

Résumé for the Firstfruits

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BIG SANDY, Texas—If you apply for an important position, your success most likely depends on a good résumé of your experiences that qualify you for a job. Fortunately, Christ has given us a sample résumé to direct our effort toward fulfilling the job requirements for the first resurrection.

Notice 1 Peter 2:21-23.

1 Peter 2:21-23—"For even hereunto were ye called: because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow his steps: Who did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth: Who, when he was reviled, reviled not again; when he suffered, he threatened not; but committed himself to him that judgeth righteously."

To paraphrase: Christ is looking at what we do, why we do it and how we feel about it. Let's take a closer look.

What we do

Although Christ did no sin, He knows not to expect us to be perfect. However, what He expects from us is at least the *effort* to avoid sin.

Matthew 25:24-27—"Then he which had received the one talent came and said, Lord, I knew thee that thou art an hard man, reaping where thou hast not sown, and gathering where thou hast not strawed: And I was afraid, and went and hid thy talent in the earth: lo, there thou hast that is thine. His lord answered and said unto him, Thou wicked and slothful servant, thou knewest that I reap where I sowed not, and gather where I have not strawed: Thou oughtest therefore to have put my money to the exchangers, and then at my coming I should have received mine own with usury."

As long as we show our faith by our effort, we are welcome to go to Him when we fail.

Hebrews 4:15-16—"For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin. Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need."

Why we do it

Since no guile was found with Christ, it meant He had pure motives of the heart. If any effort is not for the right reason, then it is for nothing.

1 Corinthians 13:3—“And though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, and have not charity, it profiteth me nothing.”

Because motives influence judgment, wrong motives are like a red flag to Satan and he will take the opportunity to tempt.

1 Thessalonians 3:5—“For this cause, when I could no longer forbear, I sent to know your faith, lest by some means the tempter have tempted you, and our labour be in vain.”

How we feel about it

Since Christ reviled not, we are to control our emotions—especially anger.

Among the works of the flesh, five are wrong anger, and the other works invite wrong anger.

Galatians 5:19-21—“Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these; Adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, Idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, Envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like: of the which I tell you before, as I have also told you in time past, that they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God.”

Even renown educators know that anger is a reaction to fear, hurt and/or frustration. So, rather than holding onto feelings or resentment and revenge, Christ shows us an example of forgiveness.

Luke 23:34—“Then said Jesus, Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do. And they parted his raiment, and cast lots.”

Because emotions influence motives, Satan will also take advantage of situations to tempt when there is anger without forgiveness.

Luke 6:11—“And they were filled with madness; and communed one with another what they might do to Jesus.”

Mentioned elsewhere

These three characteristics are actually mentioned at least twice in the Old Testament and three other places in the New Testament.

Deuteronomy 6:5—“And thou shalt love the LORD thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might.”

Micah 6:8—“He hath shewed thee, O man, what is good; and what doth the LORD require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?”

Matthew 22:37-40—“Jesus said unto him, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets.”

Matthew 23:23—“Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye pay tithe of mint and anise and cummin, and have omitted the weightier matters of the law, judgment, mercy, and faith: these ought ye to have done, and not to leave the other undone.”

1 Corinthians 13:13—“And now abideth faith, hope, charity, these three; but the greatest of these is charity.”

In summary

When we were called (Hebrews 6:1-2), we signed up for a lifelong marathon (Hebrews 12:1-2)—to follow these instructions shown as examples throughout the Bible.

No doubt that every one of us has a résumé that needs to be updated. The apostle Paul instructed us to redeem the time (Ephesians 5:16). It sounds like we should be getting busy.