



DISCUSSION GUIDE

THIS WEEK: JAMES 2 – “Symptoms of a Dying Faith”

GETTING STARTED

What is one thing you are thankful for this week and what is one thing we can pray for you this week?

Remind each other of our simple expectations for meeting together.

In what ways may we think one person is more important than another person?

In what way are ‘thoughts and prayers’ an inadequate response to those that are in real need? In what way does this relate to James teaching that, ‘faith without works is dead’? In what ways are prayers our best or only response?

QUICK REACTIONS

How would you summarize/paraphrase the message in your own words?

What point/idea resonated most with you? Why?

Did you disagree with something said, or what do you think should have been added or expanded on?

QUESTIONS FROM THE MESSAGE

1. What password would you use to help you remember that “there will be no mercy for those who have not shown mercy to others? Or a password to remember to integrate your faith with action? Some examples Dave shared...

Forgive@h1m

Forgive@d@d

Forgive@m0m

Faith@w0rk

LoveMy3n3m13s

2. Why is favoritism and discrimination such a big deal to James?

3. In what way does James make a larger point by saying “even the demons believe this, and they tremble in terror?”

4. How does the example of Abraham and Rahab reinforce James point that faith without works is dead?

EXPLORE THE PASSAGE [James 2]

(Yes, these questions can seem silly, however good discussion and interpretation of the Bible begins with having a proper understanding of the basic facts; who, what, when, and where in the text.) Work through this quickly, the answers are fairly obvious.

What practical example did James use to illustrate how favoritism was practiced in the church? (2:1-4)

What has God promised to the poor of this world? (2:5)

What do rich people have a history of doing to people in the church? (2:6-7)

What is the royal law found in Scripture? (2:8)

What does practicing favoritism do to a person who is trying to keep the law? (2:9)

What does a person have to do to be considered a lawbreaker? (2:10-11)
By what standards should a person speak and act? (2:12)
What promise is made to people who judge without mercy? (2:13)
Why should we be merciful? (2:13)
What is the relationship between faith and actions? (2:14)
What illustration did James use to explain how real faith affects a person's actions? (2:15-17)
How did James describe faith that has no accompanying actions? (2:17)
What is wrong with having faith without actions? (2:18-26)
What do the demons believe about God? How does it affect them? (2:19)
What did Abraham do to show his faith? (2:21-23)
What made Abraham righteous? (2:23)
What did Rahab do? (2:25)
How are faith and actions like the body and the spirit? (2:26)

QUESTIONS THAT HELP US UNDERSTAND THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE TEXT

In what ways have you been a victim of favoritism or prejudice?
How have you shown favoritism or prejudice toward other people?
Why do we often treat rich people as more important than poor people?
How do we use physical appearance, job status, and athletic ability to show favoritism toward people?
*In what practical ways can we show genuine love to people of different races, cultures, and economic standing?
Why is favoritism or prejudice often overlooked as a sin?
Why would God condemn us as lawbreakers if our sins are only "minor" ones, such as prejudice?
How is being a Christian supposed to change the way we live?
What can a Christian do to help the people around him or her?
What is one way to tell if a person has a real, living faith?
What is difficult about applying what we hear in Scripture to our everyday lives?
In what area do you need to integrate your faith with action?
What are some of the biblical commands which are hard for you to live out?
If God has forgiven us and promised us eternal life, what motivation do we have to live in obedience to Him today?

APPLY THE PASSAGE

What do we learn about God and about ourselves in this passage?
What may God be asking you to change, do differently, repent of, pray about as a result of engaging with this passage?
How can we pray for each other?