

LIFE GROUP DISCUSSION
REAL FAITH
James 2:14-26

GETTING STARTED: Open with prayer. Take a minute to catch up on everyone's week.

MAIN POINT: Faith that does not show itself through good deeds is no faith at all.

1. When was the last time someone went out of his/her way to do something good for you? What did that act of service mean to you?
2. Read James 2:14-17. If you were 100 miles from home with no money, no credit cards, no friends, no cell phone, no transportation, and no place to stay, what would you do to survive and make it home? Would faith alone get you home? What's wrong with having faith without works?
3. Read James 2:18 & Romans 3:28. Does James contradict Paul when he writes "man is justified (saved) by faith without the deeds (works) of the law"? In your own words, explain the meaning of James 2:18. In what ways should the lifestyle of a Christian verify his or her faith?
4. *"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."* Eph. 2:8-10 (GN)

Chronology is important when it comes to FAITH and WORKS. Paul uses three prepositions to explain the sequence in the verse above. What are the three steps?

5. Read James 2:19. What do the demons believe about God? Share why real faith is more than just saying "I believe in God." In what ways have you witnessed this same superficial consumer version of Christianity invade our culture? In your own words, explain how our works, our behavior, our actions, reveal what we truly believe?
6. Read James 2:20-26. What are some specific ways to tell if a person has a real, living faith? Try to think of more than one example.
7. Which is easier for you: talking about your faith with others or demonstrating your love toward them? How would you answer this if the other person was:
 - a) A non-believing family member
 - b) A close friend who is a Christ follower
 - c) A boisterous complaining person behind you on a long checkout line
 - d) A member of a club or group you belong to who likes to mock "religious" people
 - e) Someone of a radically non-Christian faith (Hindu, Buddhist, new age, etc.)
8. Close in prayer for one another.