

## Study 19: The Christ of the Church

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### SEVENTH DAY: THE QUALITY OF THE CHRISTIAN MIND

1. The conception of God in the Christian ideal is the purest the world has known. Notwithstanding objections raised at times in the name of philosophy, and the age-long protest against deifying a man, there flourishes in the Christian Church, where Jesus Christ has always been worshiped as divine, the richest and most potent belief in God as the universal loving Father, whose majesty is unapproachable, and whose life is immanent in this world of which He is the Creator and Sovereign. Deism has been repudiated by the Christian mind. Those who worship Jesus Christ as the eternal Son of God, everywhere believe in God as the one and only wise God, the loving Father of Jew and Gentile, Barbarian, Scythian, bond and free.

2. The Christian mind is possessed by an exceeding great sense of sin. Unquestionably the life of Christ on earth, His awful death at the hands of godless men, and His resurrection have created in Christendom an intense conviction of the hideousness of sin. And this is a discovery that each individual Christian must make for himself. The vision of the Christ has filled the Christian mind with penitential sorrow, which no theories as to the origin and nature of evil have been able to dispel. Sin is felt to be more than ignorance. It has made a nest within the heart, which has poisoned the blood with its hatching. Whenever the Jesus of the gospels is preached the consciousness of guilt is deepened.

3. Paradoxical, however, as it may appear, the perfection of Christ's character instead of repelling men by the thought of its being unattainable has drawn the sinful towards Him. Moral approach to Christ is based on penitence. A return to the pure Christ of the gospels has always meant an increasing ethical impulse to the Church. It is just where Christ is revered as divine that His life constitutes the ideal. His incomparable ethical altitude becomes the source of unexampled moral effort. Those who realize most vividly the awfulness of the world's sin are least hopeless of it. So Jesus Christ has produced in the Christian mind profound penitence, but a new and hopeful energy of loving effort to reclaim others. The Christian character is thus distinguished by an inexhaustible dynamic of love, flowing from the primal act of love revealed in the self-sacrifice of the Son of God.