

Transition:

Can faith be genuine if it doesn't lead to action? James confronts us with the hard truth that real faith must show up in how we live, especially in how we treat others. In a world that values status and appearance, are we showing favoritism, or are we loving others the way Jesus does?

Tell the story:

Tell the story (with passion!) the best as you can, don't stop and teach, try not to make points, just tell the story. Perhaps leave some parts out or make a mistake, just to see if your group catches it!

Rebuild the story:

Chronologically rebuild the story by asking questions. Have the group look for what was added or left out by looking in their Bibles and going back over the story. Then have someone else tell the story the best they can – just like you modeled the first time.

Discussion Questions:

1. Can faith be real if it doesn't lead to action?
2. How do you respond to people who are different from you, especially those with less status or influence?

Fundamental:

As believers, we are instructed not to show favoritism, especially toward the rich over the poor. To show partiality is to act in a way that doesn't reflect God's heart. Loving your neighbor as yourself fulfills God's law. Showing favoritism breaks that law, and those who show no mercy will be judged without mercy. James reminds us that belief is not enough—genuine faith is proven through action. Even demons believe in God, but their belief lacks obedience. James gives us examples like Abraham and Rahab to show that true faith always results in obedience and works.

1. Take a moment to look up what Abraham (Genesis 22) and Rahab (Joshua 2) did—why do you think James uses their stories as examples of faith in action, and what do their lives teach us about what genuine faith looks like today?
2. James calls “Love your neighbor as yourself” the royal law—why do you think he refers to it that way, and how should seeing it as “royal” change the way we prioritize love in our daily lives?
3. If genuine faith leads to action, what kinds of changes would you expect to see in the way someone lives, loves, and serves others?

Homework/Challenge:

1. Ask God to show you one way you can put your faith into action this week, then do it.
2. Reflect: Is there anyone you've shown favoritism toward or ignored? Try to take steps to make it right.

Discipleship Tip:

Take time as a group to brainstorm practical ways you can live out the teachings of James 2—serve together, meet a need, or support someone, so your faith is not just spoken, but seen in action

Prayer: Lord, help us to see others the way You see them, without favoritism, without judgment, but with love. Teach us to love our neighbors as ourselves and to live out a faith that reflects Your heart. Amen.