

## FAITH + WORKS

### JAMES 2:14-26



#### OPENING

- Ask the group members how they have responded to the sermon this week. Then take prayer requests regarding their faith in action, and pray together.

#### SERMON REVIEW

- We don't work to be saved - but because we are saved, we work. Our daily life reflects our faith.
- James says that faith without works is dead! So what does a living faith look like?
- *It stays present.* You find yourselves in situations and conversations for a reason. Love people intentionally. Don't disconnect from the world; stay engaged in it!
- *It is obedient.* That word tends to make us uncomfortable, because of the idea that we'll need to do something that we don't want to do. So James points back to the obedience of Abraham, which trusted and followed the Lord to the point of his own son's death. Real faith responds to the Lord, no matter what the cost.
- *It is willing to take risks.* The most convenient thing for Rahab to do would have been to look the other way when the Israelites sought her help. Peter stepped out of a boat, into a stormy sea. There are moments in which faith doesn't seem to make sense, or seems dangerous, or will cause discomfort - yet leads us further into the will of God.
- *It is visible.* Living faith produces something! When your faith leads to good works, there is no question whether or not you follow after Jesus. What He has done in you overflows into your life as good deeds, and that changes the world.
- James isn't saying that it's too late; the time to live out your faith is now!

#### DISCUSSION

- Have one group member read James 2:14-18, and another Ephesians 2:8-10. What are the writers asserting about faith, work, and salvation?
- Based on what James is writing, is there a disconnect between faith and work? Is faith necessary, or should one be content to live a life of good works?
- James challenges the reader to "Show me your faith without deeds." Is that possible? In what ways do we try to demonstrate faith without good works?
- Even the demons know that God is one (James 2:19) and that Jesus is the Savior (Matthew 8:29, Luke 4:34), and they act in response (i.e., "shudder"). What does that say about a "faith" that acknowledges God but doesn't follow Him in deed?

- What effect do the references to Abraham and Rahab have on the text? As you look back on your own life, like James did at the lives of Abraham and Rahab, can you see your faith?
- “As the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without deeds is dead.” Having read and discussed the whole passage, conclude by summarizing why deedless faith is dead.

### CHALLENGE

- Pray for the courage to put your faith into action.
- Identify how God is asking you to be obedient, and obey. Think about the ways in which you need to trust God and act in faith, even if they’re difficult or uncomfortable.
- Continue reading, writing, and memorizing the book of James.

### PLAN AHEAD

- We’ll be getting into James 3 next Sunday! Study and reflect on the whole chapter, and pray for God to speak to our congregation through the text.