

faith that works

A Study in James

JULY

**FEARLESS
FOLLOWER**

FAITH THAT WORKS

The book of James provides wisdom for several areas of life and our relationship with Jesus. James challenges us to practice our faith in tangible and active ways!

HOW TO USE THIS STUDY GUIDE:

We've outlined the book of James to follow along with our weekly teachings. We've also selected passages that align thematically with James or are in reference to something the author notes. Follow along with these daily readings and our Bible Study Method to grow deeper in your understanding of God's word and your relationship with Jesus! ***This Guide works best with your STUDY BIBLE and a JOURNAL.***

FEARLESS WORD OF THE DAY:

This series guide follows our Fearless Word of the Day Bible Reading Plan. You can view the plan online and hear thoughts from our Fearless Leaders at fearlessfollower.org/wordoftheday

BIBLE STUDY METHOD:

As you read, keep this in mind:

Studying Scripture can feel like a daunting task. This is where a simple practice in going through a Bible passage can be tremendously helpful. The ultimate goal for interacting with Scripture is not only to read it, but to also to understand it and apply it. *It's not just about getting into God's Word, it's about God's Word getting into you.* Here is a simple method we recommend.

WHAT IT SAYS

After you have read the passage, pray for guidance and paraphrase it. As you think of different ways to put into words what you've read, the Holy Spirit will begin to guide you to a deeper understanding.

WHAT IT MEANS

Now dig deep and uncover the full meaning of the text. Go through the passage slowly and examine specific words (words you don't understand or intrigue you). Ask specific questions of the text (Why did Jesus say that? Who is the audience this was originally written to?) A Study Bible (Bible with commentary) or a study guide (like we are providing here) will help.

WHAT I'LL DO

This is probably the most important (though difficult) part of your study. Ask God to give you specific applications (i.e. something you are going to do today, a new thought you are going to focus on throughout the day, a prayer you are going to pray now and then before bedtime).

Learn more about studying the Bible: fearlessfollower.org/howtostudythebible

Download this as a PDF and use it with your smart device - go to fearlessfollower.org/wordoftheday and upload the guide using adobe reader or another notetaking app on your device.

FAITH THAT WORKS WEEK 5



Fearless Word Of The Day Schedule:
fearlessfollower.org/wordoftheday

MONDAY (JUNE 28) **WHAT IT SAYS**

Turn to James 2: 14-15

In the space below write the passage in your own words:

WHAT IT MEANS

James uses the term “faith” differently here from the way Paul does, but neither writer would disagree with the other’s point: genuine faith is a reality on which one stakes one’s life, not merely passive assent to a doctrine. - NIV Cultural Backgrounds Study Bible

In the space below write what you’ve learned about this passage and what it means.

WHAT I WILL DO

Write two action steps for today in the space below:

- 1.
- 2.

TUESDAY (JUNE 29) **WHAT IT SAYS**

Turn to James 2: 16-17

In the space below write the passage in your own words:

WHAT IT MEANS

A Jewish farewell blessing; but Jewish people were expected to show hospitality to other Jewish people in need. They held Abraham as the ultimate example of good hospitality (cf. vv. 21–23). “Keep warm” alludes to how cold the homeless could become, in Judea relevant especially in Jerusalem and the Judean hill country. Teachers sometimes used absurd examples like this one to point out where faulty thinking can lead. - NIV Cultural Backgrounds Study Bible

In the space below write what you’ve learned about this passage and what it means.

WHAT I WILL DO

Write two action steps for today in the space below:

- 1.
- 2.

WEDNESDAY (JUNE 30) **WHAT IT SAYS**

Turn to Hebrews 11: 6-7

In the space below write the passage in your own words:

WHAT IT MEANS

Many early Jewish stories honored Noah. (Later rabbis, emphasizing that most of Noah's descendants were Gentiles, preferred to transfer such stories to Moses.) Jewish teachers sometimes noted that the righteous choices of the righteous would discredit the excuses of the wicked on the day of judgment. - NIV Cultural Backgrounds Study Bible

In the space below write what you've learned about this passage and what it means.

WHAT I WILL DO

Write two action steps for today in the space below:

- 1.
- 2.

THURSDAY (JULY 1) **WHAT IT SAYS**

Turn to James 2: 18-19

In the space below write the passage in your own words:

WHAT IT MEANS

Jewish people daily recited the *Shema*, which consisted of Dt 6:4, including this line: "the Lord is one." This confession was the cornerstone of Jewish faith... Nearly all Jewish teachers would have agreed with James that loyalty to God demanded corresponding behavior... Jewish tradition and sometimes even Gentile magical texts recognized that demons trembled at God's name. - NIV Cultural Backgrounds Study Bible

In the space below write what you've learned about this passage and what it means.

WHAT I WILL DO

Write two action steps for today in the space below:

- 1.
- 2.

