

# Living the Life of Jesus

by F.B. Meyer

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*The sermon emphasizes the importance of living a life of dependence on Christ, just as Jesus lived a life of dependence on the Father.*

**Scripture:** Isaiah 50:4, Matthew 6:33, John 6:57, John 10:10, John 14:13-14, John 15:5, Romans 12:1-2, Galatians 2:20, Philippians 1:21, Hebrews 9:14

**Topics:** "Dependence on Christ", "Living for God's Glory"

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## Description

F.B. Meyer emphasizes the importance of living a life in complete dependence on Jesus, mirroring the relationship Jesus had with the Father. He illustrates this through the example of an eastern prince who found life's secret in simplicity and meditation, urging believers to enter into Christ's inner chamber. Meyer explains that Jesus chose a life of dependence rather than independence, demonstrating that true life comes from relying on God. He encourages the congregation to make Jesus the center of their lives, to seek His glory, and to live in accordance with God's will, ultimately leading to a richer, more fulfilling existence. The sermon concludes with a call to be filled with the Holy Spirit to empower this dependent life.

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## Transcript

As the living Father hath sent me, and I live by the Father: so he that eateth me, even he shall live by me (John 6:57)

An eastern prince was accustomed to retire for an hour every morning to a certain chamber in his palace, which was carefully reserved from every common eye, and in which he said that he found the secret of his life. When the room was entered, it was discovered that it was furnished like a shepherd's hut, for his forefathers were shepherds. There, with the most simple surroundings, he had been accustomed quietly to meditate upon his past, his present, and his future.

I want to conduct you into Christ's inner chamber in which His spirit dwelt, and the door of which He has left open for us, that we also may enter and dwell there. I desire to give you what seems to me the one secret of our Savior's life, that it may likewise become the one secret of yours and mine. From the words of our text we may infer that what the Father was to Jesus, Jesus is willing to be to you and to me. Everything that Jesus said of His relationship to the Father, we may say of our relationship to Jesus.

The Gospel of John is peculiarly the book of our Savior's inner life, and the book of our own inner life, because in the place of the Father we may substitute the Savior's name. Thus we may read the words of our text, "As the living Savior hath sent me, so I live by the Savior." If you take that Gospel according to John and substitute Christ for the Father, and hang on Christ as Christ hung on God, you will hardly ever need a book of private devotion other than that which is furnished by the golden book of the inner life, yielded in St. John's gospel.

### Christ's Selflessness

The first truth to which I wish to call your attention is this: Our Savior might have lived an independent life.

He was the Holy One before He stooped to us and laid aside the use of the attributes of His Godhead. During His human life He might at any moment have availed Himself of His divine attributes and might have lived His human life in the power of them. Whenever He was hungry, instead of waiting for Peter or others to provide, He might have used His creative power to transform the very stones into loaves of bread.

Had He so chosen, He might have planned His own life and from the transfiguration mountain have stepped into paradise. He might have spoken His own words and have poured forth upon men such a flood of eloquence as would have shone on the pages of literature with dazzling brilliancy. He might have done His work by His own power, working His miracles merely to increase His own reputation. He might have sought His own glory as the supreme end of His life, so displaying His power and glory that His divinity should be apparent to all.

### His Servant Life

Our Lord Jesus might have lived an independent life, and second, Satan was always urging Him to do it.

Straight from the river Jordan Jesus was led up of the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted of the devil. You who have been baptized for service are almost certain to be led by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted, just because God desires to do a mighty work in your soul. The oak, which is to live for a hundred years, must be rooted and moored to stand the storm, and God, wanting you to become a strong, sturdy oak, will most certainly lead you into temptations. Temptation is not sin if the temptation is resisted. The effect of being tempted is to root us more in Christ.

The first thing the devil said to Jesus was, "Thou art the Son of God. God has just owned thee as such, as the second person of the holy Trinity. Thou hast all power. Now use that power for Thyself, and make these stones bread."

That was the crucial point in our Lord's life, and He said, "No: I am going to be a dependent human being. Inasmuch as those whom I have come to save depend upon my Father and upon me, I will learn what it is to depend by faith absolutely upon my Father. If my Father does not feed me, I will die of hunger. Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word of God, and I am going to wait for my Father to speak."

When our Lord said that He at once definitely refused to live the independent life which would have been possible, and elected to live a life of constant dependence upon the Father.

### Our Lord's Life

Look at our Lord's life. In His birth God the Father gave Him life. It was not His own life; He could not do as He liked with it, and after He had lived it for thirty-three years the Father asked again for that life. And Jesus in dying said, "Father, receive my life." It might have seemed that from the moment when He descended into the grave there was no longer any life for Him, but through the cross He came into a richer life than ever. He gave up the natural to get the eternal; He gave up the life of the flesh to receive the life of the Spirit; He gave up the life that could die, that He might receive the resurrection life of power to impart.

