

# STRONG

STUDENTS

MIDDLE &  
HIGH SCHOOL

STUDENT BOOK



Action!  
Faith That Works  
JAMES



## Action! Faith That Works

Over the next thirteen weeks, you will learn both how to handle trials biblically and how to become a consistent and effective doer of the Word. God saves us by faith but then wants us to continue to live by faith. He wants us to take action and demonstrate we have a faith that works!



## Time with God

Keep a journal as you work through your Time with God each week. A great way to think through passages and gain insights is to ask yourself simple questions. See the list below and sample questions for each one.

- Who?** *Who wrote this passage? To whom was it written?*
- What?** *What is this passage about? What happened to the characters in the passage?*
- When?** *When was this passage written? When did the events in the passage take place?*
- Where?** *Where was this passage written? Where did the events in the passage take place?*
- Why?** *Why was this passage written? Why is it organized as it is?*
- How?** *How should this passage affect its readers? How might I live out this passage?*

As you answer these questions in a journal, you will begin to see what each passage means and how God wants you to use it.



## How to Go to Heaven

God has promised you eternal life. You can know for sure you will spend eternity with Him in Heaven (1 John 5:13).

1. You must understand that you are a sinner and God won't let sin into Heaven. God is perfect and could never allow evil to dwell in His presence. You must face the reality that you are a guilty sinner (Rom. 3:23).
2. You can't earn eternal life. You are already guilty, and nothing you do can pay for your sin. Unless God miraculously saves you, you are destined for eternity in Hell. That is a terrifying fact. Thankfully, God has miraculously provided salvation for everyone (Eph. 2:8, 9).
3. God sent His Son to earth to become a man and die to pay for your sins. Jesus Christ remained perfect because He remained the Son of God. When Jesus died on the cross, God the Father accepted His sacrifice to fully pay for your sins. Jesus' resurrection from the dead proved that God had accepted Jesus' death. Jesus can now offer you eternal life (Rom. 5:8; 1 Cor. 15:20).
4. Jesus did all the work to secure salvation, but that doesn't make anyone automatically saved. You must accept His payment for your sins by placing your trust in His finished work on the cross. God will not accept anything else. When you place your trust in Jesus, God guarantees you have eternal life (John 5:24).

If you aren't sure you are saved, place your trust in Jesus Christ right now, and you can know for certain you will spend eternity with Him!



# JAMES: A GUIDE FOR FAITH

**Theme:** God gives us power to put faith into action by practicing what we believe.

## I. The \_\_\_\_\_

### A. His \_\_\_\_\_

It is James, the half-brother of \_\_\_\_\_, who wrote the epistle of James.

Although a part of Jesus' biological family, James did not become a believer and member of His \_\_\_\_\_ family until \_\_\_\_\_ Jesus' resurrection.

James's encounter with the \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_ apparently transformed his life.

### B. His \_\_\_\_\_

James humbly referred to himself only as a *doulos*, which means \_\_\_\_\_, or \_\_\_\_\_.

James developed callouses from long hours spent on his \_\_\_\_\_ in \_\_\_\_\_.

### C. His \_\_\_\_\_

James accepted all individuals who knew Christ as Savior, whether they were \_\_\_\_\_ or \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_ or \_\_\_\_\_.

All in Christ should be accepted as members of the \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_.

### D. His \_\_\_\_\_

James refused to recant his faith even though he knew it would \_\_\_\_\_ him his \_\_\_\_\_.

## II. The \_\_\_\_\_

### A. The target \_\_\_\_\_

It is to Christians \_\_\_\_\_ from Jerusalem that James most likely wrote.

James wrote to encourage them to keep on, to \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_, and to do right.

### B. The \_\_\_\_\_

James addresses topics related to the \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_ of faith.

James discusses subjects involving the \_\_\_\_\_ testimony of one's faith.

James \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_ in the lives of his audience.



# Time with God

Read each passage and answer the questions to spend personal time with God.

## MONDAY

*Read James 1:1; Matt. 13:55; Acts 8:1–4.*

What is significant about James's reference to himself as simply a servant?

Why did James address his audience as the "twelve tribes"? How had they been scattered?

## THURSDAY

*Read James 5:10, 11.*

What do these verses reveal about the situations James's readers were facing? How were they to apply the examples he gave here?

How can the description of the Lord in verse 11 encourage you during times of trouble?