FRIDAY (JULY 2)

WHAT IT SAYS

Turn to James 2: 20-22

In the space below write the passage in your own words:

WHAT IT MEANS

Here, James mentions Abraham, the father of the Israelite people. He brings together two key passages: Genesis 15, where Abraham believes in God's promise to give him an enormous family even though he is childless, and Genesis 22. In the latter passage...Abraham faces a stern test. He is commanded to sacrifice Isaac, his son by Sarah, the son through whom those great promises were to be fulfilled. It's a dark episode, but Abraham stands the test. The faith he had at the beginning was translated into action. - The Early Christian Letters, N. T. Wright

In the space below write what you've learned about this passage and what it means.

WHAT I WILL DO

Write two action steps for today in the space below:

1.

2.

SATURDAY (JULY 3)

WHAT IT SAYS

Turn to James 2: 23-24

In the space below write the passage in your own words:

WHAT IT MEANS

Jewish tradition celebrated Abraham being God's friend (2 Chron 20:7, Isaiah 41:8). - NIV Cultural Backgrounds Study Bible

In the space below write what you've learned about this passage and what it means.

WHAT I WILL DO

Write two action steps for today in the space below:

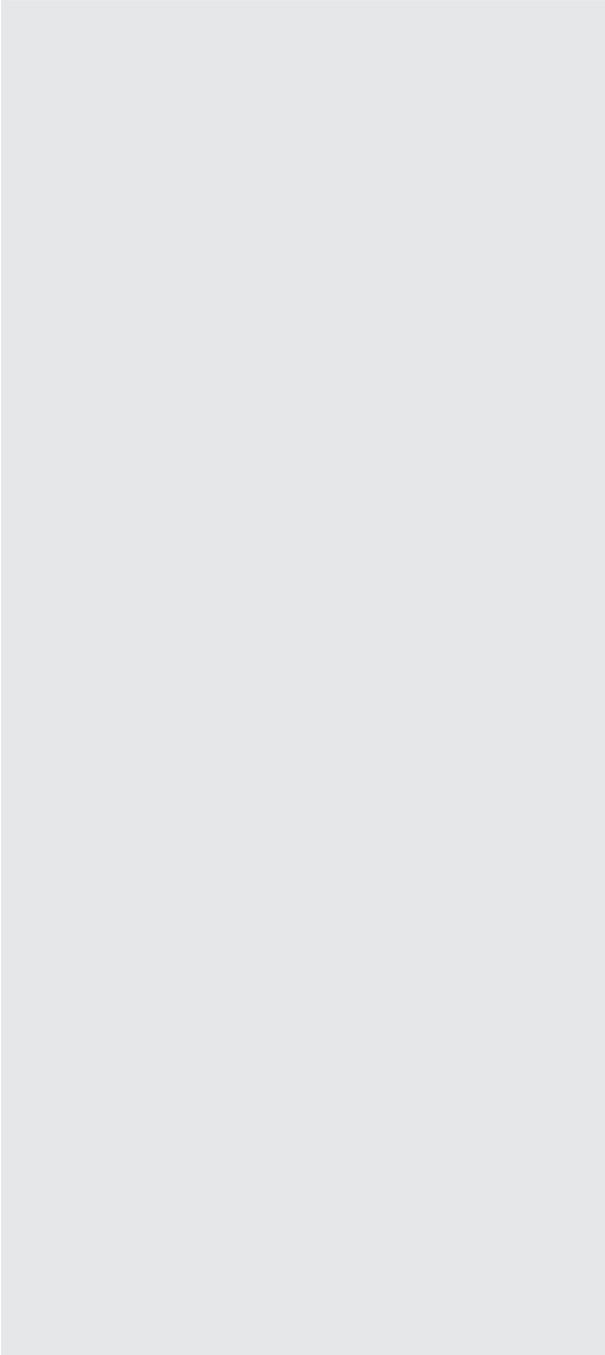
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2.

