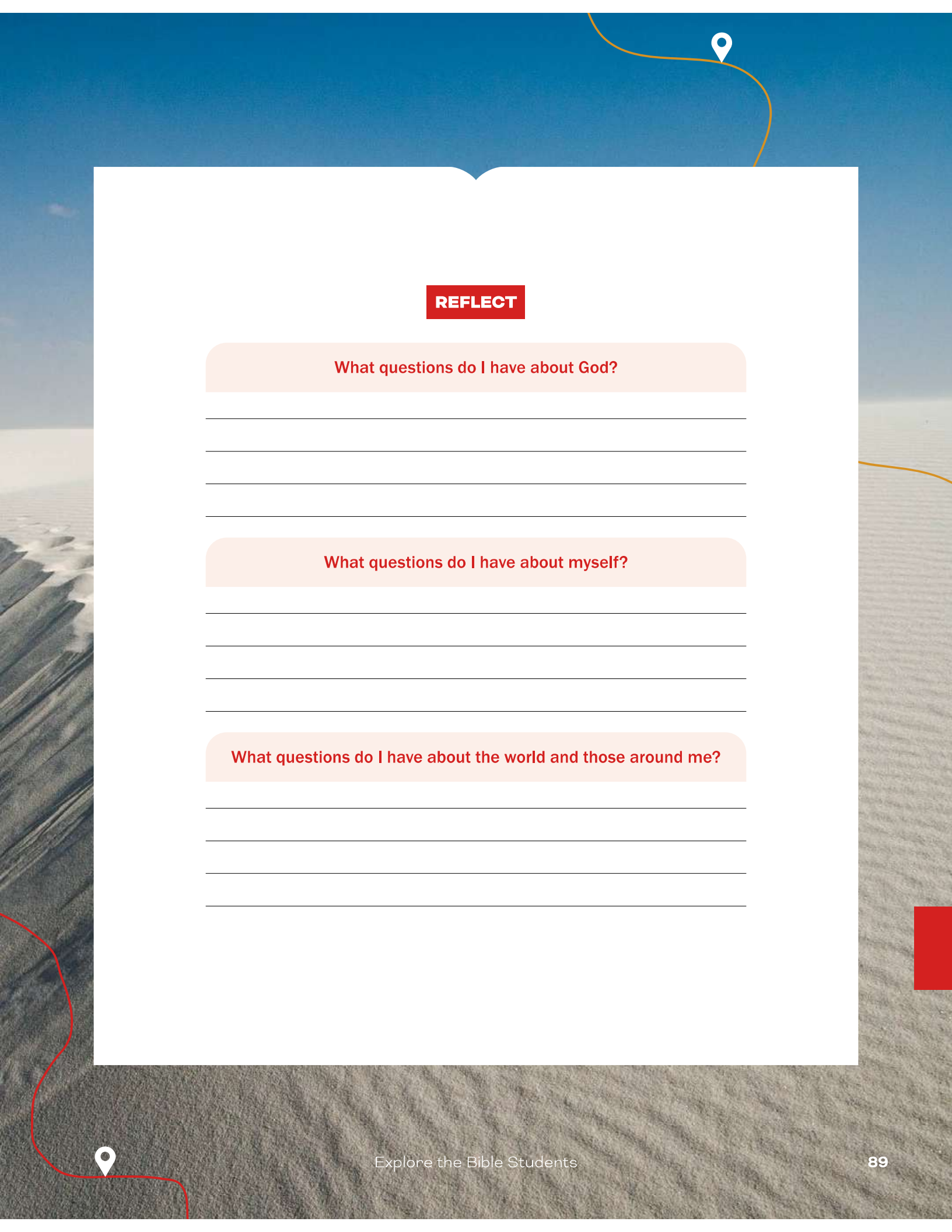


Session 11

True FAITH

CENTRAL TRUTH | Saving faith leads to living in a way that honors the Lord.

Imagine that you grab a controller, sit down on the couch, turn on the TV, and press the button on the controller to start your game. The TV comes on, but before you is a black screen. You press the button on your controller again, but nothing happens. When you get up to investigate, you realize someone unplugged the game console from the power outlet. You plug it in, and the opening sequences rolls. Or maybe you wait all day for a text from your friend, only to realize your phone died a few hours ago, and you'll need to charge it to see anything other than a black screen. Some things just won't work without power. In the same way, without faith, our works are like that black screen—powerless. Nothing we do could ever save us; only Jesus could do that. But once we trust Him for salvation, He makes us new, and what we do should reflect His presence in our lives. In today's session, we'll see that saving faith leads to living in a way that honors the Lord.



