

Life Lessons

The “How” and “Why” of Life

“I see a man cannot be a faithful minister, until he preaches Christ for Christ’s sake, until he gives up on striving to attract people to himself, and seeks only to attract them to Christ.” Here is the “HOW.”

“I feel there are two things it is impossible to desire with sufficient ardor – personal holiness, and the honor of Christ in the salvation of souls.” Here is the “WHY.”

The great Scottish Presbyterian minister **Robert Murray McCheyne** made both of these stirring statements before he died at the untimely age of twenty-nine. It is even more stirring to realize that he spoke even more powerfully through his life.

One visitor in one of his services wrote back:

I heard you preach last Sabbath evening, and it pleased God to bless that sermon to my soul. It was not so much what you said, and your manner of speaking that struck me. I say in you a beauty in holiness that I never saw before.

McCheyne began his ministry at twenty-two and lived long enough to only minister seven years, but those years were years marked by a characteristic dependence upon the Lord that defined all he did. McCheyne’s devotional life included reading at least three chapters of scripture every morning followed by prayer and privately singing hymns and choruses of praise. He followed the teaching of Jeremy Taylor, *“If you mean to enlarge your religion* (a seventeenth century term he used to refer to one’s relationship with God through Christ) *do it by enlarging thine ordinary devotions than thy extraordinary.”* In today’s language we might say, *“You can only reach as high as you dig deep.”*

McCheyne was not only passionate about reflecting the Lord; he also knew what he wanted to reflect the Lord. He loved to see people come to faith in Christ. He saw himself as an *“adoring spectator”* as God used him to share Christ with others. He prayed, preached, and personally ministered without losing sight of his main business.

What can you do with this Life Lesson?