

stories that will get people thinking these things out for themselves and finding their relevance to their own situations. Rather than leave his definitive autobiography he leaves sayings, riddles that are designed to spark off our curiosity and lead us into our own understanding of who he is and what he has to do with us. Rather than compile “Christianity for Wallies” in terms of a simple summary, he leaves “Christianity for Everyone” in teachings which can be understood and interpreted by any person at any stage in their life if they will just follow him. The only people who will not understand are the people who think they know it all already.

Jesus Christ was and is a teacher who taught not only through words and statements but through an inter-active relationship. He knew that his time in this world was brief and that there would be millions of men and women who would never know him as the man who lived and walked around the Sea of Galilee. They would know only what others told them. Sets of rules, lengthy statements of doctrine would, as we have seen, cause only misunderstanding and division. Stories, sayings, teachings on a whole miscellany of subjects would hopefully “ignite a spark” in the people of each generation, a spark which, if fanned into flame by their own commitment and the encouragement of the church, would bring them to a clearer understanding of him and of themselves.

And so I close with these famous words by Albert Schweitzer:

He(Jesus) comes to us as one unknown....as of old by the lakeside he came to those men who knew him not. He speaks to us the same word, "Follow.. me" and sets us to the tasks which he has to fulfil for our time.... And to those who obey him, whether they be wise or simple, he will reveal himself in the toils, the conflicts, the sufferings which they shall pass through in his fellowship, and as an ineffable mystery, they shall learn in their own experience who he is.

Amen.

SILENT REFLECTION