

Consider Jesus – in Lowliness of Birth

Thoughts for Daily Duty, Service, and Suffering

By [Octavius Winslow](#)

1870

"Consider Jesus, the apostle and high priest whom we confess."
—Hebrews 3:1

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"Is not this the carpenter's son?" - Matthew 13:55

What a remarkable fact in the history of Jesus does this question, asked with mingled surprise and contempt, betray! It presents Him in a point of light in which, perhaps, few have paused to study Him, and yet than which there is scarcely another more real and instructive. It invites us to consider Jesus as the Son of man, as the son of a carpenter, and in all probability, until He began to be about thirty years of age, assisting Joseph in his humble calling. Hence it was asked concerning Jesus, "Is not this the carpenter?" How truly did the Son of God identify Himself with the humanity and the curse He came to ransom and remove. And when we see those hands which built the universe building earthly dwellings for man—squaring the beam, plying the saw, thrusting the plane, driving the nail, constructing and raising the framework—we behold personally Him tasting the bitterness of that part of the curse which enjoined, "In the sweat of your face shall you eat bread."

We learn from this that, obscurity of birth and lowliness of craft are no dishonor to him whose condition it may be; and that they have often been found in alliance with true greatness of character, high devotedness to God, noble and useful deeds for man. God, who is no respecter of people, looks upon man's outward estate with a very different eye to that with which the world looks upon it. You ask for the proof. Behold, the Incarnate Son of God, instead of selecting, as He might have done, a princess for His mother and a palace for His birth, lo! His reputed father is a carpenter, His mother, though of royal lineage, is too poor to present on the day of her purification an offering more costly than "a pair of turtle-doves," and the scene of His wondrous advent is among the beasts of the field feeding quietly at their troughs.

But, consider Him. You are, perhaps, taunted for your obscure birth, looked down upon

for your humble calling, slighted for your social position, and are discouraged from any attempt to rise above it and strike out a path of wider influence and nobler exertion. But learn from Jesus that there is no dishonor in humble parentage, that true dignity belongs to honest toil, and that personal piety, consecration to God, and far-reaching usefulness to man, may be closely associated with those whose niche in society is low in the scale, and whose walk through life is along its more shaded and secluded pathway.

We have referred to LABOR. Here, again, Jesus demands our consideration. Our Divine Savior might be termed, in modern parlance, a 'working man.' He was, in early life, a carpenter. Labor was concurrent with man's creation. Before the fall, God sent him into the garden to keep it. And although the ground brought forth spontaneously, yet it was beneath his culturing hand that the earth was to bloom and blossom as the rose. Idleness was no part of our original constitution; God never intended that man's powers should be stunted, and that his life should evaporate in useless and ignoble repose. Be up, then, and doing. Be ready for any labor, prepared for any duty, willing for any sacrifice, active, honest, and earnest in any and every sphere in which God may place you.

Consider Jesus! He knows your walk. He will sympathize with, and give you grace for, the difficulties and discouragements, the temptations and trials, peculiar to your position in life. And however obscure your birth, or lowly your calling, or cramped your powers, strive to imitate, please, and glorify Him. Not totally hidden will then your light be. Your trust in God, your resemblance to Christ, the example of your honest industry, patient endurance and virtuous bearing—which poverty could not crush or obscurity veil—will influence for good all whose privilege it may be to know, admire, and love you. Thus your "light will shine out of obscurity," and, humble though your course and limited though your sphere may have been, you will not have lived for God and for man in vain.

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