

COMMUNITY GROUP GUIDE

Mirrors: The Book of James - Part 4

Helium, Faith, and Trust Falls: Why James Thinks Talk is Cheap

INTRODUCTION

This weekend we looked at a passage in James talking about the difference between true faith and false faith. James says that simply “believing” in Jesus does not mean that you have true faith. Even the demons believe in Jesus. Rather, true faith is revealed by good works. Christians are not saved by their works, but if someone is truly a follower of Jesus Christ, their faith will be revealed by their good works.

OPENING QUESTIONS

1. Was there anything that you heard that you had never heard before?
2. When you hear the word “faith” what comes to mind?

INVESTIGATING SCRIPTURE

A good way to study the Bible is by using three steps: Observation, Interpretation, and Application. We want to observe the passage first to get an idea of what is happening. Then we interpret the meaning of the passage so that we can apply it to our lives. The following questions will follow this pattern as we look through this Biblical passage.

Scripture: Read James 2:14-26 and Matthew 25:31-46

Observation

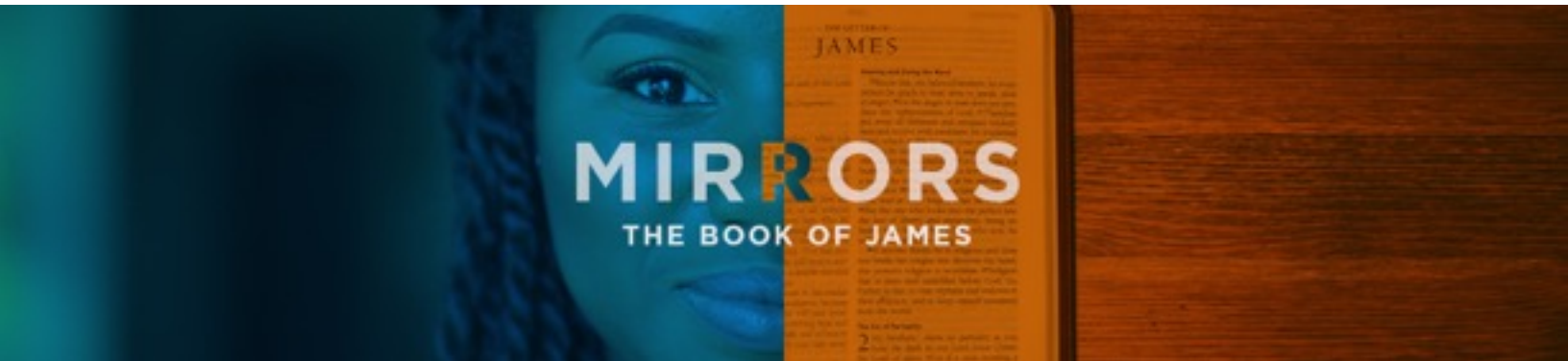
1. How does James relate your faith to your works in this passage?
2. What examples does James use to show that faith without works is dead?
3. What examples does James point to to show what true faith looks like?

Interpretation

1. How can intellectual belief in Jesus still not be enough for salvation?
2. In Matthew 25, what does Jesus use as the ultimate test of your faith when everyone is gathered before Him?
3. Why does Jesus say that it is necessary to care for the poor and the needy?
4. How does James 2:14-26 and Jesus' words in Matthew 25 apply to our southern "Christian" culture?

Application

1. In what ways have you "accepted Jesus into your heart" without accepting Him into your lifestyle?
2. What are some active steps you could take to care for the "least of these?"



Homework

James' message is about checking our hearts and then realign them towards God and His purposes. Then getting to the work God has created us for. For our homework this week, we are challenging you to do **one act of selfless love**. Here are a few ideas:

1. Serve at Mercy Church. You can sign-up online. Tear down team. Set-up team.
2. Volunteer with one of our partner organizations.

PRAYER

Prayer is an essential component of your life as a follower of Christ, and an integral part of any healthy church body. Divide up into groups of 2-3 people and use the following points to guide you through a time of prayer together.

Psalm 18:31-35 - "For who is God, but the Lord? And who is a rock, except our God?— the God who equipped me with strength and made my way blameless. He made my feet like the feet of a deer and set me secure on the heights. He trains my hands for war, so that my arms can bend a bow of bronze. You have given me the shield of your salvation, and your right hand supported me, and your gentleness made me great."

This is a Psalm where King David is reflecting on all the difficult times he has faced and how the Lord has been his strength. Notice that David isn't saying that God made his way easy, but he is saying that God was with him every step of the way. Stepping out in faith can be challenging and sometimes difficult. However, the good news is God is our strength. With this hope in mind pray for:

1. Pray for true faith in the people of Mercy Church.
2. Pray for the people of Mercy Church to be more bold in preaching the Gospel to the people God has put in their lives.
3. Pray for the upcoming short term mission trips.