TEACHING GUIDE

Teaching: Faith and Deeds - July 4
Text: James 2:14-26

SERMON NOTES

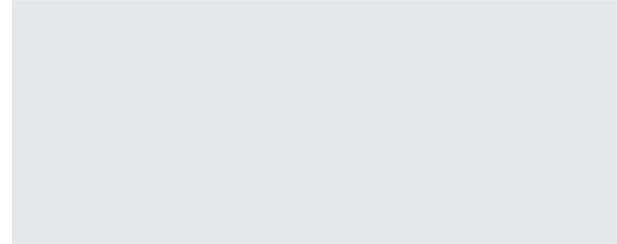


LOOKING BACK

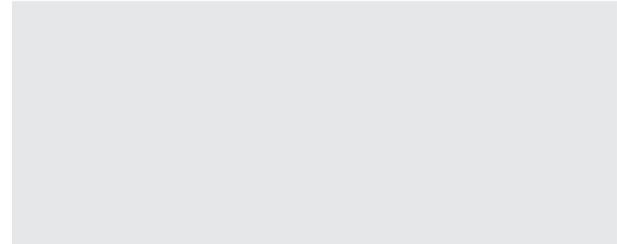
READ JAMES 2:14-26

REFLECT ON AND DISCUSS THE QUESTIONS BELOW

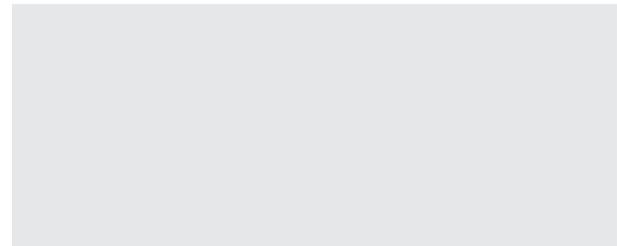
1. What stood out to you in your reading for this week and the teaching this weekend?



2. What did you learn about the Book of James that was new to you?



3. How were you challenged to live differently this week?



Watch the message again under "Watch and Read" at fearlessfollower.org

FAITH THAT WORKS WEEK 6



Fearless Word Of The Day Schedule:
fearlessfollower.org/wordoftheday

MONDAY (JULY 5) WHAT IT SAYS

Turn to James 3: 1-2

In the space below write the passage in your own words:

WHAT IT MEANS

Other Jewish sages also warned against teaching error and recognized that teachers would be judged more strictly if they led others astray. Some teachers were now advocating a sort of “wisdom” that would soon lead to a failed revolt against Rome and massive suffering (AD 66- 70). - NIV Cultural Backgrounds Study Bible

In the space below write what you’ve learned about this passage and what it means.

WHAT I WILL DO

Write two action steps for today in the space below:

1.

2.

TUESDAY (JULY 6) WHAT IT SAYS

Turn to James 3: 3- 4

In the space below write the passage in your own words:

WHAT IT MEANS

In the ancient Mediterranean world, most people understood the common illustrations of controlling horses with bits and ships with rudders. Jewish texts often cast wisdom, reason and God in the role of ideal pilots, but James’ point here is not what should have control or have power. His point is simply the power of a small instrument. - NIV Cultural Backgrounds Study Bible

In the space below write what you’ve learned about this passage and what it means.

WHAT I WILL DO

Write two action steps for today in the space below:

1.

2.

WEDNESDAY (JULY 7) **WHAT IT SAYS**

Turn to James 3: 5-6

In the space below write the passage in your own words:

WHAT IT MEANS

Others also compared the spread of rumors to the igniting of what would rapidly become a forest fire. Here the image is that of a tongue that incites the whole body to violence. Scripture and other sources already warned of the boastful, hostile tongue (Ps 52: 1-4) and the tongue as a hurtful fire (Ps 39: 1-3; 120: 2-4; Pr 16: 27; 26: 21). - NIV Cultural Backgrounds Study Bible

In the space below write what you've learned about this passage and what it means.

WHAT I WILL DO

Write two action steps for today in the space below:

- 1.
- 2.

THURSDAY (JULY 8) **WHAT IT SAYS**

Turn to James 3: 7-8

In the space below write the passage in your own words:

WHAT IT MEANS

Made in God's image, people were appointed over all creatures (Gen 1:26). But although other creatures could be subdued as God commanded (Gen 1:28, 9:2), the tongue was like the deadliest snake, full of toxic venom. - NIV Cultural Backgrounds Study Bible

In the space below write what you've learned about this passage and what it means.

WHAT I WILL DO

Write two action steps for today in the space below:

- 1.
- 2.

FRIDAY (JULY 9)

WHAT IT SAYS

Turn to James 3: 9-10

In the space below write the passage in your own words:

WHAT IT MEANS

James' audience would readily grasp his point. Jewish teachers emphasized that however one treated other humans, it was as if one did it to God himself, because people were made in his image. Sometimes they also noted, as here, the specific incongruity of blessing God while cursing other people, who were made in his image. The issue here (as in 1:19-20; 4:11; 5:9) is speech hostile to others – fitting the letter's setting. - NIV Cultural Backgrounds Study Bible

In the space below write what you've learned about this passage and what it means.

WHAT I WILL DO

Write two action steps for today in the space below:

- 1.

- 2.

SATURDAY (JULY 10)

WHAT IT SAYS

Turn to Matthew 7: 16- 18

In the space below write the passage in your own words:

WHAT IT MEANS

Figs, olives and grapes were the three most common agricultural products of the Judean hills, and alongside wheat and barley they would have constituted the most common crops of the Mediterranean region as a whole. That everything brought forth its kind was a matter of common observation and became proverbial in Greco-Roman circles. - NIV Cultural Backgrounds Study Bible

In the space below write what you've learned about this passage and what it means.

