wentzville
CHRISTIAN CHURCH

Faith that works

Part 1

Name:

PARTICIPANT GUIDE FALL 2020

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35 OVERVIEW OF JAMES

LETTER FROM KEITH

It goes without saying that this has been a crazy year! 2020 will go down in history as a crisis filled season of life for those who lived through it. Trial after trial, hardship after hardship, and I doubt if anyone was exempt. While many are looking for the end of the world or for Jesus to come back [and he might!] I think the Letter of James might offer us a greater direction and understanding to our lives today.

James 1:2-4
"Consider it pure joy, my brothers and sisters, whenever you face trials of many kinds, because you know that the testing of your faith produces perseverance. Let perseverance finish its work so that you may be mature and complete, not lacking anything."

Everything we go through is a chance for us to grow in our faith and maturity in Christ. With that in mind, we can have joy when we go through a year like 2020. What an opportunity for growth! James has so much more to say about our faith and how we live it out each and every day. James is a very practical letter to the church and so relevant for us today, so let's dig in! We will be preaching through this letter each week on Sundays, and I pray you will use this book in your Life Groups and/or on your own. You can use this booklet to engage in God's Word even deeper through the discussion questions, personal devotions, and through the daily devotion led by our staff on the Wentzville Christian Church Facebook page.

We can look back on 2020 as a difficult year or we can consider it pure joy because we grew in our faith and dependence on God the Father! We discovered a ***faith that works!***

Blessings,

Keith Comp
Senior Minister

HOW TO USE THIS GUIDE:

The purpose of this guide is to ignite a passion for the Bible in your daily life. God's Word is living, active, and useful for our lives...but so few Christians actually engage in it daily. We want to provide you with a resource that you can use on your own and with your Life Group to ignite and sustain this passion. We want to make God's Word our way.

SERMON NOTES:

Bring this workbook to church each Sunday. As you listen to the sermon, make a note when you hear something that surprises you, intrigues you, bothers you, challenges you, or encourages you.

CONNECT QUESTIONS:

These questions will help you and your group members become more comfortable with talking and sharing with each other. Not only will you learn more about one-another, the questions will help to steer the discussion in the direction of the topic.

COMMUNITY DISCUSSION:

These questions are the "meat" of the discussion and will point back to the sermon each week. Feel free to read and answer these questions before your group meets. They will also help you dig deeper into the Scriptures during your group discussions.

CHANGE QUESTIONS:

At the end of Jesus' most famous sermon, he says that if you do not put his words into practice then you are a fool [Matthew 7:24-27]. Life transformation is the ultimate goal of a follower of Christ. Feel free to answer these questions out-loud when your leader reads them or you can quietly reflect and write a response in your workbook.

PRAY FOR ONE-ANOTHER:

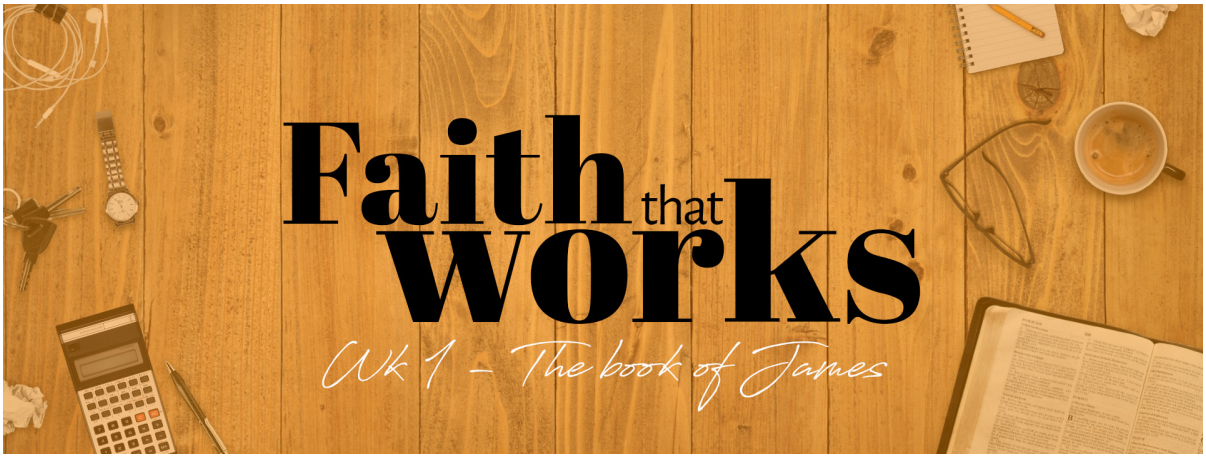
Please focus this time on *your own personal* praises and requests instead of listing all of the bad things that happened to someone you know. We challenge you to get "deep" with one-another relationally, which means becoming a little bit vulnerable as you are honest with one-another.

