

## A #Hack4Faith Discussion-based Study for Groups and/or Individual Enrichment

### The Letter of James

*"Let perseverance finish its work so that you may be mature and complete lacking nothing." James 1:4*

#### Discussion Four: **Genuine in Actions**, James 2:14-26.

**Key Phrase:** *"...you see that faith was active together with his works, and by works, faith was made complete..." James 2:22*

##### 1. Discussion Scenario:

- a. There are many cliches that we hear growing up from parents, teachers, coaches, etc. like, "walk the talk," "practice what you preach," and "actions speak louder than words." The guidance here is that what we do, that is, what others see, is fully aligned with the words they hear us saying. A correlation to this wise guidance from a spiritual perspective is "faith without works (actions) is dead" which James teaches. As believers, how do we show the genuineness of our faith through our actions?

##### 2. The Call to Couple "Faith and Works (Actions)":

- a. Framing the issue of "faith and works" for believers.
  - i. Read James 2:14-19, [James 2:14-19 CSB - Faith and Works - What good is it, my - Bible Gateway](#).
    1. Jot down a few notes recording your initial thoughts/takeaways from this passage.
    2. List any questions that come to mind that you'd like to discuss with the group.
- b. Learning from past examples – the coupling of "faith and works."
  - i. Read James 2:20-26, [James 2:20-26 CSB - Senseless person! Are you willing to - Bible Gateway](#).
    1. Jot down a few notes recording your initial thoughts/takeaways from this passage.
    2. List any questions that come to mind that you'd like to discuss with the group.

##### 3. Digging in - Building a Scriptural Perspective on Being Genuine in Works/Actions:

- a. A quick look at the Old Testament examples:

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- i. Abraham, [Genesis 22:1-19 CSB - The Sacrifice of Isaac - After these - Bible Gateway](#)
    - 1. What are your observations of Abraham's faith?
  - ii. Rahab, [Joshua 2 CSB - Spies Sent to Jericho - Joshua son of - Bible Gateway](#)
    - 1. What are your observations of Rahab's faith?
  - iii. Why might James have chosen these two from the Old Testament writings?
- b. Faith vs Works/Actions – The teaching of Paul vs James
  - i. Paul
    - 1. Romans 3:21-31, [Romans 3:21-31 CSB - The Righteousness of God through Faith - Bible Gateway](#)
    - 2. Galatians 2:16, [Galatians 2:15-21 CSB - We are Jews by birth and not "Gentile - Bible Gateway](#)
  - ii. What do you see here? Might there be a conflict in what Paul is teaching and what James is teaching about faith and works? Your thoughts?
- c. The New Testament:
  - i. John the Baptist, the last Old Testament prophet, his mission, to identify the Messiah.
    - 1. Matthew 3:1-12, but focus on vs 8, [Matthew 3:1-12 CSB - The Herald of the Messiah - In those - Bible Gateway](#)
      - a. What is John the Baptist's "litmus test" for those that truly repent?
  - ii. Jesus
    - 1. Matthew 5:13-14, [Matthew 5:13-14 CSB - Believers Are Salt and Light - "You - Bible Gateway](#)
    - 2. Matthew 7:15-21, [Matthew 7:15-21 CSB - "Be on your guard against false - Bible Gateway](#)
    - 3. How is James' teaching consistent with Jesus' teaching regarding faith and actions?

#### 4. Making it Real – Faith with Shoes On:

- a. In light of all the scriptures above, think through two metaphors:
  - i. Faith as the "currency" of the Kingdom of God and we have the choice in how we "invest" it.
    - 1. Think about the role of currency across the globe. Think about the role of currency in an individual's life.
      - a. What's the importance of currency in any socio-economic structure?
      - b. If you could look into someone's investments, what might you learn about them?
    - 2. With these thoughts in mind, how is faith like a "currency" in our spiritual walk?

- ii. Think about Faith as the “boat/ship/kayak/water-skipper” and the “wake” that it leaves behind. What does the wake reveal about the floating object?
- b. What practical ways can we align our faith and actions?

**5. Bringing it home:**

- a. What are your key takeaways from this study/discussion? List up to 3 and be prepared to share at least one.
  - i.
  - ii.
  - iii.
- b. Being “genuine in actions” -- what two actions can you take this week?
  - i.
  - ii.
- c. Write a short prayer to your Lord Jesus Christ regarding being genuine in faith and actions in your life.

**Acknowledgement:** Some of the content in this study was inspired by William Barclay (1976). *The Daily Study Bible Series, Revised Edition, The Letter of James and Peter*. The Westminster Press.