



THE TESTS OF TRUE FAITH

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ON LINE HELPS FOR THE TEACHER

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Lesson 1

FAITH TESTED BY WORKS

NOTE TO THE TEACHER

James knew Jesus well. They lived in the same home and had the same mother, Mary. They did not have the same father. Jesus, the Son of God, was born supernaturally. James was the natural son of Joseph and Mary. So Jesus and James were half-brothers. As boys, they played together, ate together, and went together to the synagogue to worship God. We don't know exactly when James placed his trust in Jesus as Saviour. It may have been after the resurrection of Christ. (See John 7:5; 1 Corinthians 15:7.)

James speaks of himself as a servant a bonds slave of God and Christ. He served as leader of the council and church in Jerusalem. (See Acts 12:17; 15:13-29; Galatians 1:19; 2:9.) James, because of his pure life and good works, was respected even by those who did not believe in Christ.

The *Epistle of James*, like all the other Bible books, is

from God Himself. It contains advice on various subjects. Its theme is: Genuine faith in Christ shows itself in good works.

God teaches through the writings of Paul, that "to be justified" is to be declared righteous. That is, the person who truly trusts in Christ, is in right standing with God. Through the letter of James, God teaches that "to be justified" also means to be proved righteous. This means that a person shows others he/she is a child of God by doing good works. Works are the outcome and proof of living faith in Christ Jesus.

Depending on the ability of your students, you may wish to divide these lessons.

Before class, prepare a dummy using a bag of trash, cornstalks, pillows, or whatever is available. Use clothes like those your students wear to dress the dummy. Place it next to you with its back toward the class.

Scripture to be studied: James 1:1-27; 2:14-26; 5:10-11 and all references in outline and text.

The aim of the lesson: To show that true faith in Christ produces good works.

What your students should know: Those who belong to the Lord Jesus should do good, as He did. (See Acts 10:38.)

What your students should feel: A desire to show their faith by doing good works.

What your students should do: Determine what they can do this week that will prove they have genuine faith in the Saviour.

Lesson outline (for the teacher's and students' notebooks):

1. Faith without works is dead (James 2:17, 20, 26).
2. Genuine faith is tested by good works (James 2:21-26; Genesis 15:3-6; 22:1-14; Joshua 2:1-21; 6:25; Hebrews 11:31).
3. Real faith is tested by trials (James 5:10-11; Job 1:1-22; 38:1-41:34).
4. Tested faith is rewarded (James 1:12; Job 42:1-17).

The verse to be memorized:

Faith, if it hath not works, is dead. (James 2:17a)

THE LESSON

Who is this beside me? He hasn't moved since class began.

Nor has he said a word. Who will try to get him to take part? (Give students opportunity to talk to the "person".) Why do you suppose he doesn't answer? (Guide students to the correct answer: the "person" isn't real.) We can talk to him, even shout at him. But he will never talk to us because he has no life. Do you know that it is possible to look like a Christian, even think you are a Christian, and not be a true believer in Christ? For this very reason God caused James to write a letter long ago. That letter is now part of the Word of God and is known as The Epistle of James.

1. FAITH WITHOUT WORKS IS DEAD

James 2:17, 20, 26



Show Illustration #1

Because James was giving God's message, he wrote with boldness. "Faith which does not have good works with it, is dead!" (See James 2:17, 20, 26.) It's not real faith if the person doesn't do good things for others. It is make-believe faith.

When the Lord Jesus was here on earth, He went about doing good (Acts