WHAT I WILL DO

Write two action steps for today in the space below:

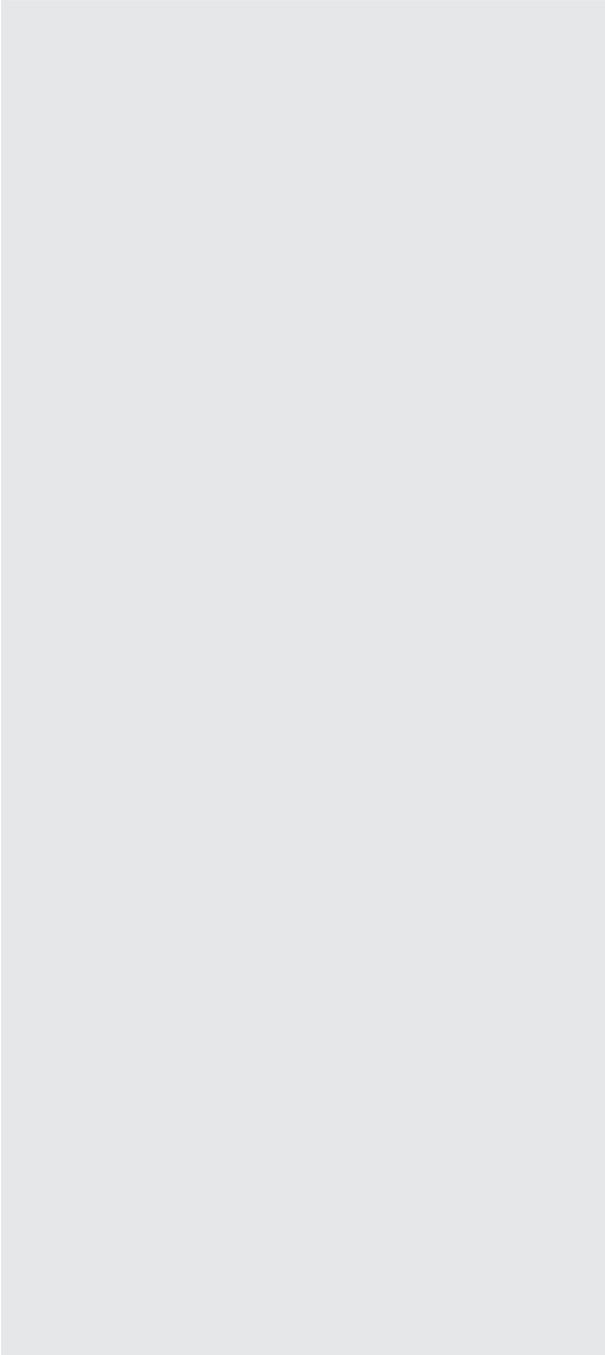
- 1.

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TEACHING GUIDE

Teaching: Taming the Tongue - July 11
Text: James 3:1-12

SERMON NOTES

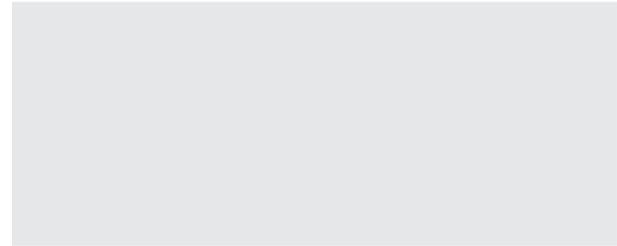


LOOKING BACK

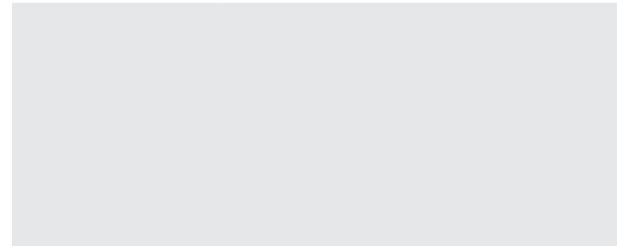
READ JAMES 3:1-12

REFLECT ON AND DISCUSS THE QUESTIONS BELOW

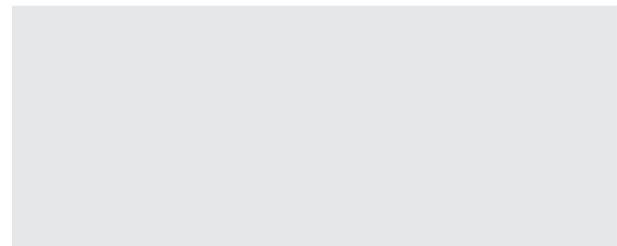
1. What stood out to you in your reading for this week and the teaching this weekend?



