

F. REFLECTION

God instructs us to walk by faith in obedience to Him. Reflect on the incredible blessings when our faith and actions work together to complete our faith.

"Take up the shield of faith, with which you can extinguish all the flaming arrows of the evil one." Ephesians 6:16 (NIV)

"This is what the Lord says: "Cursed is the one who trusts in person, who draws strength from mere flesh and whose heart turns away from the Lord. That person will be like a bush in the wastelands; they will not see prosperity when it comes. They will dwell in the parched places of the desert, in a salt land where no one lives. But blessed is the one who trusts in the Lord, whose confidence is in Him. They will be like a tree planted by the water that sends out its roots by the stream. It does not fear when heat comes; its leaves are always green. It has no worries in a year of drought and never fails to bear fruit." Jeremiah 17:5-8 (NIV)

"We are confident of all this because of our great trust in God through Christ. It is not that we think we are qualified to do anything on our own. Our qualification comes from God." 2 Corinthians 3:4-5 (NLT)

"You have not seen Christ, but still you love Him. You cannot see Him now, but you believe in Him. So you are filled with a joy that cannot be explained, a joy full of glory. And you are receiving the goal of your faith—the salvation of your souls." 1 Peter 1:8-9 (NCV)

"Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways submit to Him, and He will make your paths straight." Proverbs 3:5-6 (NIV)

"For we have heard the Good News, just as they did. They heard the message, but it did them no good because when they heard it, they did not accept it with faith." Hebrews 4:2 (GN)



HOW TO HAVE STRONG FAITH THAT REALLY WORKS JAMES: PRACTICAL GRACE-FILLED LIVING Series – Part 4 of 10 James 2:14-26 | Week of May 29, 2022 | Pastor Mike Prah

SERMON OVERVIEW:

In this study, we will discuss How To have Strong Faith That Really Works. Faith is not just something you SAY, not just something you FEEL, not just something you THINK, and more than just something you BELIEVE. The Apostle James teaches that a strong, real faith is also something you DO. Our faith and actions work together to make our faith complete.

A. OPEN YOUR SESSION WITH PRAYER

B. ICE BREAKER: Take some time to share what is going on in your life, testimonies, and upcoming events. Recognize birthdays, anniversaries, or special occasions of your group members. Pick 1 item from the Icebreaker list to discuss to know each other better.

C. BIBLE DISCUSSION: PICK A FEW POINTS FROM EACH SECTION TO DISCUSS SECTION 1: REVIEWING SERMON MESSAGE

- (a). What fresh insight did you learn from the sermon? OR
- (b). What Bible verse cited in the message stands out to you the most? Why?

SECTION 2: PERSONALIZING SERMON MESSAGE

- (a). What did you hear that encouraged or reassured you?
- (b). How did the message increase your love for God or Jesus Christ?

SECTION 3: ENCOURAGING APPLICATION OF THE SERMON

- (a). If we diligently apply the message, what effect would it have on your personal lives and walk with Christ?

D: DIGGING DEEPER (TAKE TURNS READING THE SCRIPTURES AND THEN DISCUSS THE QUESTIONS)

1. REAL FAITH IS MORE THAN SOMETHING YOU SAY

JAMES: "What good is it if you SAY you have faith but don't show it by your actions? Can that kind of faith save anyone?" James 2:14 (NLT)

JESUS: "Yes, just as you can identify a tree by its fruit, so you can identify people by their actions. "Not everyone who calls out to me, 'Lord! Lord!' will enter the Kingdom of Heaven. Only those who actually do the will of my Father in heaven will enter. On judgment day, many will say to me, 'Lord! Lord! We prophesied in your name and cast out demons in your name and performed many miracles in your name.' But I will reply, 'I never knew you. Get away from me, you who break God's laws'" Matthew 7:20-23 (NLT)

- In Matthew 7:20-23, Jesus says, "you can identify people by their actions." Briefly share some actions that identify a person as a Christ-believer or an unbeliever?
- Both the Apostle James and Jesus teach that it does you no good if you say you have faith by do not prove it in your actions. How does this teaching encourage you to live out your faith publically?

