

Small Group Discussion Guide — April 10, 2022

- Series: More than Words
 - Sermon: James - Live It!
 - Scripture: James 2: 14-22
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CONNECT

1. What stood out to you from the service this week?
2. Are you more likely to act without thinking or think without acting?

ENGAGE

1. Read James 2: 14-18.
 - What attitude or behavior is Paul calling out in verse 14? What might this look like in real life?
 - What is the relationship between faith and deeds, according to James?
 - In what way is faith without deeds “dead”? What does this mean?
2. Read verses 19-22.
 - What is the significance of James reminding us that we believe that there is one God?
 - What is the lesson from Abraham’s example? How was his faith put to the test? What does this say about the way our lifestyle should correspond to our professed faith?

APPLY

1. David talked about the idea of *integration* - that our words and deeds should match each other, revealing a heart that is undivided in devotion to Christ. When you think about the various circles in your life - work, friends, church, school, sports - think honestly about how integrated is your faith in Christ and your actions? What is some evidence of this? If there seems to be a broad disconnect, what might this mean, and how do you feel Christ leading you in this moment?
2. The Hebrew language is rich and uses many words that contain a “both/and” translation. For example, the word “shema” is best translated as “hear *and* obey.” The word “pistuo” means “believe *and* trust.” In this passage, James is making the point that faith *and* works are also forever linked. How does this challenge your traditional understanding of the word “faith”? What steps can you take to live out your faith, without falling to the temptation to do “false works” - things that might make you look good, but aren’t done from a heart of love, rooted in Christ?

PRAYER

Father in Heaven, You are perfectly consistent and whole in your being. Your character is perfectly aligned in Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. You have called us to live a life that is consistent with the faith we profess - a faith that is alive and results in good works. May the fruit of our lives be a result of Your love and Word at our core. In Jesus' name we pray, amen.

GOING DEEPER

This is Holy Week, the days between Jesus' humble entrance into Jerusalem and his crucifixion. As you go through this week, remember the crowds who cheered him on Sunday, only to jeer and scorn him on Friday. Consider how you either stand with Jesus or distance yourself from him in your various circles. Pray that God will help you love him with all your heart, soul, and strength, presenting a consistent and unified life which will function as a most effective witness for Christ.

SUPPORTING VERSES

Deuteronomy 6: 4-7

Matthew 7: 16-20

John 14: 15

James 2: 26

QUOTATIONS

"In crowds, even the most intelligent and civilized individuals regress to the stage of barbarians. This regression occurs through three psychological mechanisms: Submergence - loss of personality through anonymity in the crowd. Suggestibility - similar to a hypnotic state, and based on submergence. And Contagion - uncritical social influence of any passing sentiment or behavior, which is caused by suggestibility."

Gustav Le Bon

"But the good news is that anyone can meet with this Jesus ... and when people do, Jesus takes them right into the very heart of the Christian faith. It all then begins to make sense. Why? Because they themselves know in a personal way the One who is at the very center of it all — the very one around whom the rest of the Christian faith is built."

Peter Walker

"Whatever our position in life, if our lives and works are to be of the kingdom of God, we must not have human approval as a primary or even major aim. We must lovingly allow people to think whatever they will."

Dallas Williard