

CHRISTIANITY
David Kilgour
All-party Interfaith (APIF) luncheon
Room 362, East Block
House of Commons
Ottawa
30 May 2013

Given that each speaker has only three minutes to speak about our respective faiths today, permit me to offer one of the shortest and best reflections ever made about Christianity. I understand that the writer's identity today is unknown.

One Solitary Life

He was born in an obscure village
The child of a peasant woman
He grew up in another obscure village
Where he worked in a carpenter shop
Until he was thirty

He never wrote a book
He never held an office
He never went to college
He never visited a big city
He never travelled more than two hundred miles
From the place where he was born
He did none of the things
Usually associated with greatness
He had no credentials but himself

He was only thirty three

His friends ran away
One of them denied him
He was turned over to his enemies
And went through the mockery of a trial
He was nailed to a cross between two thieves
While dying, his executioners gambled for his clothing
The only property he had on earth

When he was dead
He was laid in a borrowed grave
Through the pity of a friend

Nineteen centuries have come and gone
And today Jesus is the central figure of the human race

And the leader of mankind's progress
All the armies that have ever marched
All the navies that have ever sailed
All the parliaments that have ever sat
All the kings that ever reigned put together
Have not affected the life of mankind on earth
As powerfully as that one solitary life

Most Christians believe in a patient, loving God, who calls us to a relationship of respect and empathy with neighbours of different faiths (or no faith at all). It sets us free to be open to the faiths of others, to risk, to trust and to be vulnerable.

Thank you.