2. REAL FAITH IS MORE THAN SOMETHING YOU FEEL

"Suppose you see a brother or sister who has no food or clothing, and you say, "Good-bye and have a good day; stay warm and eat well"—but then you don't give that person any food or clothing. What good does that do? James 2:15-16 (NLT)

"If anyone has material possessions and sees a brother or sister in need but has no pity on them, how can the love of God be in that person?" 1 John 3:17 (NIV)

- According to the above Scriptures, what does a strong, living faith look like?
- Pastor Mike mentioned that genuine faith is more than sympathy and feeling. A real believer gives assistance, takes the initiative, and acts on a need. When we become a part of God's family, God wants us to get involved with people and care about other believers. What does this teaching mean to you?

3. REAL FAITH IS MORE THAN SOMETHING YOU THINK

JAMES: "Now someone may argue, "Some people have faith; others have good deeds." But I say, "How can you SHOW ME your faith if you don't have good deeds? I will SHOW YOU my faith by my good deeds." James 2:18 (NLT)

PAUL: "Anyone who belongs to Christ has become a new person. The old life is gone; a new life has begun!" 2 Corinthians 5:17 (NLT)

- According to James and Paul, what is the evidence that you are truly a Christ-believer?
- Real faith is visible. If you claim to be a Christian, people will be able to see it by looking at your lifestyle. You can't see faith, but you can see the results. What proof (new life) do you see in your lifestyle as evidence of your genuine faith in Christ?

4. REAL FAITH IS MORE THAN SOMETHING YOU BELIEVE

"You believe that there is one God. Good for you! Even the demons believe this, and they tremble in terror" James 2:19 (NLT)

- Pastor Mike mentioned that the main point here is even though the devil and his demons believe in God, they are not obedient to God, so their belief does not accompany good deeds; therefore, their belief in God is useless. How does this message relate to a person who may know about God but lives without submission to God and disobedience?

- What do you think the demons believe about God that makes them tremble in terror?

5. REAL FAITH IS SOMETHING YOU DO

"Can't you see that faith without good deeds is useless? 21 Don't you remember that our ancestor Abraham was shown to be right with God by his actions when he offered his son Isaac on the altar? 22 You see, HIS FAITH AND HIS ACTIONS WORKED TOGETHER. His ACTIONS made his faith complete. 23 And so it happened just as the Scriptures say: "Abraham believed God, and God counted him as righteous because of his faith." He was even called the friend of God. 24 So you see, we are shown to be right with God by what we do, not by faith alone." James 2:20-24 (NLT)

- According to verse 22, how do we make our faith complete (stronger)?
- What does verse 24 say to you?

"Stay here with the donkey," Abraham told the servants. "The boy and I will travel a little farther. We will worship there, and then we will come right back." Genesis 22:5 (NLT)

- Abraham told the servants, "The boy and I will come right back," even though he was going to sacrifice his son? How does Abraham's actions based on his faith encourage us to trust God and move forward even when we do not understand everything

"For it is BY GRACE you have been saved THROUGH FAITH ... FOR a life of GOOD WORKS which God has already prepared for us to do." Ephesians 2:8-10 (GN)

- God saved us by His grace because we trusted in Him so that we would live a life of good works that He has prepared for us to do. What does this verse mean to you?

E. PRAYER POINTS

1. Pray for each LifeGroup member to respond positively to this message and follow through on the application. Pray for a divine, positive impact as God's people apply this Word to everyday living.
2. Ask for individual prayer requests and pray for your group's individual needs.
3. Closing Prayer

PLEASE REACH OUT TO ANYONE WHO DID NOT MAKE IT TO YOUR LIFE GROUP MEETING & CHECK ON ANYONE SICK OR IN NEED IN YOUR GROUP.