2. What did you learn about the Book of James that was new to you?



3. How were you challenged to live differently this week?



Watch the message again under "Watch and Read" at fearlessfollower.org

FAITH THAT WORKS WEEK 7



Fearless Word Of The Day Schedule:
fearlessfollower.org/wordoftheday

MONDAY (JULY 12) **WHAT IT SAYS**

Turn to James 3: 13- 14

In the space below write the passage in your own words:

WHAT IT MEANS

Especially since the era of Maccabean revolt against Syrian oppressors, many Judeans had valued revolt against oppressors as an act of devotion to God. This time, however, revolt would lead to Judea's devastation, Jerusalem's destruction, and the enslavement of many survivors (AD 66-73). Although some Pharisees emphasized peace, many popular teachers urged that revolt was the only solution to current problems. Instead of this popular course, James counseled waiting on God. - NIV Cultural Backgrounds Study Bible

In the space below write what you've learned about this passage and what it means.

WHAT I WILL DO

Write two action steps for today in the space below:

1.

2.

TUESDAY (JULY 13) **WHAT IT SAYS**

Turn to Proverbs 2: 1-5

In the space below write the passage in your own words:

WHAT IT MEANS

The comparison between wisdom and the value of various types of riches is also attested in Egyptian wisdom. - NIV Cultural Backgrounds Study Bible

In the space below write what you've learned about this passage and what it means.

WHAT I WILL DO

Write two action steps for today in the space below:

1.

2.

WEDNESDAY (JULY 14) **WHAT IT SAYS**

Turn to Proverbs 2: 9-11

In the space below write the passage in your own words:

WHAT IT MEANS

Proverbs often motivate people to the best type of behavior and attitudes. Those actions it characterizes as wise are often accompanied by reward, and those that it characterizes as foolish are said to result in punishment... However, these rewards and punishments are often misunderstood by modern readers, who take them as promises. The proverb form is not in the business of giving out guarantees... Proverbs do not give out promises; rather, they tell us what is the best course to a desired end, all things being equal. - NIV Cultural Backgrounds Study Bible

In the space below write what you've learned about this passage and what it means.

WHAT I WILL DO

Write two action steps for today in the space below:

- 1.
- 2.

THURSDAY (JULY 15) **WHAT IT SAYS**

Turn to James 3: 15-16

In the space below write the passage in your own words:

WHAT IT MEANS

James contrasts divine wisdom with that inspired by evil. Jewish people often used "heaven" and "above" to mean "God." In contrast to heavenly wisdom, violent "wisdom" (vs 14; 4: 1-2) was earthly and demonic. Some Jewish groups believed that evil spirits inspired all sin; the idea that demons surrounded everyone also grew in folk beliefs. James might suggest a more indirect demonic activity here through people imbibing dominant values of a surrounding culture influenced by evil. - NIV Cultural Backgrounds Study Bible

In the space below write what you've learned about this passage and what it means.

WHAT I WILL DO

Write two action steps for today in the space below:

- 1.
- 2.

FRIDAY (JULY 16)

WHAT IT SAYS

Turn to Romans 12: 9-10

In the space below write the passage in your own words:

WHAT IT MEANS

Paul here offers various exhortations around the theme of treating one another well (an important issue in the Roman church). Most of Paul's exhortations would be widely acceptable in the culture... Competition for honor dominated ancient Mediterranean urban society, particularly Rome; Paul offers a contrary model. - NIV Cultural Backgrounds Study Bible

In the space below write what you've learned about this passage and what it means.

WHAT I WILL DO

Write two action steps for today in the space below:

- 1.
- 2.

SATURDAY (JULY 17)

WHAT IT SAYS

Turn to 1 Corinthians 2: 6-7

In the space below write the passage in your own words:

WHAT IT MEANS

Philosophers could apply this descriptor ("mature") to those advanced in wisdom - which the Corinthians lack. But as a Jewish work from this period put it, even one considered "perfect" or "mature" was useless without God's wisdom (Wisdom of Solomon 9:6)... Jewish tradition emphasized that God formed wisdom before the world, used it to form the world, and that wisdom would endure forever. - NIV Cultural Backgrounds Study Bible

In the space below write what you've learned about this passage and what it means.