PRAY FOR THE MISSIONS OF THE WEEK:

WCC supports many wonderful missionaries and organizations all over the world. We are committed to support them with our finances as well as our prayers and encouragement. Ask God to work in their lives and through their ministries to ignite a passion for Jesus in others.

DAILY DEVOTION:

Be consistent, honest, and intentional with this time and you will not regret it. The whole point of this workbook is to make the sermons and Scriptures stick with you in your daily walk with Christ. Digging in to God's Word and applying it to your daily life is perhaps the best way to solidify His truth into your heart and your life.


Faith that Works
Wk 1 – The book of James

WEEK 1 - TRIALS & TEMPTATIONS [PART 1 - JAMES 1:1-12]

CONNECT QUESTIONS

1. **What is the hardest test you remember taking?**

2. **What is the greatest award you have ever received for an accomplishment?**

3. **What activities, places, or possessions bring you pure joy?**

COMMUNITY DISCUSSION

1. **Read James 1:1-3. What is supposed to bring us pure joy in life? Why does this sound backwards?**

2. **Read James 1:4. What is the result of our faith [vs. 3], and why must it complete its work in order to be effective?**

3. **What do you think it means to be mature in Christ and not lacking in anything? What kind of a lifestyle would this look like?**

4. **Search the web for a definition of wisdom and share your favorite with the group. What do you think it means to have Godly wisdom?**

5. **Read James 1:5-8. What happens when doubt creeps into a person who is undergoing trials?**

6. **Read James 1:9-11. James gives a practical example of what it looks like to be double minded. How does this example show what it means to be mature and have wisdom?**

7. **Read James 1:12. What are the rewards for those who persevere? What does it look like for people to undergo trials today? What would it look like for you to stand the test?**

CHANGE QUESTIONS

1. **What tests are you going through right now? Do you blame yourself? God?**

2. **Have you truly prayed for wisdom from God? How can you seek His wisdom this week?**

3. **In what ways do you need to be humbled? Where do you need to be mature? Where do you need to persevere?**

PRAY FOR ONE-ANOTHER

[Spend some time praying with your Life Group. When asking for requests, try to keep the focus on personal praises/requests that relate to people in the group.]

PRAY FOR MISSIONS OF THE WEEK

Team Expansion: Tim & Amy Maxson

The Maxsons work at Fellowship Dubai church in the Middle East and are making disciples of migrant workers. The Maxson family has five children. teamexpansion.org

High Hill Christian Camp

High Hill Christian Camp and Retreat Center's goal is to offer a fun, Christian atmosphere in a modern camp setting surrounded by God's wilderness — all designed so that children will leave with a closer relationship with Jesus. highhillcamp.org

Show-Me Christian Youth Home

This faith-based organization seeks to improve the lives of children struggling because of circumstances in their current home environment. showmehelpingkids.com

DAILY DEVOTIONS [JAMES 1:1-12]

"1James, a servant of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ, To the twelve tribes scattered among the nations: Greetings.

2Consider it pure joy, my brothers and sisters, whenever you face trials of many kinds, 3because you know that the testing of your faith produces perseverance. 4Let perseverance finish its work so that you may be mature and complete, not lacking anything. 5If any of you lacks wisdom, you should ask God, who gives generously to all without finding fault, and it will be given to you. 6But when you ask, you must believe and not doubt, because the one who doubts is like a wave of the sea, blown and tossed by the wind. 7That person should not expect to receive anything from the Lord. 8Such a person is double-minded and unstable in all they do.

