

STUDY NOTES

JAMES: A FAITH THAT ENDURES

a series at New City Church

www.newcityphx.com/sermons

The following content is based on the message "Faith Without Works Is Dead" on 2/24/19 at New City Church in Phoenix, AZ. The following is not meant to be a full synopsis but rather a brief look at the main ideas. To use this Study Guide effectively you must listen to the message found at <http://newcityphx.com/sermons/>.

Leaders using these study notes for group study and reflection should read the Biblical text thoroughly before beginning, using this resource as assistance and not relying solely on this material for insight. We encourage all leaders to pray and ask the Spirit for revelation as they lead their respective community groups.

PRAYER

Pray and ask God to lead the discussion as everyone gets to share.

SCRIPTURE: JAMES 2:14-26

SOCIAL JUSTICE AND THE GOSPEL

People have a tendency to emphasize either social justice or the gospel. They will say that we should just focus on preaching the gospel, or they will say that we should spend our time caring for others, without taking time to speak the gospel. God cares about both issues.

Since the beginning of time, God has asked his people to administer justice while being a beacon of his good news.

- *Why do you think that some people emphasize either social justice or the gospel? How have you seen this done?*
- *How should speaking the gospel lead to administering social justice?*

A CRITICAL WITNESS OF THE CHURCH

If you read the passages surrounding today's passage, then you'd see that James is very clearly talking about how the church cares for people in the church. James highlights how the church cares for those who are under-resourced.

The ways that the church cares for people is a critical witness to Jesus.

- *If people in the church didn't have any physical needs, how would that be witness to people outside the church?*

A LIVING THEOLOGY

In verse 19, James says, "You believe that God is one; you do well. Even the demons believe—and shudder!" He is making the point that anyone could believe the right things about Jesus, but it doesn't mean that they follow Jesus. Christianity is an embodied belief-system that is both proclaimed and lived. Faith proves itself in its actions, not in its belief statements.

Proper theology is a living theology.

- *What are some other areas in life where you have to place actions behind your words?*
- *If proper theology is a living theology, then how would **not** living out your faith lead to a dying faith?*

YOUR FAITH GOES SOMEWHERE

Everyone puts their faith and justification in something. It could be your job, your marriage, your kids, your degree, your friendships, etc. Everyone will use something to try to justify their life. Anything other than Jesus will be a let down.

- *How do your actions prove where you place your faith?*
- *If you look at your actions, in what would you say that you placed your faith?*
- *Pray with each other for strength to live out your faith with good works.*