WHAT I WILL DO

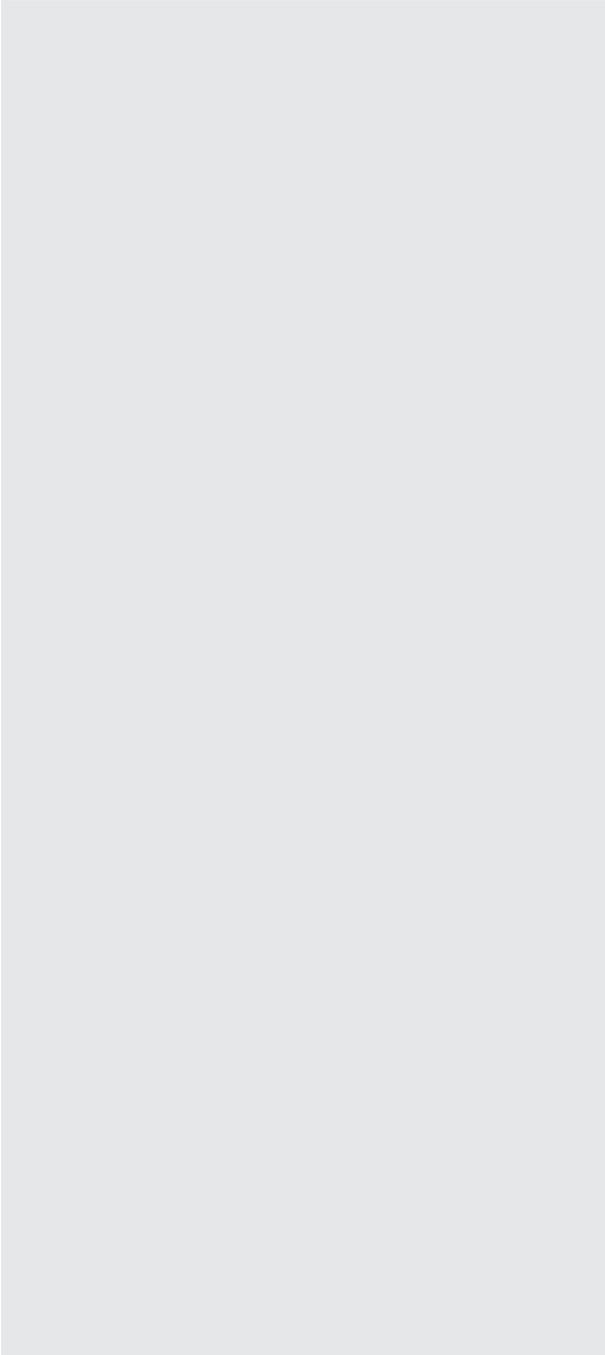
Write two action steps for today in the space below:

- 1.
- 2.

TEACHING GUIDE

Teaching: Two Kinds of Wisdom - July 18
Text: James 3:13-18

SERMON NOTES

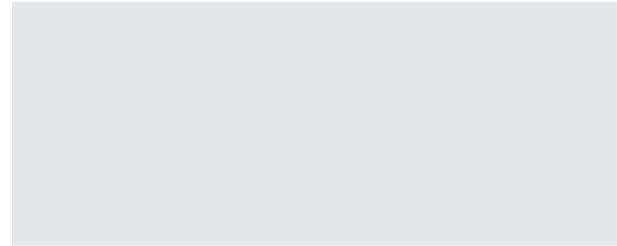


LOOKING BACK

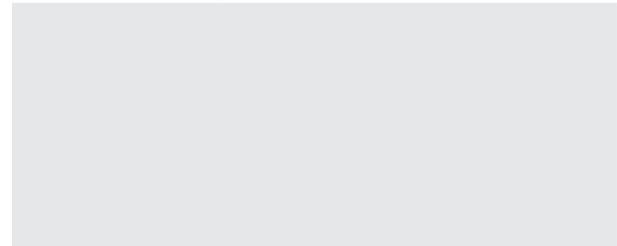
READ JAMES 3:13-18

REFLECT ON AND DISCUSS THE QUESTIONS BELOW

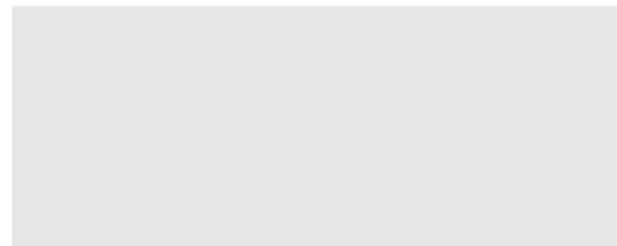
1. What stood out to you in your reading for this week and the teaching this weekend?



2. What did you learn about the Book of James that was new to you?



3. How were you challenged to live differently this week?



Watch the message again under "Watch and Read" at fearlessfollower.org

FAITH THAT WORKS WEEK 8



Fearless Word Of The Day Schedule:
fearlessfollower.org/wordoftheday

MONDAY (JULY 19) **WHAT IT SAYS**

Turn to James 4: 1-3

In the space below write the passage in your own words:

WHAT IT MEANS

How does 'friendship' with the world in that sense relate to what James has been saying about war, fighting and asking for things in the wrong way? By 'the world' he seems to mean, as often in scripture, 'the way the world behaves', the pattern of life... If you go with the drift, if you don't reflect on what you're doing but just pick up habits of mind and body from all around you, the chances are you will become 'friends' with 'the world' in this sense. - The Early Christian Letters, N. T. Wright

In the space below write what you've learned about this passage and what it means.