9Believers in humble circumstances ought to take pride in their high position. 10But the rich should take pride in their humiliation—since they will pass away like a wild flower. 11For the sun rises with scorching heat and withers the plant; its blossom falls and its beauty is destroyed. In the same way, the rich will fade away even while they go about their business.

12Blessed is the one who perseveres under trial because, having stood the test, that person will receive the crown of life that the Lord has promised to those who love him."

DAY 1: James 1:1

- If a stranger were to observe your life, whom would they say you are a servant of?

- What do you think it means to be a servant of both God and Jesus? How do you serve them daily?

DAY 2: James 1:2-4

- When has your faith been tested? What did it produce in your life? Perseverance? Negativity? Anger? Joy? Resentment?

- How would your life be different if you had complete spiritual maturity and a complete faith? What is one thing you can work on today?

DAILY DEVOTION [JAMES 1:1-12]

DAY 3: **James 1:5-8**

- Who is the wisest person you know? What actions or attributes make them wise?

- What is the biggest thing you have asked God for? Why is wisdom more beneficial than anything else you could ask for?

DAY 4: **James 1:9-11**

- What do you think James means that believers in humble circumstances are actually in a high position?

- What are some expensive things you own which have lost their value? How does James want you to view possessions, status, and riches in this life?

DAY 5: **James 1:12**

- When you are going through a trial in life, what do you pray for? Why?

- James encourages us to have perseverance. What does that produce in this life? In the life to come?

Faith that Works
Wk 2 – Trials and Temptations

WEEK 2 - TRIALS & TEMPTATIONS [PART 2 - JAMES 1:13-18]

CONNECT QUESTIONS

1. **What food or sweet temptation do you fall victim to every time?**

2. **What is something you bought that you really should not have bought?**

3. **What made you buy it, and why should you have not bought it?**

COMMUNITY DISCUSSION

1. **Last week we learned that God uses trials to help us grow. This week we learn about temptations. What do you think is the difference?**

2. **Read James 1:13-14. Why do you think James wants us to know God does not tempt us? Why do you think God does not tempt and cannot be tempted by evil?**

3. **Read James 1:14-15. Read these verses carefully and then restate the progression that takes place from temptation to death. How can we work on avoiding these traps?**

4. **According to verse 14, what is the real reason we fall into the traps of temptation? Why is it important for us to know this?**

5. **Read James 1:16. Why do you think James says this right after talking about desire, sin, and death?**

6. **Read James 1:17-18. How is verse 13 related to verse 17? What does James want us to understand, and why?**

7. **What have you found to be helpful when you are facing temptation? How can we encourage one-another?**

CHANGE QUESTIONS

1. **How can you determine the difference between a trial and a temptation in your life?**

2. **What steps do you need to take to identify and resist destructive desires and temptations?**

3. **Have you been deceived? Have you been lured? How will you get back on the right track this week?**

PRAY FOR ONE-ANOTHER

[Spend some time praying with your Life Group. When asking for requests, try to keep the focus on personal praises/requests that relate to people in the group.]

PRAY FOR MISSIONS OF THE WEEK

Jireh India Missions

This ministry in India shares the good news of Jesus with those who have never heard His name. They provide homes and education for orphans at House of Peace, teach widows to sew so they can provide for their children, provide bread for much of their community through Five Loaves Bakery, and work with a leper colony. They strive to fulfill Psalm 82:3 — *Defend the poor and orphans; do justice to the afflicted and needy*.

HOPE Ministries Food Pantry

HOPE provides families in St. Charles county assistance with food and physical needs. You can donate non-perishable food items to this ministry by visiting the food cart in the WCC café. Take home a bag and bring it back with the items requested for the month.

Shiloh Christian Children's Ranch

Located in Kahoka and Clarence, MO, Shiloh is a safe haven for abused and neglected children, and includes six homes for children, two relief homes, and an onsite school. shilohranch.org

DAILY DEVOTION [JAMES 1:13-18]

“13When tempted, no one should say, “God is tempting me.” For God cannot be tempted by evil, nor does he tempt anyone; 14but each person is tempted when they are dragged away by their own evil desire and enticed. 15Then, after desire has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and sin, when it is full-grown, gives birth to death.

16Don’t be deceived, my dear brothers and sisters. 17Every good and perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of the heavenly lights, who does not change like shifting shadows. 18He chose to give us birth through the word of truth, that we might be a kind of firstfruits of all he created.”

