

Grace Groups: How to Know If Your Faith Is Real

Week of June 14, 2026

Theme: Your words and wisdom reveal whether your faith is real.

Text: James 3:1–18 (cf. Matt 12:34; Matt 15:18; Prov 4:23)

Leader Reminder

These questions are a tool, not a checklist. Please pick and choose the ones that best serve your group. You will not cover them all. The order of importance in your group is:

- **Prayer (seek God together)**
- **Connection (share life and listen well)**
- **Questions (engage Scripture and sermon themes)**

(Don't sacrifice the first two in order to rush through all the questions.)

Warm-Up

Think about a time you said something you immediately regretted. What happened, and what did that moment reveal about what was going on inside you? *Keep this accessible and light.*

Dig Deeper

1. James compares the tongue to a bit, a rudder, and a spark — all tiny things with enormous power. What does it say about the seriousness of our words that James spends this much time on them?

(James 3:3–6; Proverbs 18:21)

Leader Note: Help the group move past “words can hurt” to the deeper idea: the tongue is a diagnostic tool. It reveals the condition of the heart, just as an unexpected medical test reveals what’s really going on inside.

2. James says “no human being can tame the tongue” (v. 8). Why is controlling our speech something effort alone can’t fix? What does that tell us about where real change has to come from?

(James 3:7–8; Matthew 15:18–19; Proverbs 4:23)

Leader Note: Push the group toward the heart issue — speech is a symptom, not the root problem. Encourage honest reflection about times willpower wasn’t enough. Avoid moralizing; the goal is honest diagnosis, not behavior tips.

3. James describes two kinds of wisdom: one “earthly, unspiritual, demonic” and one from heaven that is “pure, peace-loving, considerate, submissive” (vv. 15–17). Where do you see these two wisdoms competing in your everyday decisions?

(James 3:13–18; Proverbs 3:5–7; Romans 12:2)

Leader Note: Help people name specific areas — parenting, money, conflict, ambition — where they feel the pull of worldly wisdom. Avoid abstract answers.

4. Jesus/Gospel Connection: Jesus said, “Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks” (Matt 12:34). Jesus brought heaven down precisely because we keep bringing hell up. How does the gospel — His incarnation, death, and resurrection — address the heart problem James is diagnosing?

(Matthew 12:34–35; Philippians 2:5–8; Titus 3:4–6)

Leader Note: Keep the focus on grace: Jesus didn’t come to make us try harder — He came because we couldn’t fix ourselves. His perfect words and wisdom cover our failures and offer us a new heart. Resist letting this become a pep talk about speaking better.

5. The sermon discussed submitting to a diagnosis in order to get healed. What does it look like to “submit to the diagnosis” James is offering? What might need to change if you took this seriously?

(James 1:22–25; Psalm 139:23–24; Hebrews 4:12)

Leader Note: Give space for quiet. Encourage honesty over spiritual-sounding answers. Be ready for someone to name a real struggle with their speech or the wisdom they’ve been following.

Application

- This week, pay attention to a specific pattern in your speech — with your spouse, kids, coworkers, or online. What does that pattern reveal about what is ruling your heart? Bring your honest answer to God in prayer.
- In one area where you’ve been following worldly wisdom (envy, self-protection, revenge, “live your truth”), what would one step toward godly wisdom look like this week? Name it specifically.

Encourage specific, realistic steps — not vague intentions.

Prayer Focus

Thank God that Jesus brought heaven down when we kept bringing hell up — and that His work on the cross covers the failures of our mouths and our choices. Ask for the Holy Spirit to do what no human willpower can: heal the heart so the words and wisdom that flow from it reflect Him. Pray for specific areas where group members need courage to follow godly wisdom this week.