

THE SINLESS CHRIST

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The sinless Christ by George Tybout Purves

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GEORGE TYBOUT PURVES

**THE
SINLESS CHRIST**

The Presbyterian Pulpit



THE SINLESS CHRIST

BY

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INTRODUCTION

THE sermons contained in this volume cannot fairly be called sermons preached by Dr. Purves. He prepared full notes. In preaching, however, he was absolutely independent of them, and many of the most impressive passages of his discourses had never been written. But, as he closely adhered in the pulpit at many points to the language of the outline written in his study, these discourses will enable the readers who heard him preach on their texts to recall the sermons as he delivered them.

Those who, like the writer of this Introduction, listened to Dr. Purves regularly as his parishioners know that he was an exceptionally great preacher. Underlying his preaching was the Christian "theory of the universe." To this theory he had given and was always giving the careful study and reflection of a large, disciplined and energetic mind. As he apprehended

it, it was self-consistent, justified by reason and in harmony with his religious experience. It was his strongest, most distinct and most cherished intellectual conviction.

During his entire professional life he was a close, scientific and enthusiastic student of the Bible, and of the New Testament in particular. He had a brilliant career for eight years as Professor of New Testament Literature and Exegesis in Princeton Theological Seminary. He knew the later Scriptures as few men know them. He received them as the absolutely truthful and inspired record of God's gracious revelation to sinful men, and as the infallible rule of religious faith and life.

His religious life was sincere and simple. The trait which those near to him would probably call distinguishing and out-standing was his affectionate loyalty to Jesus Christ, his Redeemer, Lord and Friend.

He was a man of high intellectual tastes and wide and various intellectual interests. He was a cultivated man who loved good and great books. But these tastes, strong as they were, were reso-

lutely subordinated to his sympathy with his fellow-men, his affection for them and his active interest in their spiritual well-being. This affectionate interest finely revealed itself in his work as a Christian pastor. I never knew a better pastor than Dr. Purves was when in Princeton.

He had a great gift of speech. I have heard him more than once when he was compelled to speak with no time at all for preparation and had to throw himself upon his reserve of culture. At these times he surprised and delighted me by the spontaneous methodizing of his mind, and the clearness and grace of his speech. I never heard him speak when his own emotions and the emotions of his audience were not stirred. He spoke with fervor and energy, which the hearer felt as power.

To say that these were the gifts, convictions, attainments and method of a man is to call him a great didactic Christian orator. But no catalogue will explain the consummate charm of Dr. Purves as a preacher. The living whole was far greater than the sum of all the parts. We, whom he instructed and inspired, while we rejoice that some

of his discourses are given to the public, cannot help regretting that many of those who will obtain from this volume new strength to do and bear and undergo and overcome, did not enjoy the high privilege which was ours when he opened unto us the Scriptures.

JOHN DEWITT.

PRINCETON, October 23, 1902.

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