

ONE SOLITARY LIFE

A man was born in an obscure village, the child of a peasant woman.
He grew up in another obscure village. He worked in a carpenter shop until he
was about 30 and then, for a short period,
he was an itinerant preacher.

He never went to college. He never had a family.
He never owned a home. He never held an office.
He never wrote a book. He never traveled more than 200 miles
from the place where he was born.
He never did any of the things that usually accompany greatness.

He had no credentials but himself. While still a young man, the tide of popular
religious opinion turned against him. His friends ran away.

One of them denied him. Another betrayed him.
He was turned over to his religious enemies. He went through the mockery of
a trial. He was nailed to a cross in the midst of two malefactors and two
robbers. While he was dying, his executioners gambled for the only piece of
property he had on earth -- his seamless robe.
When he was dead, he was laid in a borrowed grave.

Nineteen centuries have come and gone and today he is still the centerpiece of
the human race and the leader of all columns of progress.
I am far within the mark when I say that of all the armies that ever marched, all
the navies ever built, all the parliaments that ever sat,
all the kings that ever reigned and all the presidents that ever ruled,
plus all the men and women of power who ever lived put together,
have not affected the life of man upon this earth as powerfully
as has that one solitary life --
Jesus Christ of Nazareth, the man from Galilee.

James A. Francis