

BELIEVING AND DOING

May 30, 1909

James 2 : 14-26—Memory Verse, 26.

Golden Text—Faith without works is dead.—James 2 : 20.

14 What *doth it* profit, my brethren, though a man say he hath faith, and have not works? can faith save him?

15 If a brother or sister be naked, and destitute of daily food,

16 And one of you say unto them, Depart in peace, be *ye* warmed and filled; notwithstanding ye give them not those things which are needful to the body; what *doth it* profit?

17 Even so faith, if it hath not works, is dead, being alone.

18 Yea, a man may say, Thou hast faith, and I have works: shew me thy faith without thy works, and I will shew thee my faith by my works.

19 Thou believest that there is one God; thou doest well: the devils also believe, and tremble.

20 But wilt thou know, O vain man, that faith without works is dead?

21 Was not A'braham our father justified by works, when he had offered I'saac his son upon the altar?

22 Seest thou how faith wrought with his works, and by works was faith made perfect?

23 And the scripture was fulfilled which saith, A'braham believed God, and it was imputed unto him for righteousness: and he was called the Friend of God.

24 Ye see then how that by works a man is justified, and not by faith only.

25 Likewise also was not Ra'hob the harlot justified by works, when she had received the messengers, and had sent *them* out another way?

26 For as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also.

THE LESSON RETOLD

When Jesus sent out His disciples to teach the people of all nations, He meant that they should do it, not only by speaking to them, but also by writing to them. Many words that they spoke are forgotten, for they and the persons who heard them have been long since dead; but what they wrote, we can still read in the Epistles or letters which they wrote, either to various persons or to the churches.

These Epistles, like the rest of the Bible, are a message from God; and they are intended as much for us as for those to whom they were first written. What they teach, we are to believe and remember and obey.

One of these letters was written by James, a brother of Jesus Himself, to Jewish Christians living in lands far away from Palestine, where most of the Jews lived. Some of these Jewish Christians did not rightly understand the teaching of Jesus and His apostles. To be Christians, they knew, they must have faith

and trust in Jesus to save them. But they had got the foolish notion that they could be Christians without living good lives and doing good deeds, if only they had faith.

But James declares that those who thought in this way had not true faith, and were not really trusting in Jesus. They must show that they were truly His followers by doing what He would wish them to do. "If a neighbor of yours were hungry and cold", he says, "of what use would good wishes or kind words be to him, if you did not at the same time give him food and warm clothing? So it is with any one who says that he trusts in Jesus, while he does not do the good works which Jesus commands. That man's faith is a dead faith, of no use to any person."

Just as a tree cannot be living, James goes on to teach, unless it brings forth leaves and fruit, so no one can really be trusting in Jesus, unless he is trying to follow Jesus' example,