## TUESDAY

*Read John 7:5; Mark 3:21; 1 Cor. 15:3–7.*

When and how did James change his attitude toward Jesus?

Have you had an encounter with Jesus? If so, how has it affected your life?

## FRIDAY

*Read James 1:22.*

Why might we consider this a theme verse for James?

In what ways can the Holy Spirit mold you into a doer of the Word?

## WEDNESDAY

*Read Gal. 1:9; Acts 15:13–21.*

How was James viewed by others in the early church?

James proposed a solution for the disagreement over accepting Gentiles into the church. What did his decision reveal about his attitude toward the fellowship of believers?

## SATURDAY

*Read James 2:14, 17–18; 3:13.*

From these verses, how would you summarize James's teaching on faith and works?

How would you evaluate the relationship of faith and works in your own life?

# Tough Questions Answered



## How can I overcome doubt?



Perhaps you've wondered how everything in the Bible could be true. Maybe you doubt its relevance to modern life. Maybe you feel like God doesn't care about you, and you can't understand how He allows certain things to happen. Do you ever wonder, as James first did, how Jesus could really be the Son of God? Even if you're a Christian, you can still have doubts like these. It's part of our sinful nature to doubt God. From the Garden of Eden, when Satan led Eve to question God's wisdom, doubt has affected faith in God.

Satan works through intelligent or influential people with persuasive arguments to attempt to place seeds of doubt in our minds. Such influences might make you unsure of your beliefs. And sometimes Satan tells you it's impossible to live out the Christian faith in today's world and that compromise is inevitable.

When doubts like these creep into our minds, it's difficult to practice our faith. But we can overcome our doubts!

Jesus taught that God honors even the smallest amount of faith (Matt. 17:20). Just as the tiny mustard seed grows into a very large bush, so our faith can grow. Christ can then accomplish great things through us. When we believe God exists and earnestly seek Him, He will reward our faith (Heb. 11:6). Even if we still have some doubts, God promises to work in our lives in response to our faith.

The best way to overcome your doubts, then, is to act on what faith you have—despite those doubts. Be honest with God about your doubts and lack of faith. Pray for God to help you practice the faith you do have. Sometimes all you can do is to cry out to Jesus, just as the father who sought healing for his child cried out, "Lord, I believe; help my unbelief!" (Mark 9:24). God will hear you and guide you. He will strengthen your faith as you put it into action. Your doubts, in turn, will grow weaker.

**When we believe God exists and earnestly seek Him, He will reward our faith.**

# Modern Martyrs



On February 15, 2015, twenty Christian men from Egypt and one from Ghana were killed in Libya for refusing to deny Jesus. Islamic militants had captured them and tortured them for weeks, warning them to denounce their Christian faith or to face death. But even up to the time of execution, the men were heard proclaiming Jesus Christ as Lord.



Thousands like these Christian men die as martyrs each year. According to an annual report by Open Doors USA, 5,898 Christians around the globe were killed for their faith from October 2020 through September 2021.

Throughout history, beginning with Stephen and other early Christians like James, believers have died because they were unwilling to denounce Christ. Thank God we can still freely proclaim our Christian faith in the US. But that might not always be true. Consider the strength of your faith. Would you die as a modern martyr for your beliefs?

## Memory Verse Review



### Memory Verse—James 2:14

People may claim to have faith yet show no proof in their actions. James asked if such a superficial faith can save a person. The answer is no. Simply saying the right words does not bring salvation. It is faith that saves us, not our works. When we have been saved by faith, our works will show it.

1. What does this verse say about the relationship between faith and works?
2. Does this verse contradict Paul's statements, declaring that we are saved through faith and not through our works? Explain.
3. Think of a specific way you can practice your faith this week.

## Measuring Growth



James may have found it difficult to believe Jesus could be the Messiah. Despite his initial attitude toward Jesus, James later became a committed believer and a leader in the Jerusalem church. He wrote his book to former Jerusalem church members who had been scattered by persecution. His writing offered the struggling believers practical guidance for living out their faith. James addressed specific issues including trials, temptation, prejudice, and conflict. He challenged his audience to put off worldliness and to show genuine faith.

Look for the following indicators that you recognize James as a practical guide for living out your faith.

1. I am challenged to examine my faith seriously as I study the book of James.
2. I seek to know more about putting my faith into action.
3. I am committed to becoming a doer of God's Word.

**Additional Memory Verses**—Matthew 7:21; Romans 2:12, 13.