

**THE PSYCHOLOGICAL  
ASPECTS OF  
CHRISTIAN EXPERIENCE**

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The Psychological Aspects of Christian Experience by Richard H. K. Gill

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**RICHARD H. K. GILL**

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OF CHRISTIAN EXPERIENCE**

**BY**

**RICHARD H. K. GILL, A.M., Ph.D.**



UNIV. OF  
CALIFORNIA

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## PREFACE

Continued observation of the various methods of religious instruction has brought upon me a conviction that grows stronger as the years go by, that there must be, as Francis Peabody says, a new expansion of the range of studies appropriate to the teachers of religion. There ought to be a far deeper study of the psychology of religion. The appeal to the impulses and emotions, so prevalent in the methods of some teachers, is far behind twentieth century enlightenment. It was foreign to the methods of our Saviour. He taught men. He did not frighten them into action, neither entice them. He instructed their minds in truth. "Ye shall know the truth and the truth shall make you free."

While religious teaching addressed to the head alone may not reach any deeper, the proper inlet by which the truth may reach the soul is the intellect and not the impulses. This brief essay will but sketch some of the mental experiences of religious life, sufficiently, it is hoped, to arouse a desire for further study and deeper investigation of the subject.





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## INTRODUCTION

In this study of the psychological aspects of Christian experience, we shall endeavor to follow exclusively the mental states and changes through which the subject passes in the enjoyment of the various phases of Christian experience. We shall not touch the spiritual or doctrinal side at all. Of course these differ with the different sects. But human minds are alike, and pass through similar states and changes in Christian development. More attention ought to be paid to the intellectual side of religion, and less to the sentimental. If Christian ministers would appeal more generally to the intellect and reasoning, and discard that class of preaching that appeals only to the emotions, their work would be more lasting. ✓

As we proceed to examine the psychic changes accompanying the developments of Christian experience, we should not only gain a more intelligent view of what goes on in the mind, but be able to preach the gospel more effectively. If we are to reach the soul through the intellect, we should know just what effect the gospel should have upon it, and what changes of mind