Jesus Christ held His life in trust,--God gave it, God maintained it, God required it, and all the time the Son said to the Father, "I live by thee." God was as much the breath of Christ's life as the air is of our natural life. It was as if His natural life kept saying to God, "May I live another hour?" and the Father said, "Live." Every minute the attitude of Christ was taking, taking, taking life from the Father. So we should live; always drawing from Christ, the fountain of life; always receiving from God life for our life. We must live because of Jesus.

So in the plan of our Lord's life. Sometimes He said to His disciples, "Let us go across the lake and rest." He might have chosen to pursue that plan of rest, but when the people hurried around the lake and asked to be taught and fed, in their intrusion on His quiet He saw the Father's plan. Once when He was going to Jairus' home, a woman who had an issue of blood stopped Him, I know not for how long, and in the touch of her finger He saw the intrusion of the Father's plan for the day, and He stopped His own plan to follow it.

In that wonderful fifth chapter of John, He says, "The Son can originate nothing--the Son can do nothing from Himself--but what He sees the Father doing." When He was in Joseph's shop, as a young boy of twelve or fourteen, and saw Joseph making yokes for the oxen, He studied how Joseph made them, and fashioned the yoke on which He was working like it--always copying Joseph. Then afterward when He came to live among men, He was always watching for the development of the Father's plan, and the things which God did in the unseen and eternal world, Jesus did in His earthly life. So this plan was the plan of God.

Jesus also depended on the Father for His words. In one of the most beautiful translations of the Revised Version in the fiftieth chapter of Isaiah we are told that God the Father came every morning to the Son and awakened Him, whispering into His ear the words which He was to say during the day, so that as Jesus went forth to teach the people day by day He did not speak His own words, but the words which the Father gave Him. On the mountain of beatitudes, when He finished one paragraph, I suppose that He would look up and say, "What next?" And that wonderful farewell discourse recorded in John consisted of the words of the Father received by Jesus as He spoke them.

Then as to His miracles. In that wonderful fourteenth chapter of John, Jesus says, "The words that I say unto you, I speak not from myself, but the Father abiding in me, doeth His works." We might almost say that we do not know Jesus, because He was so completely dependent upon the Father that His words were the Father's, His works were the Father's, His life was the Father's, and in Jesus we do not see Jesus but we see the Father mirrored in His words and works and life.

So also about His will. He had a will of His own, because He said, "Not my will." We do not understand the mystery of His nature but we remember that He said, "Not my will but thine be done."

We know, too, how He sought the Father's glory. He said, "I have glorified thee on earth. It matters little what men say or think of me, I at least have given them a new thought about thyself. I have glorified thee

on the earth"; and He promised to answers our prayers, "that the Father might be glorified in the Son."

Now He is there in the glory waiting to find a prayer that we have uttered that He can answer to glorify His Father; He at once answers that kind of a prayer, because He is so set on this purpose. In that last prayer He also said, "I would like to be glorified, my Father; give me glory that the Son may glorify thee." It was as if Jesus Christ was only ambitious to be well thought of in order that He might make God the Father the better considered.

#### What the Lord Chose

My fourth point obviously is this: If our blessed Lord chose this life of dependence out of all possible lives that He might have lived, does it not seem wisest, most blessed, most Christlike, for you and me to give up living the independent life in the flesh and to begin from this moment to depend upon Christ as Christ depended upon God?

If Jesus Christ held His life moment by moment in the balance at God's dictation, should not we receive the help and expend our life as Jesus wills? If Jesus Christ allowed His plan always to give way to God's plan, do you not see that instead of scheming, planning, and striving to get our own way so much, we ought always to be looking out for God's plan and to yield submissively before it? If Jesus Christ gave up His words for the words which the Father put into His lips, do we not greatly mistake in trying to elaborate our sentences and beautify them, instead of day by day waiting to receive the words our Savior gives us? If you would depend day by day on the Master for the power of His life, opening all your being, and preferring the power imparted to any power of your own, I need not say how your life would at once become divine.

Let us receive from our glorified Lord that life-power with which He is invested, that He may glorify and ennoble our daily existence. Let us so dress, so adorn our houses, so spend our time, so earn money, that men may think better of our Lord. We should not expend one hour for any other purpose than that our life might be glorifying Jesus Christ for being, or doing, or suffering, or giving,--the four departments of Christ's life.

Do you not see the beauty of having such a life that you might yield it back into the ocean from whence it came? Do you not see this great prerogative of your manhood given to you that you may give it back again? We have been so foolish in the past that we have thought that whatever gifts have been entrusted to us, must be clung to or lost; forgetting it is only those who give away what they have, who really keep and get the best.

We have clung to our money, forgetting that by giving it away we shall get something better. We have clung to sermons with their eloquence, their chastity of expression, not realizing that just as soon as we give away the human power we get the divine power. We are so afraid of giving away what was only given to us as a trust, that we fail to get what God plans to bestow. I hear my Savior singing as He goes down into the grave, "Thou wilt not leave my soul in death, nor suffer thy holy one to see corruption. Thou wilt show me the path of life. In thy presence is fulness of joy, at thy right hand are pleasures forevermore." And so He goes down into the valley of death singing, and we know that in death He finds something better than He left.

