

Life Link

Title: Christ's Example

Big Idea: The life of Christian is not easy. Lynn Anderson, a country and western artist recorded a song which contains these lyrics:

I beg your pardon,
I never promised you a rose garden.
Along with the sunshine,
There's gotta be a little rain sometimes.
When you take, you gotta give, so live and let live,
Or let go.
I beg your pardon,
I never promised you a rose garden.

Many Christians today believe that once they come to Christ that their life will be easy and carefree. But, soon they find out that a Christian's life is not a life of ease but, a life of struggle. All who live in this world face the challenges that life has to offer. As you face the challenges of this world as a Christian we don't face it alone.

Peter explains in the text about our [Life in Christ \(vs.1-2\)](#), [Life Before Christ \(vs. 3-4\)](#) and [Life According to Christ \(vs.5-6\)](#)

Intro Illustration: Astronauts on the International Space Station experience "weightlessness", not having to bear weight on your feet sounds relaxing, but in the long term there are many health problems associated with it. Bones and muscles weaken, and other changes also take place within the body. One of the functions of the ISS is to study how astronaut health is affected by long periods in weightlessness.

A small girl had been promised the privilege of climbing to a nearby hilltop where her brother enjoyed playing. But when she came within sight of the steep, rough path, she drew back in dismay. "Why, there isn't a smooth spot anywhere. It's all bumpy and stony!" she exclaimed.

"Yes," said her more experienced older brother, "but how else would we ever climb to the top if it wasn't? The stones and bumps are what we step on to get there." (Sermon Central, Source Unknown.)

Read Sermon Text:

1 Peter 4:1-6 Therefore, since Christ suffered for us in the flesh, arm yourselves also with the same mind, for he who has suffered in the flesh has ceased from sin, 2 that he no longer should live the rest of his time in the flesh for the lusts of men, but for the will of God. 3 For we have spent enough of our past lifetime in doing the will of the Gentiles — when we walked in lewdness, lusts, drunkenness, revelries, drinking parties, and abominable idolatries. 4 In regard to these, they think it strange that you do not run with them in the same flood of dissipation, speaking evil of you. 5 They will give an account to Him who is ready to judge the living and the dead. 6 For this reason the gospel was preached also to those who are dead, that they might be judged according to men in the flesh, but live according to God in the spirit.

1. Life in Christ (vs.1-2)

1 Peter 4:1-2 Therefore, since Christ suffered for us in the flesh, arm yourselves also with the same mind, for he who has suffered in the flesh has ceased from sin, 2 that he no longer should live the rest of his time in the flesh for the lusts of men, but for the will of God. NKJV

- a. Suffering of Christ- **Psalms 66:10** For You, O God, have tested us; You have refined us as silver is refined. (NKJV) Peter express to us that we identify with Christ through His suffering and that suffering gives us the strength to overcome and resist sin. Not our strength but the strength of God through Christ Jesus. We must arm ourselves with a "holy resolve" that is mind of Christ which gives us strength to resist sin. Not only to resist sin but fend off the attack of Satan. **Eph 6:14-17** reminds us to prepare for battle that preparation must include the armor of God.

Eph 6:14-17 Stand therefore, having girded your waist with truth, having put on the breastplate of righteousness, 15 and having shod your feet with the preparation of the gospel of peace; 16 above all, taking the shield of faith with which you will be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked one. 17 And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God; NKJV

- b. **Cease from Sin-** Romans 13:12 The night is far spent, the day is at hand. Therefore let us cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armor of light. NKJV

Why do Christians waste their time with sin. When there is so much more important and rewarding things in this life. For many the temptation of this life is to great. We should resist the devil and he will flee yet many (carnal) Christians continue to flirt with worldly things. The things of this world will not produce eternal value. Jesus said that we are to "lay up our treasure in heaven" (Matt 6:20) and he adds that "For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also." (Matt 6:21 NKJV). The reason many are unable to resist the things of the world according to Paul is many are "babes in Christ". Is it not time to put away our childish things and grow up that is to say start the process of spiritual maturity in Christ Jesus?

1 Cor 3:1 And I, brethren, could not speak to you as to spiritual people but as to carnal, as to babes in Christ. NKJV

2 Cor 10:4 For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal but mighty in God for pulling down strongholds, NKJV

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Ephesians 6:11-13 Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. 12 For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places. 13 Therefore take up the whole armor of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand. NKJV

c. **Live no more like others-**

2. **Life Before Christ (vs. 3-4)**

1 Peter 4:3-4 For we have spent enough of our past lifetime in doing the will of the Gentiles — when we walked in lewdness, lusts, drunkenness, revelries, drinking parties, and abominable idolatries. 4 In regard to these, they think it strange that you do not run with them in the same flood of dissipation, speaking evil of you. NKJV

- a. Living like the World Verse 4 Peter uses these words "flood of dissipation" This word means "Dissolute indulgence in sensual pleasure; intemperance. unrestrained indulgence in physical pleasures, alcohol, excessive expenditure; wastefulness". Peter warns the believer to no longer to live in the same cesspool as the rest of this world, Not to indulge in physical pleasures and desire of the world. To fellowship with those in darkness we must walk in darkness however to have fellowship with light we must walk in the light. Just as the prodigal son took his inheritance and wasted it away until he had nothing and was forced to live in the pig pen of life. Yet when he came to his senses he return to his Father's house and was welcomed with open arms. There is Great joy in the return of one lost sinner.

