

Works without Respect to Persons

Key Verse:
*“Hearken, my
beloved brethren,
Hath not God
chosen the poor of
this world rich in
faith, and heirs of
the kingdom which
he hath promised
to them that
love him?”*
—James 2:5

Selected Scripture:
James 2:1-12

noble are called.” As we appreciate the Lord’s love and mercy toward all people, we should come into obedience of the Master’s instructions concerning the law of selfless love.—John 13:34,35; 15:12,13

To have divine approval, it is necessary that we develop characters in conformity with God’s principles of righteousness. We have been called by our Heavenly Father to bear good fruits and to walk the narrow way of self-sacrifice and service. Each of us should seek the teachings and principles of God’s Word so that we may properly develop our faith to produce words and deeds worthy of our calling. “He that hath my word, let him

TODAY’S LESSON BRINGS

to our attention the importance of not only having a strong faith, but also of applying that faith in our daily lives by means of works. “Be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only.” (James 1:22) Furthermore, in our deeds we are not to be respecters of persons, nor to make differences in how we treat others based on how they may dress, or how wealthy they are. (James 2:1-9) We read in I Corinthians 1:26, “Not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many

speak my word faithfully.” “If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God.”—Jer. 23:28; I Pet. 4:11

Acceptable works and deeds require that we have sound evidence and authority as the basis of our faith. Faith does not jump to conclusions, but makes investigation and sees that it has scriptural grounds for its claims. Paul states: “Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.”—II Tim. 2:15

It is our faith in God and in his Son, Christ Jesus, which will bring us victory. (I John 5:4) However, victory will be accounted only if we shall additionally, to the best of our ability, work out our “salvation with fear and trembling.” (Phil. 2:12) Such a living faith shows itself by actions, and God will test us by our works as to the strength of our faith. “Wilt thou know, O vain man, that faith apart from works is barren?” (James 2:20, *American Standard Version*) The right kind of faith will make an outward manifestation, according to circumstances directed by God.

Faith and works together bring us into the characterlikeness of Christ. He is our example and standard with regard to both faith and works. Indeed, it is only through our Lord Jesus, and our relationship with him, that we can even have the opportunity of doing these things. With him as our elder brother, however, we can say with Paul: “I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me.”—Phil. 4:13

Faith cannot remain alive without manifesting itself. All our services to the Lord are valuable as living proof of our faith in God’s promises. “This is the promise that he hath promised us, even eternal life.” (I John 2:25) Let us daily remember that we have something to do in realizing the gracious promises of God to us. He is, of course, thoroughly capable and willing to perform all his part regarding every matter, but it is necessary that we cooperate with him in all ways, and to show, without respect to persons, the proof of our faith by our works. ■