

Life Lessons

“Two of Life’s Big Mistakes”

Two of life’s big mistakes are (1) over-estimating what can be done in a short amount of time, and (2) under-estimating what can be done in a great amount of time. We can learn much from the aristocratic Anglican preacher Charles Simeon (1759 – 1836).

Charles was born the son of a wealthy English lawyer and was accustomed to great affluence. He entered Cambridge University in 1779 and dressed extravagantly. But remember, God saves the “Up and Out,” the same as the “Down and Out.” So worldly and pagan was Charles that when forced to ritualistically participate in “Holy Communion” at Cambridge that he remarked, “Satan himself was as fit to attend as I!” However, God had other plans for Charles Simeon. By April 4, 1779, (Easter Sunday) Simeon had come to a transforming personal faith in Jesus Christ. His conversion and evangelical zeal offended both his family and the Anglican Church. Undaunted, he began preaching in 1782 and became the minister of the Holy Trinity Church associated with Cambridge University in 1783.

Now the story becomes interesting.

- His evangelical zeal and doctrine were so opposed that his first Sunday in the pulpit most of the nine hundred members stayed home.
- Pewholders (that’s right, **those who purchased reserved seats at church**) locked the gates of the pews to keep visitors out. So, Simeon places benches in the aisles. The church officers threw the benches in the churchyard! Simeon started a Sunday evening evangelistic service. Church leaders promptly locked Simeon and the lost out of the church.
- Now get this! **Simeon remained the pastor for fifty-four years** – during the first thirty years, he faced open persecution and harassment!
- Simeon actually used his own wealth to buy church facilities to install other evangelical preachers to proclaim the gospel!
- Simply put, **Simeon believed preaching the Word would change lives, AND IT DID!**
- At his death in 1836 the entire city closed its shops and the university dismissed its classes. The robed academics marched in procession to honor the man who dared to believe and preach the Word of God.

Never underestimate what God can do...

THROUGH PASSION & PERSEVERANCE!