

Affirming Christ as Lord

Key Verse: *"If thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved."*
—Romans 10:9

Selected Scripture:
Romans 10:5-17

that confession must be made with the mouth. The mouth here is used symbolically to represent all the outward manifestations of our being, and includes not only our words, but also our actions, conduct, and walk of life. It is how all of these aspects of our life are 'confessing' the Lord Jesus, which is of vital importance. Paul says, "The man which doeth those things shall live by them."—Rom. 10:5

Our confession of faith in Jesus must be accompanied by works in our daily life which give evidence of such confession and go beyond mere words. Peter identifies some of these works which must accompany, or be 'added' to our faith. He says, "Beside this, giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue; and to virtue knowledge; And

THE KEY VERSE OF THIS

lesson seems to present a fairly simple and easy arrangement by which one receives salvation. Simply state verbally your confession and belief in the Lord Jesus as your Redeemer, and heavenly salvation is guaranteed. A closer examination of this scripture reveals to us that there is more to the attainment of a heavenly reward than simply a surface confession and belief in Jesus. The verse states

to knowledge temperance; and to temperance patience; and to patience godliness; And to godliness brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness charity [love]. . . . for if ye do these things, ye shall never fall.” (II Pet. 1:5-7,10) Apostle James also comments on the need for works, citing Abraham as a prime example. He says, “Even so faith, if it hath not works, is dead, being alone. . . . Was not Abraham our father justified by works, when he had offered Isaac his son upon the altar? Seest thou how faith wrought with his works, and by works was faith made perfect [complete]?”—James 2:17,21,22

The second vital lesson of the Key Verse is contained in the phrase, ‘and shalt believe in thine heart.’ The heart is the center of all our innermost motivations and desires, and hence, the most critical measuring rod of our relationship to God. Regardless of our ‘confessions,’ if the condition of our heart is not acceptable, we will not be deemed worthy to receive the promised salvation. Truly has the wise man said, “Keep thy heart with all diligence; for out of it are the issues of life.” (Prov. 4:23) To genuinely believe in the Lord Jesus from the heart means that we must live by faith—faith not only in his sacrifice, but also faith in his way of life, his character, his words, and his actions. We must further have faith in our hearts that each experience which we encounter in life, big or small, pleasant or trying, is being permitted and overruled for our highest spiritual welfare by the Heavenly Father.

Our faith in Christ Jesus can only be made complete by having both the inward heart belief and its resulting motivation to put on his character, as well as the outward confession of word, action, and walk of life which demonstrates such character-likeness. Paul states, “The word is near you, in your mouth and in your heart – that is, the word of faith which we are preaching, . . . for with the heart a person believes, resulting in righteousness, and with the mouth he confesses, resulting in salvation.”—Rom. 10:8,10, *New American Standard Version* ■