

IMPACT

I **M**ust **P**ersonally **A**cknowledge **C**hrist **T**oday
Trust in the LORD with all your heart, And lean not on your own understanding; in *all your ways acknowledge Him* and He shall direct your path.
Proverbs 3:5-6

Passage: Romans 8:5-9 “...Those who live according to the flesh set their minds on the things of the flesh, but those who live according to the Spirit, the things of the Spirit. For to be carnally minded is death, but to be spiritually minded is life and peace. Because the carnal mind is enmity against God; for it is not subject to the law of God, nor indeed can be. So then, those who are in the flesh cannot please God. But you are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if indeed the Spirit of God dwells in you. Now if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, he is not His.”

Quote: James 1:22 “But be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves.” “Actions speak louder than words.” James 2:18-20 makes it clear that living faith will evidence itself.

The pattern of a person’s speech and actions reveals the reality of who he or she truly is at the heart level.¹ Although illustrations often come up short when explaining spiritual truth, perhaps the following will offer insights into the commitment involved in being a Christian and not merely possessing knowledge about Christ or sounding Christian when it is advantageous. Believe means “to have faith in, or with respect to, a person or thing.” “To think to be true, to be persuaded of, to place confidence in the thing believed; to entrust to.”¹ In fact, the word “believe” is from the same root word for faith—the conviction or belief respecting man’s relationship to God and divine things, generally with the included idea of trust and holy fervor....¹ A man can strongly believe that a parachute will enable him to jump out of a plane and float to the ground because he knows “the facts” and has seen others experience this. He cannot say that he entrusts his life to it until he follows through on his “profession of faith.” It is one thing to *profess belief* while standing on the ground; it is quite another thing to *possess belief* while descending from 13,000 feet at 115 miles per hour! Complete trust is *demonstrated* by an intentional and irreversible action. He jumps from the plane! Likewise, the faith that saves necessitates personal and exclusive trust in Christ alone for the

welfare of your eternal soul. It is the conviction that Jesus is indeed Who He claims to be and that He accomplished all that God the Father sent Him to do—“save His people from their sins.”²

It has been said that individuals are saved by faith alone, yet the faith that saves is never alone! “Where this faith is, there is a yielding of obedience to the commands, a trembling at the threatenings, and an embracing of the promises of God for this life and the life to come. The principal acts of saving faith are accepting, receiving, and resting upon Christ alone for justification, sanctification and eternal life. Justifying faith, therefore, includes knowledge, conviction, and trust. True faith wants Christ as He is offered in the Scriptures; that is, as the only Mediator between God and man.”³ True faith always produces the fruit of obedient, selfless love for the lord Jesus Christ!⁴ Jesus said, “He who has My commandments and keeps them, *it is he who loves Me*. And he who loves Me will be loved by My Father, and I will love him and manifest Myself to him.”⁵ In at least

The deadly deception

one respect, genuine faith is very similar to genuine love—they both produce evidence of their existence. Merely saying that you love someone without demonstrating it is a “dead love;” it is an empty profession. Recall that Judas followed Christ for three years and deceived everyone but Christ Himself. The fact that he never *received Christ as Savior* was evident by his traitorous kiss and eventual suicide.⁶ To *receive* means to take to one’s self, to make one’s own, to claim for oneself, to seize, to lay hold of, to apprehend.” Receiving Christ is not merely making a decision that we deem to our advantage. It is personally and permanently possessing and being possessed by the Lord Jesus Christ.⁷

In our next IMPACT, we shall see that, although saving faith is the vital prerequisite to *being* a Christian, it is always accompanied by repentance.

¹ Greek Lexicon ² Genesis 1:1 and John 1:1-3; 10:30; Colossians 1:16; Hebrews 1:1-4; Matt. 1:21 ³ Ernest C. Reisinger; I Timothy 2:5; Matt.16:24 ⁴ Matthew 13:23; Colossians 1:9-13 ⁵ John 14:15, 21, 23; 16:27; ⁶ John 1:12, 13 ⁷ John 10:29; 17