

James – Active Faith
Jonathan Cleveland
James 2:14-26
October 4, 2020

Reflection & Discussion Questions

Sometimes we can overthink our faith

James is a primer on how we can start living our faith and stop overthinking it.

- *Do you tend towards overthinking – in faith or otherwise?
- *How does overthinking tend to affect faith?

Grace isn't opposed to effort...just earning

James is contrasting broken or dead faith with healthy faith
Read and discuss James 2:14-17(ESV)

14 What good is it, my brothers, if someone says he has faith but does not have works? Can that faith save him? 15 If a brother or sister is poorly clothed and lacking in daily food, 16 and one of you says to them, "Go in peace, be warmed and filled," without giving them the things needed for the body, what good is that? 17 So also faith by itself, if it does not have works, is dead.

- *How does our understanding shift in light of the fact that the sozo word – here translated as 'saved', connotes 'restored'?
- *What examples can you think of that illustrate an empty faith?
- *How have you been confused by the interplay between faith and works?

Faith is the thing that informs how we live

Allow what you believe about Jesus to disrupt and affect everything about the way you act
Read and discuss James 2:18-26(ESV)

18 But someone will say, "You have faith and I have works." Show me your faith apart from your works, and I will show you my faith by my works. 19 You believe that God is one; you do well. Even the demons believe—and shudder! 20 Do you want to be shown, you foolish person, that faith apart from works is useless? 21 Was not Abraham our father justified by works when he offered up his son Isaac on the altar? 22 You see that faith was active along with his works, and faith was completed by his works; 23 and the Scripture was fulfilled that says, "Abraham believed God, and it was counted to him as righteousness"—and he was called a friend of God. 24 You see that a person is justified by works and not by faith alone. 25 And in the same way was not also Rahab the prostitute justified by works when she received the messengers and sent them out by another way? 26 For as the body apart from the spirit is dead, so also faith apart from works is dead.

- *What does this passage show us about Abraham and Rahab's faith?
- *What is the connection between what we think is true and how we act it out?
- *Is it possible to have a real faith that changes nothing about us? Why or why not?
- *When is a time that the little faith that you had was put into action?

As believers, we have a true friendship with God

True friendships thrive when there is consistency between what is said and what is done.

*What would it look like to be a true friend to him today?

*How does our friendship with God flow from his perfect law? (Matt. 22:37-40)

*What is he trying to awaken in you that longs to be affected by God?

Join us as we read through the book of James this fall as a church

[James Reading Plan](#)

October 4th – 10th

James 1:1 – 2:26

Visual reflection (Visio Divina)* [Faith](#) by C. Michael Dudash

Song for reflection [What a Friend](#) by Josh Garrels

*Visio divina – a thoughtful and slow way of contemplating a visual prompt like a piece of art, photograph or image and inviting God to speak to you through it. First, focus on the detail that your eyes are drawn to right away – keep focus there and pay attention to what thoughts and emotions you are having. Then, look at the entire image and consider it as a whole, being aware of thoughts, questions and emotions it provokes. End in silence and prayer, considering your experience and anything you feel called to respond to.