

“Only one life, will soon be past, Only what’s done for Christ will last”

While traveling in Europe a few summers ago, my wife and I visited several ruins of churches and early Christian settlements. St. Kevin’s Kitchen at Glendalough, Ireland, was one that really made an impression on me. As I walked through the ruins, dating from the 10th to 12th century, the words of a verse I had heard long ago, “Only one life, ’twill soon be past, only what’s done for Christ will last,” rang from deep within my soul.

Shortly after visiting the ruins, I decided to put those words on a picture I had taken. My thought was that it could act as an impactful reminder to myself and others that the days we have left are just a fleeting second of time, given to us to draw close to God and to make an impact for Christ on this fallen world.

The people buried at Glendalough have long been forgotten by all who walk this earth. Their weathered gravestones offer only a faint reminder of lives once lived.

Another famous quote that you have probably heard goes like this: “He who dies with the most toys wins.” Christians who have read the Bible know this isn’t true, as God, through His Word, tells us: “For we brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out” (1 Tim. 6:7). Some of the Pharaohs of old tried, by entombing themselves with things they thought they would need in the afterlife, but of course, this didn’t work. Today, some of the ultra-wealthy hope to have their fleshly bodies restarted by having their dead corpses frozen in hopes that they will be resurrected when science breaks the code of life. That won’t work any more than the Pharaohs’ schemes worked. Not knowing the authorship of those penetrating words, “Only One Life...,” I did a search and was pleased to find that they likely came from the pen of C. T. Studd. C. T. was a 19th-century missionary for Christ. A short search led me to a biographical article by Stephen Ross. He pointed out that C. T. Studd was born in England in 1860, one of three sons of a wealthy businessman. I also learned that upon his father’s death, C. T. gave over 90% of his sizable inheritance to the effective ministries of the time, including D. L. Moody, George Müller, and others. In addition to giving the majority of his wealth, he gave the even greater gift of himself through years of missionary work, primarily in China, but also in India and Africa. C. T. Studd believed what he wrote and lived the life to prove it.

Please look closely at the gravestones in the pictures. The names and dates on most have been washed away through rain, weather, and time. In time your gravestone will look the same as these, and no one will remember you as they walk through the ruins of a lonely cemetery where your dusty bones lie. Ask yourself this question: where will your eternal soul, now dwelling in your fleshly body, reside when your dusty bones and worn gravestone are all that remain of your long-forgotten physical life on this earth?

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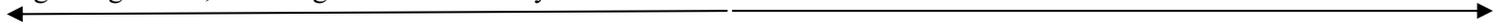
The only truth about death is found in Hebrews 9:27: *“And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment.”* The fact is that you can’t live forever in this fleshly body, and you can’t take anything with you when you die. However, works done for Christ can be sent on ahead and will be waiting for you when you get to Heaven: a tract left, a person witnessed to, a gesture of kindness, or a cup of cold water in Jesus’ name. The things that heavenly crowns are made of can be sent ahead, and they will be worth the cost a billion times over.

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Jim Elliot, another great missionary and martyr for the cause of Christ, once said: *“He is no fool who gives what he cannot keep to gain what he cannot lose.”* He is referring to the “crowns” mentioned in Revelation 4:10 & 11. Jim Elliot knew and believed Ephesians 2:8 & 9: *“For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, not of works, lest anyone should boast.”* That gift of salvation is a gift from God to Jim Elliot, C. T. Studd, you, me, and all who believe in the Jesus Christ revealed in the Bible.

Verse 10 makes clear the real purpose of life in this sin-filled, decaying world: *“For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them.”* (Ephesians 2:10). *“...For what is your life? It is even a vapor that appears for a little time and then vanishes away.”* (James 4:14).

Let the line below act as an illustration of our time on this earth. There are arrows on either end indicating that there is no beginning or end, the line goes out for eternity.



Now look carefully and, about midway, you will see a little speck of space, a break in the line. This speck represents your allotted time on this earth. Time you have been given to either throw away, or read the Bible and act on God’s revelation to you. It represents the brief time we have to reject the sin-filled, self-seeking ways of this world and to give our lives to the One who loves us more than we can imagine. He wants us to spend eternity in His loving arms, forever protected from Satan and his ways of sin, deception and greed. To reject Satan and be with Christ in the glory and splendor of Heaven for eternity will be so worth it all.

Satan, on the other hand, spends this present time prowling about the earth, *“...seeking whom he may devour”* (1 Peter 5:8). In the end times, there will be more and more false christs, going about the business of their father, the Devil. Please accept a short homework assignment and go to 2 Thessalonians 2:10 to find out for yourself exactly who Satan will be able to deceive and who he won’t be able to deceive in the end times. Your eternal destiny may depend on how you respond to what you learn there.

Please go back and contemplate on how you might apply this message to your life. Matthew 24:24 warns us: *“For false christs and false prophets will rise and show great signs and wonders to deceive, if possible, even the elect.”* Now, please take the time to find out exactly who will and who will not be deceived in the End Times. Look up . Please do it! I’m providing a QR code to make it easier and will even start you off with the first half of the verse:

The fifteen words at the end of the verse are all I am asking you to fill in: *“and with all unrighteous deception among those who perish, _____, _____.”*



With that, here is the promise from God that I will leave you with: *“And you will seek Me and find Me, when you search for Me with all your heart.”* (Jeremiah 29:13). For the security of your eternal soul, please don’t delay in taking God up on this all-important promise. If you still have one breath left in you and will confess your sins to God, repent of those sins and believe in Christ’s *worthy payment for those sins on Calvary’s cross, He will blot out your sin, and you will one day be able to sing with the angels: “Where, O death, is your victory? Where, O death, is your sting?”* (1 Cor. 15:55).

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If you are already a Christian, please **Pass This On** to someone who needs to hear its message.

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