

R12.2 September 2022 Blog

One Life

Let us turn now to this paraphrase of the story told by Dr. Francis in a sermon he delivered about the child, Jesus.

The following is adapted from a sermon by Dr James Allan Francis (1864-1928) in "The Real Jesus and Other Sermons" © 1926 Judson Press, Philadelphia (pp 123-124 titled "Arise Sir Knight!").

A child is born in an obscure village. He is brought up in another obscure village. He works in a carpenter shop until he is thirty, and then for three brief years is an itinerant preacher, proclaiming a message and living a life.

Jesus never...

- ⇒ Writes a book.
- ⇒ Holds an office.
- ⇒ Raises an army.
- ⇒ Has a family of His own.
- ⇒ Owns a home.
- ⇒ Goes to college.
- ⇒ Travels more than two hundred miles from home.

He gathers a little group of friends and teaches them His way of life. While still a young man, the tide of popular feeling turns against Him. One denies Him; another betrays Him. He is turned over to His enemies. He goes through the mockery of a trial. He is nailed to a cross between two thieves and when dead is laid in a borrowed grave by the kindness of a friend.

These are the facts of Jesus's life. He is crucified. He rises from the dead. Today we look back across more than two thousand years and ask, "What kind of trail has He left across the centuries?" When we try to sum up His influence, all the armies that ever marched, all the navies that were ever built, all the parliaments that ever sat, all the kings that ever reigned, put together, are pitifully trivial in their influence on mankind compared with that of this one solitary life.

Let us analyze Jesus's strategy to win the world for God.

1. Did He take on the corrupt and evil government? *NO*
2. Did He leave us with a set of axioms on how to do well in business or be more successful in life? *NO*
3. Did He try to educate us on science or the creation of the world? *NO*
4. Did He tell us how to organize the coming church? *NO*

One of His major objectives was to teach us about the road to Heaven and how to avoid the road to Hell. His teaching confirms there is a Heaven, and a Hell and eternity is real. He taught us there is life after death, the path to it, and that He is the *only* way to eternal life with God in Heaven (see John 14:6).

Question: Since you are going to spend whatever remaining years God has for you on this earth, and then eternity with Jesus (assuming you are His), how are you preparing for the next life?

Truth: What you do in this life will affect your life in eternity.

Our stay on earth is short. It is full of struggles and trials. Satan messed it up near the very beginning of man's existence. You barely begin reading the Bible and the mess begins after just a couple of pages in Genesis. Guess what? The mess will continue throughout this side of eternity.

God is a God of motivation. Our whole experience on earth is to the glory of God. There is a benefit to our lives and to Himself. He does not ask us to conduct our lives and to pursue our objectives His way without motivating us. He understands life is hard on the earth with Satan prowling about in pursuit of prey. Thus, He gave us the Holy Spirit and motivation. He motivated Jesus to stay the course for the payout at the end. It appears to me He uses two motivations. A positive motivation and a negative motivation. You want people you know and love to accept Christ because of the better life, and you don't want them to go to Hell (a negative motivation) and you want them with you in heaven (a positive motivation).

Consider the following verses, which are worthy of our study and meditation. We are to take these seriously because God's Word is truth.

Luke 16:19-31 The Rich Man and Lazarus (please refer to your Bible for the complete text)

Luke 12:34 For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.

Matthew 6:19-21 Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy, and where thieves break in and steal. But store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys, and where thieves do not break in or steal; for where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.

Luke 6:35 But love your enemies, and do good, and lend, expecting nothing in return; and your reward will be great, and you will be sons of the Most High; for He Himself is kind to ungrateful and evil *men*.

Rev 22:12 Behold, I am coming quickly, and My reward is with Me, to render to every man according to what he has done.

Application:

We all know these are important doctrines. So, what are you going to do? Consider these possibilities:

1. Write specific applications for your life in pursuit of eternal rewards and treasures.
2. Invest time with your spiritual friend/mentor to study and pray on these important concepts.
3. Teach these concepts to at least one other person in your network.
4. Review your thinking on these matters with your children and grandchildren.
5. Write a treatise on each item and share it with your spouse.