

## Sermon Discussion Guide- Week of October 24, 2021

### Let's Get Serious: Becoming a World Christian-

#### How to have a Dead Faith, James 2:14-26

Pastor Johnson- 8:30 & 10:30 Contemporary, Pastor Hall- 10:30 Traditional

### Getting Started- Life Updates, Prayer Requests & Opening Question (15 min)

- Anything to share about personal events or faith experiences since you last met?
- Are there joys or concerns that you would like to share with the group for the closing prayer time or for group members to hold in prayer during the week? (please note them below for later)
  
- **Opening Discussion Question-** What memories stand out to you as a child or youth of doing practical deeds of helping others, either through the church or outside of the church?

### Review the Sermon (15 min)

Please read aloud the scriptures from this week's sermon message and then discuss the questions which follow as time allows. There are more questions than you will have time for, so it is ok to be selective.

#### James 2:14-26

**<sup>14</sup> What good is it, my brothers and sisters, if someone claims to have faith but has no deeds? Can such faith save them? <sup>15</sup> Suppose a brother or a sister is without clothes and daily food. <sup>16</sup> If one of you says to them, "Go in peace; keep warm and well fed," but does nothing about their physical needs, what good is it? <sup>17</sup> In the same way, faith by itself, if it is not accompanied by action, is dead. <sup>18</sup> But someone will say, "You have faith; I have deeds." Show me your faith without deeds, and I will show you my faith by my deeds. <sup>19</sup> You believe that there is one God. Good! Even the demons believe that—and shudder. <sup>20</sup> You foolish person, do you want evidence that faith without deeds is useless?**

**<sup>21</sup> Was not our father Abraham considered righteous for what he did when he offered his son Isaac on the altar? <sup>22</sup> You see that his faith and his actions were working together, and his faith was made complete by what he did. <sup>23</sup> And the scripture was fulfilled that says, "Abraham believed God, and it was credited to him as righteousness," and he was called God's friend. <sup>24</sup> You see that a person is considered righteous by what they do and not by faith alone. <sup>25</sup> In the same way, was not even Rahab the prostitute considered righteous for what she did when she gave lodging to the spies and sent them off in a different direction? <sup>26</sup> As the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without deeds is dead.**

1. If you had to give a one-minute summary of the sermon message this week, what would you say?
2. How do verses 14-18 lead you to define the word "faith?"

3. How is the nature of faith emphasized through repetition in verses 14, 20 and 26? Why would James offer such emphasis like this?
4. Why would Martin Luther, the leader of the protestant reformation movement, take issue with the book of James as being too works oriented?
5. How are Abraham and Rahab from the Old Testament good reference points for what real faith is?

### **Other Related Readings (10 min)**

1. Would a volunteer please read aloud Luke 3:7-14.
2. How is what John the Baptist calls “fruit in keeping with repentance” (3:8) similar to what James calls “works” or “deeds?”
3. How does John describe the consequences of faith without works or trees that don’t produce fruit?
4. How do the practical examples of Faith at Work that John provides help us understand what could be considered “fruit” or “deeds” in our own lives (vs 11-14)?
5. What other examples of fruit or deeds of faith could you share with the group?

### **Personalizing and Applying The Message (10 min)**

1. As you reflect upon the sermon and the scripture readings above, what are points of encouragement or challenge for you personally?
2. How does real faith not just engage the head, but the heart and hands as well?
3. How or why is it something we need to do together, not just individually?
4. What Methodist ministries are you aware of (either historic or modern) that embrace caring for the needs of the whole person (verses 15-16)?
5. Which of Pastor Temple’s summary phrases below might you adopt for repeated reflection this week?
  - Words unsupported are Easily Retorted
  - Love Unexpressed Will Never Pass the Test
  - Faith Unapplied is Faith Denied
6. What do you believe are the most pressing human needs in our world today that you believe that Christians or the Church should meet? Are there any steps that we can take this week to offer support in this area?

### **Witness and Closing (10 minutes)**

- To help welcome families in the community into the life of our church, Christ Church is offering a Trunk-or-Treat event Saturday from 10am to noon. Would you or the group be willing to sponsor a decorated car trunk and provide candy to kids?
  - To register a trunk see - <https://christchurchsl.org/event/trunk-or-treat-2/>
- A volunteer may conclude by leading the group in prayer about the joys and concerns shared earlier in the meeting