#### The Savior's Method

My fifth point is this: The Savior's method may be ours. There are two possible methods. Our Lord might always have been crucifying, as it were, His human nature; but He chose the second method and the better one--that of living a life of perfect communion with God by the Holy Ghost. "I love the Father." "That the world may know that I love the Father." Do you think that there was any difficulty, any agony except once in the supreme act of all when He was called upon to contemplate the possibility of losing the Father's smile? As the thought of being forsaken by the Father came over His soul, a dark eclipse, He said, "Save me from that"; but soon He said, "Not my will even in this, but thine be done."

Jesus loved the Father, and there is no difficulty in giving up the self-life when you are in love with the living Christ. The thing for us to do therefore is, not to dwell on the crucifixion, on the giving-up side, but to allow our whole nature to be drawn to the living Christ--not death, but life. Moreover, seek that abounding life which makes it so easy to say No to self. Make the living Jesus the reality of your whole life. Go about saying, "I live, yet not I, but Christ liveth in me."

How can Jesus become to me what the Father was to Jesus?

First: We must be quiet; we must wait.

In all music there are rests and sometimes whole bars of rests; so there must be in every life the sitting down quietly and allowing God by the Spirit to make Jesus dwell in us. Jesus often went up on the mountains with the thought of God the Father filling His nature, and there must be times in our life when we give an opportunity for Christ to assert Himself and impress Himself absorbingly on the vision.

Then second: Be sure to make Jesus the first of everything.

Remember the first words in our Bible,--"In the beginning God." The story of every day ought to be commenced with the words, In the beginning Jesus. He must be the alpha, the first, the beginning. If, before you rush into a new enterprise, my brother, you would sit quietly down and be sure Jesus Christ is first, it would save you from landing in many a quagmire. Make Jesus first of every plan, every act, every sermon, everything that can be begun, continued, and ended in Him.

Third: Make the glory of Jesus your aim.

You may not feel it to be your aim, but choose it to be your aim. Always remember this great principle of the Christian's life, that when you cannot feel a thing, you must choose it by act of your will, and then ask God to create in you the emotion which you have chosen to be the motive of your action. Let the glory of Jesus be your aim in every service; let His glory be the thought that animates you in making money, in your housekeeping, in your mission work. Wives often send in requests for prayer for the conversion of their husbands, but frequently they desire it not for the glory of Christ, but that the husband may no longer bring misery and disaster into the life of the wife. We must put the glory of Christ even before the conversion of men.

Then fourth: Meet God's will in every circumstance.

I should like to draw a circle, the circle of God's will, and then step into it, and keep in it all my life; then whatever came to me must come through the encircling will of God. If Joseph's brethren put him in the pit, it is not they who sent him into Egypt, but God. If Judas brings the cup, Jesus says, "The cup which my Father hath given me, shall I not drink it?" When I am living in the will of God, my enemy may shoot an arrow against me; by the time it reaches me it may glance aside if God wills, but if He wishes it to strike

me, by the time it reaches me it has become God's will for me.

Then lastly, reckon on God.

Some people are constantly worrying about their faith. I have given up worrying about my faith because I think of God's faithfulness. Begin to count God faithful. It is no use worrying whether I have strength enough to believe a note of hand; the question is, whether the man who signed that check is worthy of trust. Reckon on Christ's faithfulness toward you.

Go over these steps again: Be still. Make Christ first in everything. Live absolutely for Him. Receive from Him all your words to speak, and works to do, all the power of your life; when in any emergency or need receive from Him, who sent the demand, the power to meet it. Reckon absolutely upon Christ. Meet His will in every circumstance. That is the way that Jesus lived toward His Father; live so toward Jesus.

You may ask me how it was that in the human nature of Christ He so absolutely yielded Himself to the Father. The answer comes from one of the most marvelous books in the Bible, the epistle of the Hebrews: "Who, through the eternal Spirit, offered Himself without spot to God."

I believe that that is what the baptism of Christ meant. At the moment of his baptism, Jesus did the very thing to His holy, independent life that you and I have been called to do to our natural, sinful, and debased life. The baptism of Jesus Christ, as I understand it, was His saying by symbol and metaphor, "I come to do thy will, O my God; thy law is within my heart." Then on Him there came the blessed Holy Ghost, and it was in the power of the spirit that He perpetually yielded Himself to God.

If you and I are to live toward Christ as Christ lived toward the Father, we must be baptized into the same Holy Ghost. Whatever your station or occupation may be, you may start to live that life right now, but you may lose the power to live it within twenty-four hours. The only power by which Jesus Christ can help your life is through the infilling of the Holy Ghost. Shall we not have done forever with the independent life and be able to say as never before, "The living Savior hath sent me and He lives in me" Then you will hear Him responding, "Because I live, ye shall live also."

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Source: <https://sermonindex.net/speakers/fb-meyer/living-the-life-of-jesus/>

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