DAY 1: James 1:13

- Have you ever blamed God for something bad that happened to you or someone else? Why do people tend to blame God when things go wrong?

- Why do you think James wants you to know God does not tempt anyone? How does that make you feel?

DAY 2: James 1:14

- The term “dragged away” comes from the hunting and fishing term “lure.” How is this a good illustration of how evil desires entrap us?

- What evil desires do you have? What desires do you have that may not seem evil on the surface? How can you keep from being lured?

DAILY DEVOTION [JAMES 1:13-18]

DAY 3: **James 1:15**

- What is the progression you see in this verse? Looking back on your life, when have you seen these steps take place?

- Why are desires so dangerous? What desires do you need to get under control before they are conceived into something worse?

DAY 4: **James 1:16-17**

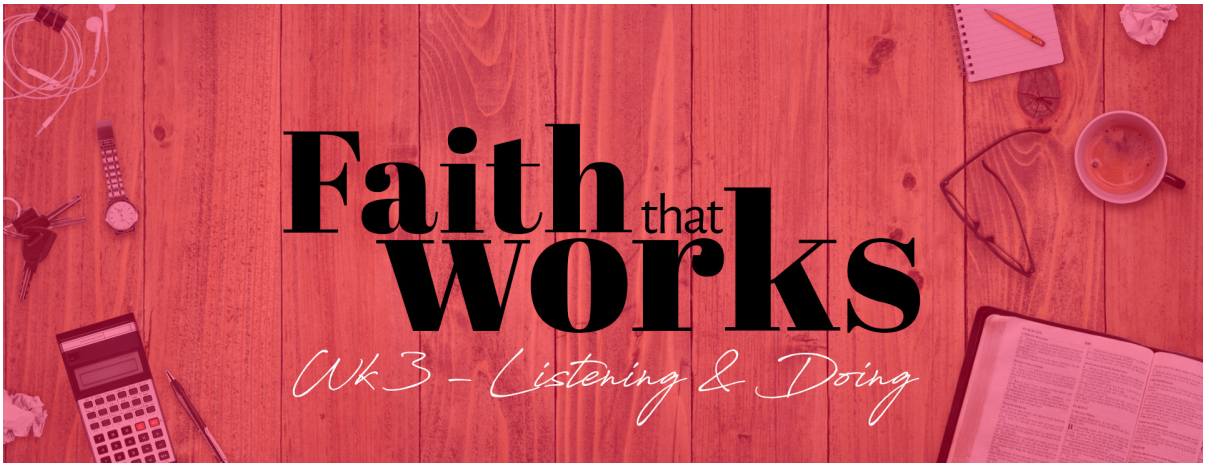
- When have you been deceived by sinful and evil desires? What did this lead to in your life?

- Write a personal reflection of how verse 17 makes you feel about God:

DAY 5: **James 1:18**

- Notice the word play and connection between the birth that comes from God's word, and the conception of desire and the birth of death. What are you conceiving and giving birth to in your daily life?

- Write a personal reflection of how this verse makes you feel about what God has done for you:


Faith that Works
Wk 3 – Listening & Doing

WEEK 3 - LISTENING & DOING [JAMES 1:19-27]

CONNECT QUESTIONS

1. **Have you ever experienced something going terribly wrong either because you failed to listen or someone failed to listen to you?**

2. **When have you put your foot in your mouth because you let your anger get the best of you?**

3. **When have you had a bad experience because you failed to listen to advice? Why did you ignore the advice?**

COMMUNITY DISCUSSION

1. **Read James 1:19-21. What are the three commands in vs. 19 and how are they related to each other? What is the root issue James is warning about?**

2. **What do we communicate to other people when we do not listen well or talk too much? What happens when these negative traits enter into our relationship with God?**

3. **Read James 1:22-25. Why is it so easy to "hear" and not "do" when it comes to the Bible? What are the dangers of this, according to verse 22?**

4. **What are the dangers of listening and not doing what God's Word says [vs. 22]? What are the benefits vs. 25]? Why are these important?**

5. **Read James 1:26-27. How does this section relate to verse 22?**

6. **What three actions does James identify as examples of true religion? How does this definition differ from what some may think Christianity is about?**

7. **What do you think James means that a person's religion can be "worthless"? How does this relate to verse 22?**

CHANGE QUESTIONS

1. **In what area of your life could you do a better job applying God's Word rather than just listening to it?**

2. **What type of hearing loss has gotten in your way of listening to and obeying God? Anger? Laziness? Self-deception?**

3. **How will you open your ears to what God has to say to you this week? How will you listen and DO what He says?**

PRAY FOR ONE-ANOTHER

[Spend some time praying with your Life Group. When asking for requests, try to keep the focus on personal praises/requests that relate to people in the group.]

