

One Solitary Life By Thomas Thornhill

“He was born in an obscure village, the child of a peasant woman. He grew up in still another village, where he worked in a carpenter shop until he was thirty. Then for three years, he was an itinerant preacher. He never wrote a book. He never held an office. He never had a family or owned a house. He didn’t go to college. He never visited a big city. He never traveled two hundred miles from the place where he was born. He did none of the things one usually associates with greatness. He had no credentials but himself. He was only thirty-three when the tides of public opinion turned against him. His friends ran away. He was turned over to his enemies and went through the mockery of a trial. He was nailed to a cross between two thieves. While he was dying, his executioners gambled for his clothing, the only property he had on earth. When he was dead, he was laid in a borrowed grave through the pity of a friend.

Nineteen centuries have come and gone, and today he is the central figure of the human race, and the leader of mankind’s progress. All the armies that ever marched, all the navies that ever sailed, all the parliaments that ever sat, all the kings that ever reigned, put together, have not affected the life of man on earth as much as that One Solitary Life.” (Author Unknown)

Surely we owe this Christ a debt that cannot be paid by material things. We can say a lot, but words mean little without individual allegiance and personal convictions. What does He mean to YOU as an individual?

Following Christ means more than just acknowledging that He lived. It means at least three things. First, it means one must Make A Choice. After Paul told king Agrippa that God, through the prophets, had foretold “that the Christ would suffer, that He would be the first to rise from the dead, and would proclaim light to the Jewish people and to the Gentiles” Acts 26:23. Agrippa was forced to make a choice. Paul asked, “King Agrippa, do you believe the prophets? I know that you do believe” (v.27). Agrippa’s choice was to say, “You almost persuade me to become a Christian” (v.28). Almost has never been sufficient. Pilate was faced with a similar dilemma when he allowed the people to crucify Christ. He was unwilling to choose Christ over popularity (Matt. 27:17-26).

Secondly, following Christ means one must Make A Change. Acts 11:26 “...And the disciples were first called Christians in Antioch.” From the day of Pentecost people could see in the disciples of Christ a change of life. By their conduct even the enemies could only say “...and they realized that they had been with Jesus” (Acts 4:13). Later, Paul wrote of this change to the Ephesian Christians, “But you have not so learned Christ, if indeed you have heard Him and have been taught by Him, as the truth is in Jesus: that you put off, concerning your former conduct the old man, which grows corrupt, according to the deceitful lusts, and be renewed in the spirit of your mind, and that you put on the new man which was created according to God, in righteousness and true holiness” (Eph.4:20-24).

Thirdly, to follow Christ means one must Accept A Challenge. Peter writes to the followers of Christ: “If you are reproached for the name of Christ, blessed are you ... On their part He is blasphemed, but on your part He is glorified. But let none of you suffer as a murderer, a thief, an evildoer, or as a busybody in other people’s matters. Yet if

anyone suffers as a Christian, let him not be ashamed, but let him glorify God in this matter" (1Peter 4:14-16). When challenged, Christians must not fear. "Be faithful unto death, and I will give you the crown of life" (Rev. 2:10).

A choice, a change and a challenge! All three must be made and met in order to truly understand, follow, and serve the One Solitary Life.

The Happiest Child in the World

By A. C. Grider

Did it ever make you sad to see a child happy? It did me! Yes, the other Sunday, I saw one of the happiest children in the world and I nearly cried. And, every time I have thought of it since, I have had to fight back the tears.

The little fellow comes to services with his mother. His father isn't a member and rarely comes. Now there is nothing in this world to this boy like his Daddy.

Well, on this particular Sunday, the little boy ran ahead of the rest and entered the church building where I was greeting people in the vestibule. He came running up to me, face aglow, with his hand outstretched. He clasped my hand, but he didn't say "hello" or "good morning." There was just one thing on his mind; just one thing that seemed to matter. He said, "Brother Grider, my Daddy came with me today!"

I wish the fathers and mothers of every child that comes to Preston Highway could have seen and heard as I saw and heard that child last Sunday. I just know it would have helped the members to be better fathers and mothers. And I am sure it would have had effect upon non-members.

You only have them for a short time, Mom and Dad. Swift passes the time when that child will look up to you in wonder and exclaim, "I want to be just like you!" If you postpone faithful service to God until the children are older, you have in all likelihood lost your opportunity to bring your children to the Lord. Parents, what pattern are you setting for your children with your life? Non-Christian friend, these things may not be important to you today; but one day, these matters will consume your heart with regret.

Mark 8:36-37 - "For what will it profit a man if he gains the whole world, and loses his own soul? "Or what will a man give in exchange for his soul?" What are you giving in exchange for the soul of your child? (Preston Highway Bulletin, 10-6-60)

A Moments Wisdom

Nothing ruins the truth like stretching it.

May we never climb so high in our own estimation that we lose sight of the way to heaven.

People seldom become famous for what they say until after they are famous for what they do.

It is curious that physical courage should be so common in the world and moral courage so rare.

I only have three faults: what I say, what I do, and what I think.

If you neglect another day, you have a day more to repent of, and a day less to repent in.

Let God completely control your life and you'll always be in the right place at the right time.

Pitch the Good Book to your child while he is young, and they won't throw the book at him when he is older.

Idol worship is often done during idle time.

When death knocks, you will come as you are.

Haste is usually to save minutes, after hours have been wasted.

God is the only one in a position to look down on others.

If you think of this world as a place intended simply for your happiness, you might find it quite intolerable; think of it as a place of training and correction and it's not so bad.

It takes both hands to lay hold of eternal life; you will have to let everything else go.

A thankful heart speaks more eloquently to God than the most persuasive tongue.

It is not enough to do good; one must do it the right way.