



Week 4 Overview

In Our Works
James 2:14–26

Opening Time to Connect

With Labor Day, most groups were off last week. With this in mind, be intentional with your opening time to connect as it has been two weeks since you've been together. Use this time to cultivate relationships, build trust, model empathy and look for ways to encourage one another as you share your lives.

Discussion on James

Rather than just being hearers of the Word (or talkers of the Word), we want to be doers of the Word. Instead, of filling your time talking about James, use half of your time in reflection to *consider how your works from the last week reveal your faith.*

Think about how you can create an environment where this exercise is comfortable and clear for people to do on their own.

Breakout and Application

Use breakout as an opportunity to follow up with the question, *"How do your works from this last week reveal your faith?"*

It might be helpful to ask your group members if they are typically *harsh* on themselves or if they tend to be too *easy*.

Ask the group to share one positive and negative example:

What's one example from this week where you lived out your faith?

What's an example where you failed to live out your faith?

Read

Get a running start by reading James 2:1–13 as a group.

James makes it clear that *mercy triumphs over judgement*. Rather than casting judgment on others, we are called to evaluate ourselves by reflecting on our own lives and faith.

James calls us to evaluate our faith as we consider our works (2:14–26) and words (3:1–12). Read James 2:14–26 as a group.

"What stands out in this passage? What are your observations?"

Talk

Do not let this become a theological discussion focused on the doctrine of *justification* by works versus faith. Be careful not to end up doing exactly what the text says not to do—*merely talking about faith and not actually living out your faith and thus becoming hearers only and not doers of the Word.*

Think

The Christian life is about coming to Christ and *progressively growing, changing and persevering* to become more like Christ.

Ask the group to take 10 minutes to quietly reflect on their actions from this last week. Here the goal is to carve out time to evaluate yourself and *consider how your works reveal your faith*. Change happens by the Spirit of God and Word of God, but rarely do we slow down to allow space for God to work.

"It's impossible to change if we don't carefully consider our works. What was it like to think about your actions from this week and what does this reveal about your faith? This is less about sharing your actions and more about what you're learning about yourself."