

Journey CHURCH

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Session 5 Leader Guide

Leader Notes:

FAITH WITHOUT WORKS

1. Faith without works is useless.
2. Faith without works cannot save.
3. Faith without works is ineffective.
4. Faith without works is dead.

The gospel saves us, sanctifies us, and holds us firm to the end.

James is not arguing that works must be added to faith but rather that genuine, biblical faith will inevitably be characterized by works.

Faith trusts God, and faith obeys God.

Works is a life of loving God and loving others.

Legitimate faith leads to an ongoing love of God and an ongoing love of others.

You have been blessed by God to live an openhanded life that shows you are not enslaved to those blessings but rather are grateful for them.

As we experience the grace and mercy of God, as we rest in that saving faith alone, our heart begins to be transformed and changed so that our love for God starts to translate into a love for people.

Intellectual assent to correct doctrine is not salvation.

Every "Thou shalt not" and every "Thou shalt" is about God inviting you into the deepest life possible.

It's desire that leads to discipline that determines destiny.

Discussion:

1. What effect does it have when you believe that God delights in you-that He not only loves you in a broad sense of the word but also specifically and affectionately likes you?
2. Why is delighting in the Lord a vital part of faith and works?

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3. How did James use the term faith? The term works?
4. How is keeping the law different from faith-based works of righteousness?
5. James didn't argue that we must add works to our faith. To add anything to our faith is to say the cross means nothing. What does it mean for the cross to be sufficient?
6. In the video Matt discussed the main point in this portion of James's letter by examining the four ideas that faith without works is useless, can't save, is ineffective, and is dead. How would you explain the main point in the video teaching?
7. Let's consider ways this sobering reality plays out personally in our lives. Read James 2:14-17. What are some statements we say that sound Christian without thinking or without acting on them?
8. On a scale of 1 to 10, 1 meaning you never do anything and 10 meaning you always do something, how often do you pray for people when you say you will? How often do you try to help meet a need?
9. Read James 2:18-26. Understanding this next point could literally save your soul. Especially if you've grown up in church, you might mistakenly think salvation is a matter of believing the right things about Jesus, like a code that unlocks the gates of heaven. Read the following statement. Intellectual assent to correct doctrine isn't salvation. What does the statement mean? How does it challenge the way you view Christianity? How does it affect the way you share the gospel?
10. What's your reaction to James's statement that even demons believe in God (see v. 19)? What do you think it means for demons to shudder? How does this reality convict us about the nature of saving faith and works?
11. James pointed to the lives of Abraham and Rahab as examples of people who did more than just believe and shudder but acted as the evidence of saving faith. How do the examples of Abraham and Rahab, who seemed to be polar opposites in every earthly way, encourage you in your faith?
12. What remaining questions or comments do you have about the video teaching or discussion? What was challenging, convicting, encouraging, or timely for your current circumstances?