PRAY FOR MISSIONS OF THE WEEK

LOVEtheLOU

LOVEtheLOU is a community development initiative that connects resources to the needs of St. Louis. During the constant process of growth and development, they strive to see St. Louis restored through transforming actions. LTL is proud of the progress in St. Louis and are excited about what will continue to happen as they grow and develop. lovethelou.org

Outreach International - Mexico | Josh & Susan Sanchez

This mission, called Me & My House Ministries, is a church plant in Colima City. Their goal is to begin a church planting movement within the region.

Team Expansion: Allen & Cherry Messimer – Taiwan

The Messimers have served as missionaries in Taiwan since 2004. Their mission is to evangelize, disciple, and provide training so every believer can use his or her gifts in a simple church ministry. This also means every church can start new, indigenous churches. Over 90% of Taiwanese people still worship idols. teamexpansion.org

DAILY DEVOTION [JAMES 1:19-27]

“19My dear brothers and sisters, take note of this: Everyone should be quick to listen, slow to speak and slow to become angry, 20because human anger does not produce the righteousness that God desires. 21Therefore, get rid of all moral filth and the evil that is so prevalent and humbly accept the word planted in you, which can save you.

22Do not merely listen to the word, and so deceive yourselves. Do what it says. 23Anyone who listens to the word but does not do what it says is like someone who looks at his face in a mirror 24and, after looking at himself, goes away and immediately forgets what he looks like. 25But whoever looks intently into the perfect law that gives freedom, and continues in it—not forgetting what they have heard, but doing it—they will be blessed in what they do.

26Those who consider themselves religious and yet do not keep a tight rein on their tongues deceive themselves, and their religion is worthless. 27Religion that God our Father accepts as pure and faultless is this: to look after orphans and widows in their distress and to keep oneself from being polluted by the world.”

DAY 1: James 1:19-21

- When has anger led you to unrighteousness? When has your mouth gotten in the way of your obedience?

- What moral filth and evil is so prevalent in your life? What do you need to do today to humbly accept and plant God’s Word inside of you?

DAY 2: James 1:22-24

- When has someone deceived you? How did it make you feel? When have you deceived yourself?

- How does James’ illustration of a mirror show what you have done with God’s Word in the past? How can you change that today?

DAILY DEVOTION [JAMES 1:19-27]

DAY 3: James 1:25

- What book, movie, show, or form of entertainment do you "look intently" into so that you have it memorized? Why do you like it so much?

- What do you think are some blessings that God will give you if you remember and obey God's perfect law, which is the Bible? How can you remember and continue in what the Bible says today? Everyday?

DAY 4: James 1:26

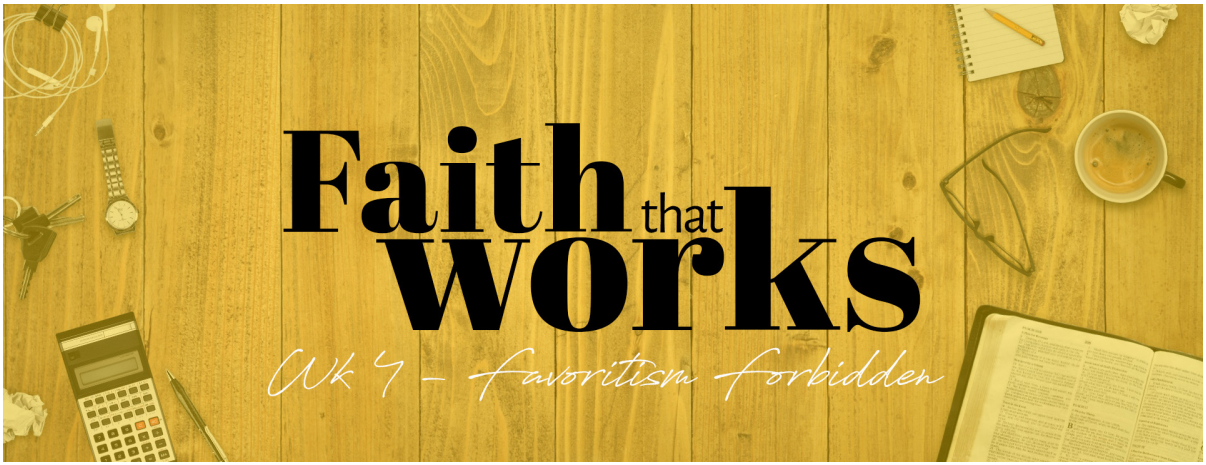
- Who do you consider to be a religious person? Do you consider yourself religious? Why or why not?

