

## 2026-02-15 Small Group Guide

### Small Group Guide: Faith That Works

#### Opening Prayer & Icebreaker

Icebreaker Question: Share about a time when you had to trust someone completely—maybe jumping into a parent's arms as a child, or trusting a friend in a difficult situation. What made you willing to trust?

#### Sermon Overview

This week's message challenged us to examine whether our faith is genuine—not just intellectual belief, but a living, active faith that produces change and obedience. We explored the difference between believing in God versus believing God, and what it means to have a "working faith" rather than "faith alone."

#### Key Scripture Passages

Hebrews 11:1-6 (Faith defined and demonstrated)

Genesis 1 (God speaks creation into existence)

James 1:16-27 (Hearers vs. doers of the Word)

James 2 (Faith without works is dead)

#### Discussion Questions

##### 1. Understanding Faith

The pastor said, "Faith isn't 'I believe in God.' Faith is 'I believe God.'"  
What's the difference between these two statements? Which one better describes your current faith?

How does Hebrews 11:1 define faith? What does it mean to be "certain about what we do not see"?

##### 2. God's Creative Power

In Genesis 1, God spoke everything into existence. How does understanding God as Creator impact your willingness to trust Him with your life?

The sermon mentioned that God wants to speak into our lives just as He spoke creation into existence. What areas of your life need God to "speak light" into darkness?

### 3. Faith and Action

The pastor emphasized that "there is no such thing as 'I believe, but I don't do anything' faith." How does this challenge popular ideas about salvation being "faith alone"?

Looking at the "Hall of Faith" in Hebrews 11:

Abel offered a sacrifice

Noah built an ark

Abraham left his home and lived in tents

What do these examples teach us about the relationship between faith and obedience?

### 4. Personal Examination

James 1:22 warns against being "hearers only" who deceive themselves. In what ways might we deceive ourselves about our faith?

The sermon asked: "Where in your life is there any conviction that says, 'I've blown it, but I'm turning around'?" How would you answer this question?

### 5. The Cost of Discipleship

Jesus said we must become "Lord of all or no Lord at all." What areas of your life have you not fully surrendered to Christ's lordship?

The pastor shared that his motivation is "to spend the rest of my life doing everything I can to thank Jesus." How does gratitude motivate obedience differently than obligation?

## Key Takeaways

Faith believes God, not just in God - True faith takes God at His word and acts accordingly.

Faith is generative - Real faith is never static; it's always growing, moving, and producing fruit.

We are created to produce - Just as God commanded the earth to produce vegetation, we are called to bear spiritual fruit and reproduce (share our faith).

Obedience is evidence of faith - We don't obey to earn salvation, but because we are saved and want to honor Christ.

Don't be deceived - Hearing God's Word without doing it is self-deception (James 1:22).

Blessing comes through obedience - James 1:25 promises blessing for those who look into God's Word and do what it says.

## Practical Applications

### This Week's Challenge

Choose ONE of the following to practice this week:

Option 1: The Morning Mirror Each morning, look in the mirror and ask God: "What do You want to change in me today?" Write down what comes to mind and take one action step toward that change.

Option 2: Faith Inventory Read through Hebrews 11 and identify one person whose faith inspires you. Journal about:

What specific action did they take?

What made their obedience difficult?

What is God calling you to do that requires similar faith?

Option 3: The Surrender Prayer Pray this prayer daily: "Lord, is there anything I've left out? Is there something else in my life I need to do? Have I obeyed Your Scriptures?" Write down what God brings to mind and share with an accountability partner.

Option 4: Witness Boldly The sermon challenged us about sharing our faith. Commit to telling at least one person this week about what Jesus has done in your life. Pray for an opportunity and courage.

### Reflection Questions for Personal Study

The pastor mentioned that many people want to know "what's the least I can do and get in?" How does this attitude reflect on our view of God's grace and Jesus' sacrifice?

Read James 1:16-27 slowly. What specific "moral filth" or "evil" is God asking you to get rid of?

The sermon stated: "You don't really have faith if your faith does nothing." Evaluate your faith by its fruit. What evidence would someone see that you truly believe in Jesus?

How does understanding that "God disciplines those He loves" (Hebrews 12) change your perspective on difficult circumstances?

What's the difference between "living with Jesus" and "living for Jesus"? Which phrase better describes your current relationship with Him?

### Memory Verse

James 1:22 - "Do not merely listen to the word, and so deceive yourselves. Do what it says."

### Closing Discussion

What is one specific thing God spoke to you about through this sermon?  
How can this group pray for you and hold you accountable this week?  
What would it look like for you to "surrender all" in one specific area this week?

Closing Prayer

Pray together, allowing time for:

Confession of areas where faith has been inactive

Surrender of specific areas to Christ's lordship

Requests for courage to obey what God has shown

Thanksgiving for God's patience and grace

Leader Notes

Be prepared for this discussion to get personal. Create a safe, non-judgmental environment.

Some may struggle with the emphasis on works/obedience. Clarify that we're not earning salvation, but demonstrating it.

Watch for anyone who may be questioning their salvation. Be ready to walk through the gospel and assurance of salvation.

Encourage specific, measurable commitments rather than vague intentions.

Consider pairing group members as accountability partners for the week's challenge.