

ULC Sermon Study Resource
Non-Negotiables // Live Out Active Faith
Pastor Gabe
February 5, 2023

Prayer: Pause for a few moments to go to the Lord in prayer. Ask that He would draw near to you in this time, and open your heart and mind to hear His Word.

Icebreaker: What is your favorite magical or mythological animal??

Reading: James 2:14-26

Outline:

- I. Living Faith (v. 14-17)
 - A. James says that if we just have faith and don't do anything with it, or if our lives don't reflect our faith, our faith is dead faith and likely isn't real faith. James is saying faith with empty words is a dead faith.
 - B. "Faith...is the very core of our being. It is our basic grasp on reality. If faith is misplaced, then all of life is skewed. If faith is misdirected towards one of God's creatures, rather than being directed toward our Creator himself, then life goes sour and spoils." - Dr. Rob Kolb
Q: Do you ever find your faith being misdirected? If so, where is it directed?
- II. Active Faith (v. 18-23)
 - A. James tells us that simply knowing theological truths about God and having emotive responses to God does not constitute real faith. Faith is the orientation of your entire life, and faith is active.
 - B. Active faith looks like resisting our culture's tendency to promote views contradictory to our faith and to push us towards complacency in living out our faith.
Q: Do you fall into one of these categories of non-active faith? If so, which do you tend towards?
- III. Saving Faith (v. 24-26)
 - A. Although the beginning of these verses are difficult, James here is saying that our works give evidence to our faith. As the great reformers would say, "Faith alone saves, but saving faith is never alone."
 - B. It's faith in the grace that is freely given to you in Jesus Christ that gives us salvation. Our works don't earn it, and the zeal of our faith doesn't earn it. After encountering that grace, we feel the call to orient our life around it.
Q: How do you orient your life around your faith?

Reflection/Application Questions:

- 1) How do you actively live out your faith and resist the culture around you?
- 2) How do we avoid intellectualizing our faith or making our faith based on emotive responses?
- 3) How do we avoid misplacing our faith?
- 4) How can we be sure our works give evidence of our faith?

Suggestions for further study:

- John 9:25-38 Q: How does this passage illustrate how faith and grace work?
- Joshua 6:22-25 Q: How does this story provide an example for true active faith?

Closing Prayer:

Dear God, thank you for the grace we receive in your son Jesus Christ. Teach us to live out our faith actively and not to fall into passivity. Continue to strengthen our faith in you so that our works may reflect you in all that we do. Amen.