- What do you think is the result of a worthless religion in God's eyes? How can you keep from deceiving yourself in how you practice true religion?

DAY 5: James 1:27

- What forms of impure religion do you think God rejects? How can you avoid these?

- What are the three practical forms of pure religion James gives as examples? Write out ways you can live out each of these this week:


Faith that Works
Wk 4 – Favoritism Forbidden

WEEK 4 - FAVORITISIM FORBIDDEN [JAMES 2:1-13]

CONNECT QUESTIONS

1. **What are the best seats you have ever had for a game, concert, or event?**

2. **Where is a place you visit in which you receive special treatment?**

3. **Where is a place you visited in which you felt others received special treatment because of their money?**

COMMUNITY DISCUSSION

1. **Read James 2:1-4. What are some hypothetical [or real] situations in which someone could receive special treatment at a church because of their wealth?**

2. **How can discrimination, in its various forms, be so detrimental to the church? How does this go against what God has in mind for the church? [See Galatians 3:27-29 and Ephesians 4:3-6]**

3. **Read James 2:5-7. What do you think it means that the poor are rich in faith? Does God love the rich and the poor differently? Explain. [See Luke 12:48]**

4. **Read James 2:8-11. What is the royal law James refers to? How does showing favoritism break this law?**

5. **Read James 2:12-13. What do you think is the "law that gives freedom" James refers to? [See James 1:25] How is this law better than the old one?**

6. **The following section in James 2 speaks about people who claim to have faith, but their actions indicate their faith is dead. How is that related to this section on favoritism?**

CHANGE QUESTIONS

1. **As you examine your life, in what areas are you showing favoritism toward some while neglecting those who may also need your attention?**

2. **What groups or types of people do you treat better or worse because of who they are or how they look?**

3. **Who specifically do you need to show love and equality to this week? What is holding you back?**

PRAY FOR ONE-ANOTHER

[Spend some time praying with your Life Group. When asking for requests, try to keep the focus on personal praises/requests that relate to people in the group.]

PRAY FOR MISSIONS OF THE WEEK

Central Christian College of the Bible

The goal of Central Christian College of the Bible is to raise up servant leaders for the church and to do so as affordably as possible. CCCB believes so completely in what their students will do for Christ that they want to not only equip them with a quality education, but an affordable one so their future ministry will not be burdened by financial stress. That is why CCCB offers a Full-Tuition Scholarship and will continue to do so as long as there are means. cccb.edu

Christian Prison Ministry of Mid-America

Missouri is home to 29 prisons and 2 county jails in 5 states. CPMM's goal is to evangelize, encourage, and equip the believers in all of these prisions. To date, over 400 inmates have been baptized!
christianprisonministryofmissouri.org

DAILY DEVOTION [JAMES 2:1-13]

“1My brothers and sisters, believers in our glorious Lord Jesus Christ must not show favoritism. 2Suppose a man comes into your meeting wearing a gold ring and fine clothes, and a poor man in filthy old clothes also comes in. 3If you show special attention to the man wearing fine clothes and say, “Here’s a good seat for you,” but say to the poor man, “You stand there” or “Sit on the floor by my feet,” 4have you not discriminated among yourselves and become judges with evil thoughts?