WHAT I WILL DO

Write two action steps for today in the space below:

1.

2.

TUESDAY (JULY 20) **WHAT IT SAYS**

Turn to James 4: 4-6

In the space below write the passage in your own words:

WHAT IT MEANS

In particular, James highlights a major lack in the world of his day: humility. Its opposite is arrogance: the arrogance that says *my* desires come first, that *my* cause is so important it's worth fighting and killing for. The cure, of course, is to submit to God and resist the devil - rather than the other way around! - The Early Christian Letters, N. T. Wright

In the space below write what you've learned about this passage and what it means.

WHAT I WILL DO

Write two action steps for today in the space below:

1.

2.

WEDNESDAY (JULY 21)

WHAT IT SAYS

Turn to James 4: 7-8

In the space below write the passage in your own words:

WHAT IT MEANS

One must choose between God's values and the world's, between God's wisdom and that which is demonic....In this period Jewish people washed their hands before prayer; Jewish people also used the language of purity figuratively, so that pure hands could signify not having committed sin with them. - NIV Cultural Backgrounds Study Bible

In the space below write what you've learned about this passage and what it means.

WHAT I WILL DO

Write two action steps for today in the space below:

- 1.
- 2.

THURSDAY (JULY 22)

WHAT IT SAYS

Turn to 1 Peter 5: 6-9

In the space below write the passage in your own words:

WHAT IT MEANS

Peter applies Proverbs 3:34 to exhort believers. This behavior includes embracing and accepting the suffering until God provides the way out (Jer 27:11); God promised to humble the proud in his day of judgment. The cries of God's people during unjust suffering had always moved him to act on their behalf (Ex 2:23 -25, 3:7-9; Jdg 2:18, 10:16). - NIV Cultural Backgrounds Study Bible

In the space below write what you've learned about this passage and what it means.

WHAT I WILL DO

Write two action steps for today in the space below:

- 1.
- 2.

FRIDAY (JULY 23)

WHAT IT SAYS

Turn to James 4: 9-10

In the space below write the passage in your own words:

WHAT IT MEANS

Scripture often connected mourning and humbling oneself with repentance, especially when confronted with divine judgment.

- NIV Cultural Backgrounds Study Bible

In the space below write what you've learned about this passage and what it means.

WHAT I WILL DO

Write two action steps for today in the space below:

1.

2.

SATURDAY (JULY 24)

WHAT IT SAYS

Turn to Matthew 7: 1-2

In the space below write the passage in your own words:

WHAT IT MEANS

In principle, many Jewish sages (and even some Greek thinkers) would have agreed with Jesus. Nevertheless, following Jesus in practice requires more than agreeing with him in principle. - NIV Cultural Backgrounds Study Bible

In the space below write what you've learned about this passage and what it means.

WHAT I WILL DO

Write two action steps for today in the space below:

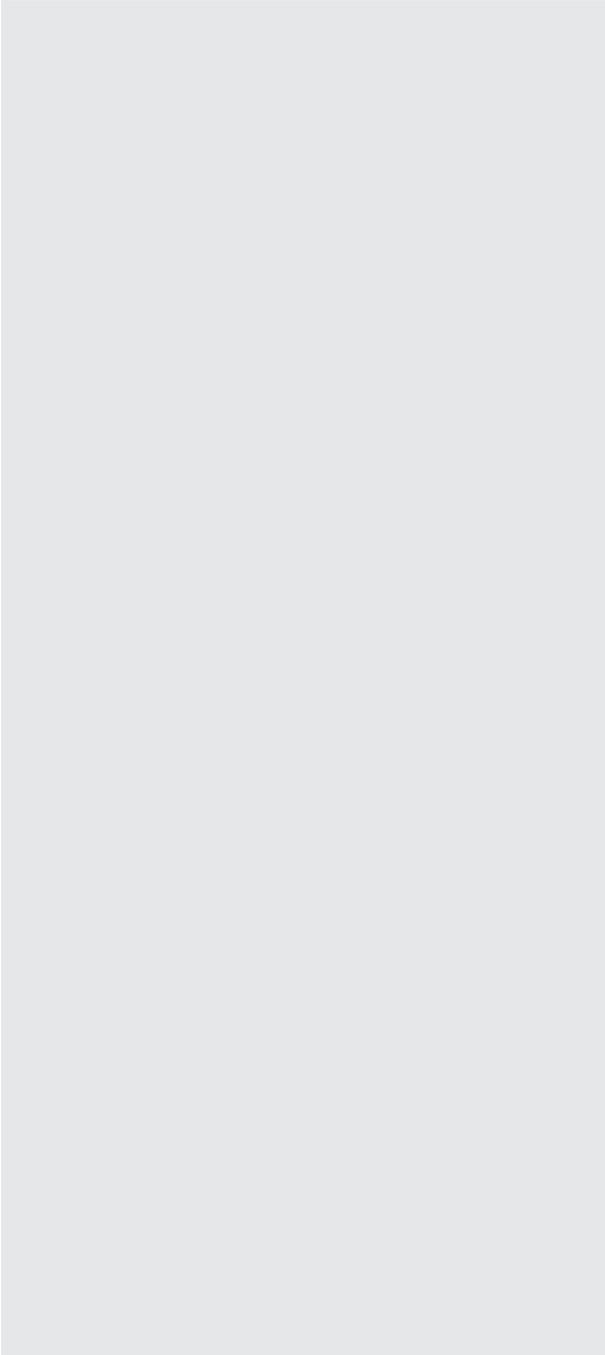
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TEACHING GUIDE

