prayer, “I have glorified thee on the earth: I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do.”

At the very least, the words of St. Luke imply that, in some sense, the human nature of the man Christ Jesus advanced and ripened by gradual steps. We are apt to be blinded to this fact by the dazzling glory of His Divine nature. The more that we love and honour our Lord, the more do our hearts fill with His infinite majesty, and the less are we disposed to think of His having ever had any, even sinless, imperfection. The more that we feel what we owe to Him who loved us, and who washed us from our sins in His own blood, the more are we disposed to prostrate ourselves before His throne; and no song seems equal to the occasion save that which gives to the Lamb that was slain all “power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing.”

But this is only one side of the twofold nature of Jesus, and it cannot be right to allow the higher to conceal the lower. St. Luke's words refer to the lower, or human side, and they indicate a fourfold growth—physical, intellectual, moral, and spiritual. Slightly changing the order, to bring out the climax, we find Jesus growing physically—"in stature;" intellectually—"in wisdom;" morally—"in favour with man;" spiritually—"in favour with God." The first member of this enumeration is easily believed; but, step by step, the difficulty of belief increases, and when we read that Jesus grew in favour with God, our difficulty is at the greatest. Yet His soul, as much as His body, was part of that human nature which He took on Him; and, sinless though it was, it followed the same law of gradual increase. The qualities that made Him "fairer than the children of men" reached their maturity by degrees, as the oak attains its strength, or the peach its flavour. Year by year the human nature unfolded itself, and its beauty increased, reaching its climax, as we may believe, when the voice burst from the sky, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased."

In the growth of human nature, the process is partly involuntary, and partly the result of will and effort. The growth of our lower or animal nature is almost wholly involuntary; but the higher the part in which the growth takes place, the more scope and need is there for conscious effort. It is not by taking thought that we can add a cubit to our stature; the hair grows, the nails push forward, whether we will or no. But in the higher departments of our nature there is no progress without exercise and effort. "Herein do I exercise myself," says St. Paul, describing the working of his inner life, "to have always a conscience void of offence toward God, and toward man." "Gird up the loins of your minds," says St. Peter, in a similar connection, "be sober, and hope to the end."

When, therefore, we read of the gradual ripening of the moral and spiritual nature of Jesus, we cannot suppose that it was a quite passive and involuntary process; it must have been the result of much holy will and effort. Sinless though He was, and incapable of sin, His high human attainments could have ripened only by degrees, and not without much painstaking on His part, and many a prayer that God's will might be done. His consecration to His Father's business, for example—the attainment with which we are now specially concerned—must have been, in its maturest and completest form, the result of much soul-

# **The Emotions of Jesus**

**by**

**Robert Law**

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# Preface

**N**OTHING needs to be said by way of preface to this latest addition to the "Short Course Series," except that it does not aim at being a treatise on the emotional life of Jesus, and that even the field indicated by its title is covered only in part. Other attractive and fruitful topics—such as our Lord's delight in nature, the emotions arising out of His more intimate personal relations, His emotion in the presence of death, His shame, and the rich emotional content of the Passion-narrative—readily suggest themselves, but have had to be altogether omitted, or else are touched upon in a merely incidental way. Whether it may be possible to me at some future time to remedy this, I know not. Meantime, this short series of studies is published with the hope that it will be welcome to members of my former congregations and to my many friends, both old and new, as a memento of one who always thinks of them with affection and gratitude, as well as acceptable and profitable to a wider circle of readers.

ROBERT LAW.

Toronto,  
December 1914.

“Jesus is God lived by man.” —GODET.

“The face of Jesus is like all men’s faces.”  
—RUSSIAN PROVERB.

“We find in Emotion a function so highly beneficial, so indispensable for full vitality, that we confidently include in our ideal of human character a permanent and immeasurable richness of emotional sensibility.”

—SULLY.

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“Twas August, and the fierce sun overhead  
Smote on the squalid streets of Bethnal Green,  
And the pale weaver, through his windows seen  
in Spitalfields, looked thrice dispirited.

I met a preacher there I knew, and said:  
‘Ill and o’erworked, how fare you in this scene?’  
‘Bravely,’ said he, ‘for I of late have been  
Much cheered with thoughts of Christ, the living bread.’