5Listen, my dear brothers and sisters: Has not God chosen those who are poor in the eyes of the world to be rich in faith and to inherit the kingdom he promised those who love him? 6But you have dishonored the poor. Is it not the rich who are exploiting you? Are they not the ones who are dragging you into court? 7Are they not the ones who are blaspheming the noble name of him to whom you belong?

8If you really keep the royal law found in Scripture, “Love your neighbor as yourself,” you are doing right. 9But if you show favoritism, you sin and are convicted by the law as lawbreakers. 10For whoever keeps the whole law and yet stumbles at just one point is guilty of breaking all of it. 11For he who said, “You shall not commit adultery,” also said, “You shall not murder.” If you do not commit adultery but do commit murder, you have become a lawbreaker.

12Speak and act as those who are going to be judged by the law that gives freedom, 13because judgment without mercy will be shown to anyone who has not been merciful. Mercy triumphs over judgment.

DAY 1: James 2:1-4

- Who was the favorite in your family growing up? Why do you think it was this way?

- When have you treated someone different because of their appearance? According to verse 4, even our thoughts toward people can be evil and sinful. How can you avoid this?

DAY 2: James 2:5-7

- When have you dishonored someone? When have you been exploited or oppressed because of your financial status?

- Who are some people in your life you would describe as rich in their faith? What about them makes you think of them in this way? How can you follow their example today?

DAILY DEVOTION [JAMES 2:1-13]

DAY 3: **James 2:8-9**

- How is the royal law connected with how we show favoritism? What is the result of favoritism?

- What grade would you give yourself on living out the royal law? What do you need to work on today? Who do you need to show love to today?

DAY 4: **James 2:10-11**

- What are some real-life examples where if someone messes up once they are treated poorly and receive severe consequences?

- Why do you think James specifically chose these two commandments? Where do you stumble? What can you work on today to not be considered guilty?

DAY 5: **James 12:12-13**

- What is your favorite part about the freedom we have in this country? How does that freedom coincide with our system of law and order?

- When have you shown mercy when it was not expected? When have you shown judgment when it was not necessary? Which felt better in the end, and why?

Faith that Works
Wk 5 – Faith & Deeds

WEEK 5 - FAITH AND WORKS [JAMES 2:14-26]

CONNECT QUESTIONS

1. **What are some famous examples of people who were discredited as frauds or deceivers?**

2. **When have you been deceived by someone who claimed to be someone that they were not?**

3. **When have you been deceived by a product that did not live up to its claim?**

COMMUNITY DISCUSSION

1. **Read James 2:14. In what way is inauthentic faith condemned in this verse? What are some examples of how people can be guilty of this today?**

2. **How do you think this discussion on faith vs. works can become confusing and divisive in different churches?**

3. **Read James 2:15-17. This is an example of the sin of omission. How is that different from sins of commission that we normally focus on?**

4. **Read James 2:18-19. What do you think is the difference between the words "belief" and "faith"? Why is it important for us to know the difference when we read Scripture?**

5. **Read James 2:20-24. Why do you think James chose to use Abraham as an example? Why is verse 22 so significant?**

6. **Read James 2:25-26. James uses the word "dead" [3x] and "useless" [1x] in this chapter to describe a non-saving faith. Why would he use such harsh words to describe a good thing like faith?**

7. **What may keep people from putting faith into action in our workplaces, neighborhoods, and other areas outside of the church?**

CHANGE QUESTIONS

1. **What is the evidence of your faith? How does your daily life show or prove your faith?**

2. **Where do you need to grow in your faith? Where do you need to show your faith through your actions?**

3. **Do you have a saving faith or is your faith useless? How will you prove your faith this week?**

PRAY FOR ONE-ANOTHER

[Spend some time praying with your Life Group. When asking for requests, try to keep the focus on personal praises/requests that relate to people in the group.]

