

described as condensed sermons. At Haddock Baptist Church, it has been my habit for the past three years, to preach straight through the life of Christ.

What exactly is a sermon? Someone said it is something a preacher will travel halfway around the world to deliver, but won't go across the street to hear.

In my books on preaching, I have many fine definitions, but the best definition comes from the Bible. Paul wrote, **"Here we are, speaking for Christ, as though God Himself were appealing to you through us" (2 Corinthians 5:20).**

A true sermon is a word from God. This is not due to any special ability of the speaker, but is due to the fact that a true sermon is an explanation and application of the Bible, which is the Word of God.

My prayer is that you will not see just words in print, but the word of "Another, Who stands behind the words you read. .

And now I will say a word about the Person who is at the center of every sermon. He was a real man. He knew how to work, how to cry, how to love and how to die. His name is Jesus Christ of Nazareth.

But He is more than a man; He is also God. This means that He can do more than live a good life and tell us how to do it. He is a divine Savior who can give us the desire and power to live a good life. And He can forgive when we fail. Like God in the beginning, He can impart life. An unknown author has written:

"Here is a Man who was born of Jewish parents in an obscure village. He worked in a carpenter shop until He was thirty, and then for three years He was an itinerant preacher. He never wrote a book. He never held an office. He never owned a home. He never had a family. He never went to college. He never put His foot inside a big city. He never traveled more than 200 miles from the place He was born. He never did one of the things that usually accompany

*greatness. He had no credentials, but Himself. He had nothing to conquer this world except the naked power of His manhood. While still a young Man, the tide of popular opinion turned against Him. He was turned over to His enemies. He went through the mockery of a trial. He was nailed to a cross between two thieves. His executioners gambled for the only piece of property He had on earth while He was dying, and that was his coat. When He was dead, He was taken down and laid in a borrowed grave through the pity of a friend. Nineteen wide centuries have come and gone, and today He is the centerpiece of the human race and the leader of the column of progress. I am far within the mark when I say that, all the armies that ever marched, and all the navies that were ever built, and all the parliaments that ever sat, and all the kings that ever reigned, put together; have not affected the life of man on this earth as powerfully as that **ONE SOLITARY LIFE."***

The question is, "Has He had an effect on your life?" Is Jesus nothing to you? Is He anything to you? Is He everything to you? Do you have a forgiven past, a decent present and a bright tomorrow? In short, do you have a spiritual life? You can – through faith in Jesus Christ. – *The Jones County News, 1968*

Looking Back

In 1962 my Pastor said if we would pray, "Thy will be done" our lives would change. I was a forester when I prayed it, and soon became a preacher driving to Fort Worth. I don't know where I would be today if I had not prayed this, but my life has been happy and joyful in spite of "ups" and "downs". If a person finds true joy in this life, he or she has found what everybody wants, but few find. Money, fame, success, popularity, etc. cannot buy it. People like O J Simpson prove that. But Jesus can give it and He will if you let Him. I know this is true.