O human soul! As long as thou canst so  
Set up a mark of everlasting light,  
Above the howling senses’ ebb and flow  
To cheer thee, and to right thee if thou roam,  
Not with lost toil, thou labourest through the night,  
Thou mak’st the heaven thou hop’st indeed thy home.”

—MATTHEW ARNOLD.

# Chapter First

## *THE JOY OF JESUS*

“These things have I spoken unto you, that My joy might remain in you, and that your joy might be full.”

— St. John xv. 11.

**J**ESUS is the Man of Sorrows; the title is for ever His, like His Crown of Thorns. It expresses Him truly as the One who has borne the whole immense burden of sinning, suffering humanity. But it does not fully, nor even fundamentally, express Him. Instinctively we would shrink from describing Jesus as an unhappy person, as one who at any moment, or in any circumstance, existed miserably. Instinctively we feel that the ground-tone of His life, latent in its harshest discords, is joy. And as we think of what His mission was, of what He purposed and claimed to effect, we see that it could not be otherwise. No pessimist could be a saviour. “Such as we have give we unto thee.” Unhappiness can never beget happiness, nor sickness health. Only he can “strengthen the wavering line,” in whom joy is a force infectious and conquering, ringing in his voice, gleaming in his eyes. So was it that Jesus came. He came with glad tidings, came as the Divine Physician into the world’s vast hospital. His words are beatitudes. He lifts up His hands in benediction. The blessings of the Divine Kingdom He was bringing to men He could compare to nothing so much as to the festive joys of marriage (St. Mark ii. 19). Himself and His disciples were like a wedding-party. He was the bridegroom whose joy overflows into the hearts of his friends, and turns fasting into feasting. Even at the last, on the verge of Gethsemane and in sight of Calvary, He speaks not of His sorrows, but still of His joy. He is the Lord of joy, and His crowning desire for His servants is that they may enter into the joy of their Lord and have it fulfilled in them.

Yet Jesus is the Man of Sorrows; and it is because He is the Man of Sorrows that His joy is so precious a legacy, so strong an anchor to our souls. He is no “sky-blue” optimist. This Man of Joy has dwelt in

the heart of blackest night. He has seen hell, here on earth, in men's hearts, flaming in their eyes, triumphing in their deeds. Yet His joy is unconquered. No one has ever sounded the depths of reality, has ever penetrated to the ultimate core of life, as Jesus did; and what He finds there is not an abyss of evil, but an infinite of good. I desire then to speak of the joy of Jesus—of His joy rather than of His joys. There are joys which are transfigured sorrows, like the rainbow, which shines in the very substance of the lowering cloud. But the rainbow is the child of the sun. And I want to speak of that unfailing cause of joy which for Jesus transcended all causes of sorrow, which made the sunshine of His life, and which alone can make the sunshine of ours.

### 1. THE JOY OF TRUST.

Now all deep, lasting joy must be rooted in faith, in our conviction regarding reality—the eternal reality that lies within and beyond the outward show that passes before our eyes moment by moment. What does life mean? What lies at the heart of it? Stevenson used to say in his half-humorous way that he had a tremendous belief in the “ultimate decency of things.” And a biographer, speaking of the gaiety of John Wesley, says that it was such as could be seen only in one “who felt his religion to rest upon the whole nature of things, and who was at rest in his religion.” And of this joyous faith, this firm confidence in an ultimate rightness and goodness in the whole nature of things, Jesus Christ is for ever the Author and Perfecter. In better words, He had absolute, invincible faith in God; and this was the root of His joy. “This is life eternal,” He said, “to know Thee, the only true God.” We seldom realise, and never adequately, what a stupendous thing it is just to believe in God, in a God who is really God, whose presence, thought, and power permeate all existence, whose eternal purpose disposes all events, overrules all wills, shapes all destinies. Such belief, if sincere and vital, must colour all life. God must be its strength and joy, or its terror and despair. And Jesus Christ believed in such a God as no other has believed. To no other has God been a reality at once so universal and so immediately near. He believed in God, not occasionally as we do, but all the time; not in the last resort, but as the first and last and supreme factor in every situation; not in the hours of crisis alone, on the mountain-top, but on the homely plain,