

Faith Of Our Youth

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"The Voice of Young Christian Faith"

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It's A Miracle!

by Amy Swearingin

Listening to the radio not long ago, I heard an incredible story of a "miracle" in New Dehli, India.

Buddhists have long practiced the ritual of pouring milk over the mouths and faces of religious statues as an offering. Traditionally, the milk would run over the mouths of the statues and eventually drip to the ground leaving a big puddle of soured, curded milk by the days end. A few weeks ago, a particular statute was reported to literally "drink" the milk offered to it.

In an effort to witness and participate in the "miracle" themselves thousands of faithful Buddhists have pilgrimaged to the site of the statue. Milk has

been selling in record amounts and for up to ten times it's actual value in cities as far away as Calcutta. Entire national newspapers have been dedicated to the never before seen "miracle." Political leaders from India have traveled to New Dehli in an effort to catch a glimpse of the disappearing milk themselves.

Despite the hoopla scientists, chemists and geologist who have been studying the phenomenon staunchly defend their claim that there is no miracle. Instead, they say the rock from which the statue is made is porous and as a re-

sult soaks up the milk creating the illusion that the statue is drinking. The thousands of people who have been to see the "miracle" resist such an explanation. They are genuinely convinced a miracle is happening.

Millions of people every year are lured to mock religions. Hundreds of thousands mistake cleverly planned magic tricks for bona fide miracles. Deceptive "prophesies", staged healings, cultic sacrifices, claims of new revelations, and so on, lure people to believe otherwise obvious lies.

"Have you ever looked for and longed for God's inherent power in your life as a Christian?"

We probably think we could never be fooled by such nonsense. Few people believe in things they can not explain. Only radicals and fanatics believe in miracles, right?

Place yourself in Israel 2000 years ago. Everywhere you turn you hear of this guy named Jesus who claims to be the Christ. You keep hearing rumors of these amazing and unheard of miracles He is performing. Your curiosity gets the better of you and you decide to go check it out for yourself. Though you are interested you plan to keep your distance from Him. You don't want anyone to get the wrong idea and think you are one of His "brainwashed disciples." After all, plenty of other people have

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THE EXCEPTIONAL GENERATION

by Karen Spencer

Who is twice as likely as the general population to eat fast food? Whose rallying cry is seemingly summed up in the words of a popular bumper sticker, "Question Authority?" What group of people are described as "pessimistic underachievers" who are "lacking intellectual curiosity" and "still in search of its identity?"

38 million young men and women born between 1963 and 1977 have been lumped together to provide the answer to these questions: Generation X.

While perusing the current literature about this generation, I discovered that many researchers concluded that there is no Generation X, that the label is erroneous. The majority, however, argue that somebody bought Doc Martens, somebody watches MTV, somebody went to Lollapalooza, somebody pierced her bellybutton. Statistics show that most of the somebodies belong to the 18-33 year old group named above.

"Mislabeling entire generations only puts us on the defensive..."

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CHRISTIAN RESUME

by Lonnie McClintock

Can you reduce your life onto one page? Many, if not most, individuals attempt to accomplish this feat several times during their lives—on their resumes. A good resume should reflect one's life and career objectives, therefore, the process of creating one demands much thoughtful consideration (and a good memory). If all goes well, the effort expended will "pay off" in the form of a job.

Perhaps developing a Christian resume should also lead to a favorable result for those who follow God's word. Before encountering such a project, though, Christians should realize that the contents on the resume will not "earn" salvation. After all, Paul reminds us in Ephesians 2:8,9 that *"by grace you have been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God; not as a result of works, that no one should boast."* However, the same writer in 2 Corinthians 13: 5 asks that we examine ourselves to test whether we are in the faith. Since a typical resume contains several components (e.g., name, address, education, work experience and goals), the thought required in composing a well-drafted Christian version provides at least one means of such an examination.

Name. Each resume begins with a name for identification purposes. Faithful followers of Jesus can be identified in many ways, including disciples (Matt. 28:19); Christians (Acts 11:26); servants of a new covenant (2 Cor. 3:6); slaves of righteousness (Rom. 6:18); and children of God (1 John 3:1,2). Appropriately, each of these names suggests that we are the Lord's (See Rom. 14: 8). As Paul wrote in Galatians 2: 20, *"I have been crucified with Christ; and it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me, and delivered himself up for me."* This passage explains why our names are identified with

Christ.

Address. We share our address with Abraham, in a city which has foundations, whose architect and builder is God (Heb. 11:8-10). Although we live in the world, we are not of the world (John 15:19). As the song relates, "This world is not my home, I'm just a-passing through." Our citizenship is in heaven (Phil. 3:20); in the heavenly Jerusalem (Heb. 12:22); and in the new heavens and new earth where righteousness dwells (2 Pet. 3:13).

Education. Christians have bountiful sources of education. Paul instructs us in Ephesians 3:9,10 that the manifold wisdom of God is to be made known through the church. (Consequently, we

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should not forsake our own assembling together (Heb. 10:25). Psalms, hymns and spiritual songs also teach and admonish us (Col. 3:16). Finally, in 2 Timothy 3:16, 17, we are reminded of the importance to Christian education in studying God's word: *"All Scripture is inspired by God and is profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness; that the man of God may be adequate, equipped for every good work."*

Work Experience. We need to put our spiritual education to use by proving ourselves doers of the word (James 1: 22). On a general level, Christians are to present their bodies as a living and holy sacrifice, acceptable to God (Rom. 12: 1); bear one another's burdens (Gal. 6:2); and endure suffering for Christ so as to glorify God (1 Pet. 4:16). On a specific level, James 1:27 states that we

need *"to visit orphans and widows in their distress, and to keep oneself unstained by the world."* Jesus adds that He expects His sheep to feed the hungry, give drink to the thirsty, invite the stranger, clothe the naked, visit the sick and come to the imprisoned, as we would do so for Him (Matt. 25:31-40). In everything, then, Christians must remember that *"we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them"* (Eph. 2:10).

Goals. Finally, resumes include personal goals. Since pursuing after worldly endeavors is vanity, our purpose should be to fear God and keep His commandments (Eccl. 12: 13). Instead of placing our hope in the uncertainty of riches, we should put our hope in God (1 Tim. 6: 17). Our strategy is to forget what lies behind and reach forward to what lies ahead, and "press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus" (Phil. 3: 13, 14). As heirs of God, we have the hope of everlasting life (Titus 3:7). As a result, our ambition is to be pleasing to Him (2 Cor. 5: 9).

Once the Christian resume is completed, unity should exist among the themes of the different components. That is, our goal will determine where we live, which will affect what we study, which will influence how we act, which will dictate how we identify ourselves (and how others will identify us). Hopefully, then, our resumes (and our examinations of our lives in Christ) will reveal that we are walking in a manner worthy of the call which we have received (Eph. 4: 1), so that our names may be written in the Lamb's book of life (Rev. 21:27).



100 Petty Street
Hagerstown, IN 47346

