

review it *(Revisit the weekly rituals and follow-up on the last gathering)*

- Look over the last session’s Action Step Journal and ask how it went. Share as honestly as you can. It’s not meant to cause shame or guilt, rather, a community of care.
- Try to recite last week’s memory verse.
- Try to recite the series memory verse, James 1:22.

hear it *(Slow down and hear the Word)*

Read James 5:19-20 aloud (twice if possible, using two different translations).

- ASK: What word, phrase, or image stands out to you and why?
- ASK: What does this passage teach about God?
- ASK: What does this passage teach about humanity?

check the mirror *(Help the group examine themselves honestly by asking questions)*

- **starting easy:**
 - What’s one place you go regularly where people actually know your name and something about your life?
 - What makes that place feel different from places where you’re mostly anonymous?
- **look at the book:**
 - **The sermon asserted a problem: church has become something we go to instead of something we are.**
 - How does the word “church” usually function in our vocabulary?
 - Do we talk about it more as a place we attend or a people we belong to?
 - Why do you think that shift has happened?
 - In your experience, what are the differences between attending church services and “living a life” with other believers during the week?

- James assumes believers know each other well enough to notice when someone wanders. What kinds of relationships would have to exist in a church for that to be possible today?
- What does this passage assume about the level of closeness between believers? Why would that kind of closeness matter when someone begins to wander from the truth?
 - Which of these three do you think is hardest for people today: being known, being supported, or being challenged? Why?

wisdom in action *(Apply wisdom principles to life situations.)*

- James describes someone “wandering from the truth.”
 - In practical everyday life, what might that wandering look like before it becomes obvious to everyone else?
 - Why do you think bringing someone back from wandering is described as something that “saves them from death and covers a multitude of sins”?
 - Jesus says people often prefer darkness rather than light (cf. John 3:19-21). Why do you think anonymity or secrecy can make it easier for sin to grow?
 - What are some ways living “in the light” with other believers can actually protect and strengthen our walk with Christ?
 - Why might transparency feel uncomfortable at first but become spiritually freeing over time?
- James says to confess sins to one another and pray for one another. Why do you think confession in community can bring healing that isolation cannot?
 - What role do trust and safety play in the kind of confession James is describing?
- How does bringing sin into the light weaken shame and strengthen our walk with Christ?

put it to work *(Move from talk to action)*

This week’s practice: **CONNECT.**

The church was never meant to be something we simply attend once a week. From the beginning, *it was a community where believers were known*, supported, and lovingly challenged so that no one had to follow Jesus alone.

- Where in your life are you currently experiencing real Christian community—and where might God be inviting you to step deeper into it?

weekly rituals

(Do these in whatever order—be sure to move through them)

- Weekly Memory Verse:
"...let him know that whoever brings back a sinner from his wandering will save his soul from death and will cover a multitude of sins." James 5:20

Action Step Journal: *Be sure to take some notes here.*

- Series memory verse:
"But be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves." James 1:22

pray

Pray that God would give each of us relationships in the church where we are genuinely known, lovingly supported, and honestly challenged!