Teaching: Submit to God - July 25
Text: James 4:1-12

SERMON NOTES

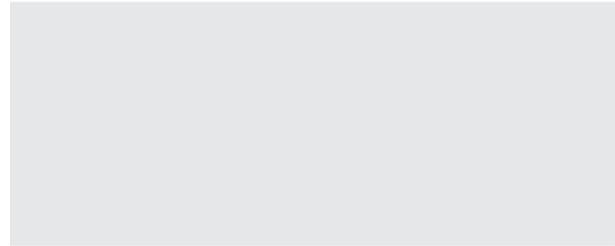


LOOKING BACK

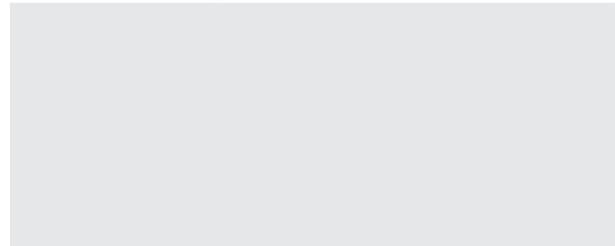
READ JAMES 4:1-12

REFLECT ON AND DISCUSS THE QUESTIONS BELOW

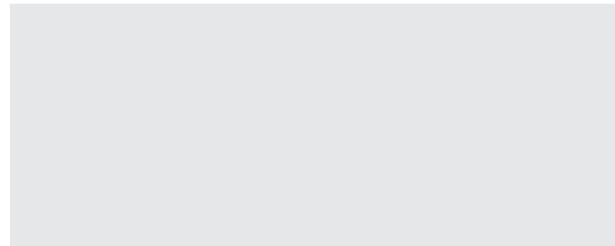
1. What stood out to you in your reading for this week and the teaching this weekend?



2. What did you learn about the Book of James that was new to you?



3. How were you challenged to live differently this week?



Watch the message again under "Watch and Read" at fearlessfollower.org

FAITH THAT WORKS WEEK 9



Fearless Word Of The Day Schedule:
fearlessfollower.org/wordoftheday

MONDAY (JULY 26) **WHAT IT SAYS**

Turn to James 4: 13-14

In the space below write the passage in your own words:

WHAT IT MEANS

Many thinkers urged their audiences to remember that one cannot control one's future... The sin here is not their thinking ahead but their arrogant presumption - acting as if their lives are in their own hands rather than God's. - NIV Cultural Backgrounds Study Bible

In the space below write what you've learned about this passage and what it means.

WHAT I WILL DO

Write two action steps for today in the space below:

- 1.

- 2.

TUESDAY (JULY 27) **WHAT IT SAYS**

Turn to Luke 12: 16-17

In the space below write the passage in your own words:

WHAT IT MEANS

In the Roman Empire, people acquired wealth in especially two ways: landowners, with high social status, profited from crops raised by tenant farmers or slaves; merchants, by contrast, usually accumulated wealth without the corresponding social status. - NIV Cultural Backgrounds Study Bible

In the space below write what you've learned about this passage and what it means.

WHAT I WILL DO

Write two action steps for today in the space below:

- 1.

- 2.

WEDNESDAY (JULY 28)

WHAT IT SAYS

Turn to Luke 12: 18-19

In the space below write the passage in your own words:

WHAT IT MEANS

Wealthy landowners often lived in cities or on estates while impoverished tenant farmers worked their land. Excavations show that the landowners often built large silos to hold excess grain. Scripture warned against merely storing grain when others were hungry (Pr 11:26). - NIV Cultural Backgrounds Study Bible

In the space below write what you've learned about this passage and what it means.

WHAT I WILL DO

Write two action steps for today in the space below:

1.

2.

LOOKING BACK

Reflect on the past month. What stands out as the biggest insights and greatest personal challenges from James?