PRAY FOR MISSIONS OF THE WEEK

Haitian Island Ministries

Steve & Terry Smith, WCC members

This organization operates medical programs providing free vitamins, medicine, and medical care and feeding programs which provide a daily meal for thousands of Haitian children each month. They also build schools and churches in some of the most remote areas of Haiti. Their medical program has served hundreds of thousands of Haitians. haitianislandministries.org

St. Louis Christian College

SLCC seeks to educate Christians and to graduate leaders who are equipped for service to God. They seek learners who are committed to Christ and highly motivated to serve God and the church; students who are capable of completing the academic rigors of a college education; adults who are willing to acquire both knowledge and skills through service and off-campus learning experiences; and men and women who are drawn from a diversity of geographic, ethnic, and socio-economic backgrounds. stlchristian.edu

DAILY DEVOTION [JAMES 2:14-26]

“14What good is it, my brothers and sisters, if someone claims to have faith but has no deeds? Can such faith save them? 15Suppose a brother or a sister is without clothes and daily food. 16If one of you says to them, “Go in peace; keep warm and well fed,” but does nothing about their physical needs, what good is it? 17In the same way, faith by itself, if it is not accompanied by action, is dead.

18But someone will say, “You have faith; I have deeds.”

Show me your faith without deeds, and I will show you my faith by my deeds. 19You believe that there is one God. Good! Even the demons believe that—and shudder.

20You foolish person, do you want evidence that faith without deeds is useless ? 21Was not our father Abraham considered righteous for what he did when he offered his son Isaac on the altar? 22You see that his faith and his actions were working together, and his faith was made complete by what he did. 23And the scripture was fulfilled that says, “Abraham believed God, and it was credited to him as righteousness,” and he was called God’s friend. 24You see that a person is considered righteous by what they do and not by faith alone.

25In the same way, was not even Rahab the prostitute considered righteous for what she did when she gave lodging to the spies and sent them off in a different direction? 26As the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without deeds is dead.”

DAY 1: James 2:14

- When have you made a bold claim that you could not back up? Did you suffer any consequences for that claim?

- What is the danger of claiming to have faith but never actually showing it with your actions? How can you avoid this?

DAY 2: James 2:15-17

- When have you helped someone who is in need? When has someone helped you when you were in need?

- Why do you think James chose to use this example? Have you ever had good intentions of living out your faith, but never followed through? What can you do today?

DAILY DEVOTION [JAMES 2:14-26]

DAY 3: **James 2:18-19**

- When have you seen someone's words not line up with their actions? Why do you think James insists on seeing evidence of someone's faith?

- How do you think the English word "believe" is different from the word "faith"? Why is it important for us to understand the difference?

DAY 4: **James 2:20-24**

- James used the words "dead" and "useless" to describe faith without works. Why does he use such harsh language for inauthentic faith?

- How does Abraham's example [Genesis 15] show what true faith should look like? How does it inspire you today?

DAY 5: **James 2:25-26**

- Rahab was a sinner, but she was still commended for her authentic faith. It was shown through her courageous actions [see Joshua 2]. What inspires you about her shout-out from James?

- Why do you think James keeps on using the word "dead" to describe inauthentic faith? What word would you use to describe your faith? What should your faith look like?

OVERVIEW OF JAMES:

WHY READ THIS BOOK?

If you're looking for practical ways to live as a Christian, you've come to the right book. James shows that it's possible to believe the right things, yet live the wrong way. This book will also show you how to turn right doctrine into right living.

WHO WROTE THIS BOOK?

No one knows for sure which James wrote this letter. Most believe the writer was James, Jesus' brother [Gal. 1:19].

TO WHOM WAS IT WRITTEN?

The twelve tribes [1:1], meaning either the people of Israel who had become believers in Christ, or the church in a symbolic sense [Gal. 6:16], including both Jewish and Gentile believers.

WHY WAS IT WRITTEN?

To warn believers of some habits they had developed that undermined the essence of what they believed—things such as favoritism, slander, pride, the misuse of wealth, and a lack of patience. Obedient living would increase their witness to those scattered among the nations [1:1].

WHEN WAS IT WRITTEN?

James may have been the first New Testament book to be written - perhaps between AD 40 and 50.

WHAT TO LOOK FOR IN JAMES?

This letter takes a no-nonsense approach to hypocrisy. James describes the evil of a tongue out of control, showing favoritism toward the rich, and boasting about plans for tomorrow. Don't look for pious platitudes here; expect a string of hard-hitting, specific, practical instructions to help you live an authentic Christian life.

—From the NIV Quest Study Bible [Zondervan, 2011]

So also
FAITH
by itself,
if it does not
have WORKS,
is dead.
~ James 2:17