

Faith: Getting It Right

The Faith Series

Discussion Questions

1. FOR FUN: What are words that are commonly misused (e.g., supposedly instead of supposedly)? Which of those incorrect uses are accepted by our culture?
2. How do people define “faith”? Why do you think people have the definitions they have?
3. How can one’s definition of faith not only be unhelpful but harmful?
4. Read James 2:14-26.
 - a. What is the problem that James is addressing with his listeners?
 - b. What is the artificial separation that James hears from some in v. 18a? Why is that a dangerous separation? How does James challenge people who say they “believe” but it’s only talk?
 - c. How does James use the demonic to chastise those who say you can have faith in Jesus without it impacting any part of your life?
 - d. Why does James conclude what he does in James 2:26?
5. Yancey said that, historically, theologians have spoken of the three different components of biblical faith: notitia, assensus and fiducia. In short, biblical faith has content to know (notitia), agreement with that content (assensus), and trust in that content (fiducia). Yancey phrased it this way: Biblical faith is a faith of the head, the heart, and the hands and feet.
 - a. Are there any of the three modern people miss concerning having saving faith? Remember, faith knows gospel content, asserts that content is true, and receives or trusts in that content personally.
 - b. Why should faith affect our will as well as our head and heart?

6. Theologian N.T. Wright wrote:

What the early Christians meant by “belief” included both believing that God had done certain things and believing in the God who had done them. This is not [merely] belief that God exists, though clearly that is involved, too, but loving, grateful trust...Indeed, the word the early Christians used for ‘faith’ can also mean “loyalty” or ‘allegiance.’ (Simply Christian, 207-208)

- a. Why are “loyalty” and “allegiance” good words for talking about faith in the gospel? Why can “trust” be a better term for moderns than merely the word “faith”?
 - b. What do these terms talk about in relation to our will and faith?
7. Why is it important to stress that faith isn’t a product of works but the other way around?
8. How does this conversation about faith reinforce our gospel identity as citizens?