Eph 5:8 For you were once darkness, but now you are light in the Lord. Walk as children of light NKJV

Isaiah 2:5 O house of Jacob, come and let us walk In the light of the Lord. NKJV

Galatians 5:25 If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit. NKJV

1 Peter 2:9-11 But you are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, His own special people, that you may proclaim the praises of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light; 10 who once were not a people but are now the people of God, who had not obtained mercy but now have obtained mercy.

11 Beloved, **I beg you as sojourners and pilgrims, abstain from fleshly** lusts which war against the soul, NKJV

1 John 1:7 But if we walk in the light as He is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanses us from all sin.
NKJV

Text Illustration: CHILDREN'S SERMON

I once heard about a confrontation between a young boy and his mother.

The mother asked her son, "Young man, there were two cookies in the pantry this morning! May I ask how it happened that there's only one now?"

The boy didn't flinch but said, "It must've been so dark I didn't see the other one."

Living in sin is often portrayed as "living in darkness." Just like the boy who missed the other cookie, we too miss out on many of God's blessings when we refuse to walk in His light. (Sermon Central)

3. Life According to Christ (vs.5-6)

1 Peter 4:5-6 They will give an account to Him who is ready to judge the living and the dead. 6 For this reason the gospel was preached also to those who are dead, that they might be judged according to men in the flesh, but live according to God in the spirit. NKJV

a. Judgment of God-

- i. **The Sinner-**There will be a judgment for saint and sinner, believer and unbeliever, slandered and slandered all will be judge. The person who denied Jesus and His payment for sin. There is only sin which will be rewarded with eternal punishment and that is the rejection of Jesus Christ. **Revelation 20:12-14** gives the unbeliever glimpse of what the future holds for each one who rejects Jesus as Lord and Savior.

Revelation 20:12-14 And I saw the dead, small and great, standing before God, and books were opened. And another book was opened, which is the Book of Life. And the dead were judged according to their works, by the things which were written in the books. 13 The sea gave up the dead who were in it, and Death and Hades delivered up the dead who were in them. And they were judged, each one according to his works. 14 Then Death and Hades were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death. NKJV

- ii. **The Saint-** Peter states that the saint will not escape the judgment of God (1Peter 4:17) Peter states that judgment will begin with Gods people and we will be held accountable for how we live which produces the wood, hay and stubble that is all that does not honor Christ will be destroyed. All of our life events and actions as a Christian will be tested by fire and that which remains will be purified by fire. (1Cor 3:14-15)

1 Cor 3:14-15 If anyone's work which he has built on it endures, he will receive a reward. 15 If anyone's work is burned, he will suffer loss; but he himself will be saved, yet so as through fire. NKJV

Should all your works be destroyed as a result of no eternal value that person will be saved. It is not the works that saves us, It is the Blood of Christ which paid the price for us on the cross of Calvary. The Apostle James stated that our works will follow with our faith and without faith it is impossible to please God.

Ps 1:6 For the Lord knows the way of the righteous,
But the way of the ungodly shall perish. NKJV

Eccl 12:14 For God will bring every work into judgment,
Including every secret thing, Whether good or evil. NKJV

Ezek 18:30 "Therefore I will judge you, O house of Israel, every one according to his ways," says the Lord God. "Repent, and turn from all your transgressions, so that iniquity will not be your ruin. NKJV

John 5:28 Do not marvel at this; for the hour is coming in which all who are in the graves will hear His voice NKJV

- b. **Live According to the Spirit-** God is not willing that any of His children suffer eternal separation from Him but, He will respect their choice and those who reject His Son, He will reject and they will be cast in to the lake of fire for evermore.

Peter states that as pilgrims traveling through this pagan world we must live lives that are different from this world. We must be different, we must look different and we must act different. We are a kingdom of priest a royal priesthood called not to conform this world.

Text Illustration:

Bible teacher F.B. Meyer once had a firewood factory that employed prisoners.

Meyer would give them a job to do, good wages, a place to live, and, when possible, spiritual encouragement.

In exchange, he expected them to render good employment.

They didn't, and he lost money.

Finally he fired them all and purchased a circular saw powered by a gas engine.

In one hour, it turned out more work than the combined efforts of all the men covered in the course of a whole day.

One day, Meyer had a little conversation with his saw.

"How can you turn out so much work?" he asked.

"Are you sharper than the saws my men were using? No? Is your blade shinier? No? What then? Better oil or lubrication against the wood?"

The saw's answer, could it speak, would have been, "I think there is a stronger driving power behind me. Something is working through me with a new force. It is not I, it is the power behind."

Meyer later observed that many Christians and many ministers are working in the power of the flesh, in the power of their intellect, their energy, their enthusiastic zeal, but with poor effect. They need to become linked to the power of God through the Holy Ghost.

[The Sawmill by F.B. Meyer from The Christ Life for Your Life]