

## The Saint: Created for Works

A Christian is, among other things, a learner. Learning is an ongoing activity in the life of a disciple. What we disciples learn can be either good or bad. St. Paul wrote to Titus, *"And let our people learn to devote themselves to good works, so as to help cases of urgent need, and not be unfruitful."* (Titus 3:14). He also wrote to Timothy, *"Besides that, they learn to be idlers, going about from house to house, and not only idlers, but also gossips and busybodies, saying what they should not."* (1 Tim 5:13)

We start the learning process as soon as we are born. We learn from our parents, our siblings, our relatives, our friends, our teachers. From success as well as mistakes, and the list could go on indefinitely. Since there is so much to learn from so many sources it's vitally important that we have a solid reference base from which to do our learning.

Obviously, the best reference base for God's children is none other than God's Holy Word, the Bible. It is the only absolutely reliable reference base that is true, trustworthy, and dependable. After all, the Holy Spirit inspired men to record what Almighty God wanted us to learn. That's why St. Paul wrote to Timothy, *"But as for you, continue in what you have learned and have firmly believed, knowing from whom you learned it and how from childhood you have been acquainted with the sacred writings, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus. All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, that the man of God may be competent, equipped for every good work."* (2 Tim 3:14-17)

The most important thing for us to learn ... and believe ... and review ... and remember ... is the Gospel.

In a nutshell, *"For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life. For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved through him."* (John 3:16-17) St. Paul stated it this way, *"For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, not a result of works, so that no one may boast. For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them."* (Eph 2:8-10)

### Wait a minute. Did God just say I have some work to do now that I believe?

Through James God gives further explanation when he wrote, *"But be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves. For if anyone is a hearer of the word and not a doer, he is like a man who looks intently at his natural face in a mirror. For he looks at himself and goes away and at once forgets what he was like. But the one who looks into the perfect law, the law of liberty, and perseveres, being no hearer who forgets but a doer who acts, he will be blessed in his doing. If anyone thinks he is religious and does not bridle his tongue but deceives his heart, this person's religion is worthless. **Religion that is pure and undefiled before God, the Father, is this: to visit orphans and widows in their affliction, and to keep oneself unstained from the world.**"* (James 1:22-27)

He continued later in his letter, *"What good is it, my brothers, if someone says he has faith but does not have works? Can **that** faith save him? If a brother or sister is poorly clothed and lacking in daily food, and one of you says to them, 'Go in peace, be warmed and filled,' without giving them the things needed for the body, what good is that? So also faith by itself, if it does not have works, is dead. But someone will say, 'You have faith and I have works.' Show me your faith apart from your works, and I will show you my faith by my works."* (James 2:14-18)

The proper relationship between the saving faith that the Holy Spirit gave us and the living out of that faith according to God's direction by the power of the same Holy Spirit is indeed an ongoing learning process. Let's all be energetically faithful in being God's workmanship according to His will and Glory.

In Our Savior

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