REFLECT

What questions do I have about God?

What questions do I have about myself?

What questions do I have about the world and those around me?

JAMES 2:14-17

¹⁴ What good is it, my brothers and sisters, if someone claims to have faith but does not have works? Can such faith save him? ¹⁵ If a brother or sister is without clothes and lacks daily food ¹⁶ and one of you says to them, “Go

in peace, stay warm, and be well fed,” but you don’t give them what the body needs, what good is it? ¹⁷ In the same way faith, if it does not have works, is dead by itself.

JAMES 2:18-23

¹⁸ But someone will say, “You have faith, and I have works.” Show me your faith without works, and I will show you faith by my works. ¹⁹ You believe that God is one. Good! Even the demons believe — and they shudder. ²⁰ Senseless person! Are you willing to learn that faith without works is useless? ²¹ Wasn’t Abraham our father justified by works in

offering Isaac his son on the altar? ²² You see that faith was active together with his works, and by works, faith was made complete, ²³ and the Scripture was fulfilled that says, Abraham believed God, and it was credited to him as righteousness, and he was called God’s friend.

JAMES 2:24-26

²⁴ You see that a person is justified by works and not by faith alone. ²⁵ In the same way, wasn’t Rahab the prostitute also justified by works in receiving the messengers and sending them

out by a different route? ²⁶ For just as the body without the spirit is dead, so also faith without works is dead.

Day01

JAMES 2:14-17



Refer to page 5 for a description of the 7 Arrows of Bible Reading.

📍 READ & RESPOND

Imagine your friend is cold and hungry, and you say, “I hope you feel better!” but do nothing to help—are you truly a friend? Your actions wouldn’t support that you are! That’s what James is addressing in today’s passage. True faith is never just talk; it’s always followed by action. We cannot be saved by works, but if Jesus lives within us, we are compelled to act in such a way that helping and serving others is just a natural part of who we are. When the Holy Spirit is shaping us to be more like Christ, our actions will reflect that. Our good works don’t save us, but they prove that the saving faith God gave us is real and alive. So, let your actions show what you truly believe!

← The first-century church likely knew people who claimed to be Christian but were selfish. What was James trying to teach them about true Christian identity?

↑ What does this passage reveal about our responsibility to be aware of and help the needs around us?

→ If someone looked only at your actions this week, what would they conclude about your faith?

📍 MEMORIZE

On a piece of paper, write down **James 2:17** five times. Doing this makes all the different parts of your brain turn on at the same time, which forces you to think about the information in a much deeper way.

📍 PRAY

Jesus, I know You live in my heart. Help me show that through my actions toward others. Give me opportunities to show that my faith in You is alive!

Day02

JAMES 2:18-23

READ & RESPOND

In today's passage, James explains the difference between simply knowing about Christ and actually being in a relationship with Him. Even the demons believe in God, but they certainly aren't saved! It isn't enough to just agree that Jesus exists; He must be the Lord (the boss) of our lives. If He is our Lord, our actions will reflect that commitment. James uses Abraham as an example. Because Abraham trusted God completely, he obeyed the challenging command to sacrifice Isaac. This act proved his faith was real and complete. Your actions don't earn salvation, but they are the clear evidence that your faith is alive and always leads to obedience.

← What was James trying to teach believers in the early church about how true faith should look on a daily basis?

↑ This passage shows that God sees our actions and our hearts simultaneously. What does this reveal about God's perfect knowledge of us?

↔ If someone asks you why you believe in God, how can this passage help you point to your actions, not just your words, as proof?

MEMORIZE

Using your phone, tablet, or computer, write out **James 2:17** in a notes app using emojis. Be creative! Send the emojis to a few friends or family members and see if they can decipher the verse.

PRAY

Father, You are the Lord of my life. Give me the courage to be a doer of Your Word, so that my life brings glory to Your name.

Day 03

JAMES 2:24-26

READ & RESPOND

James finishes his point by reminding us that we are declared righteous, or right with God, by our actions, not by faith alone. Wait, what? Doesn't the Bible say we are saved by faith? Yes, but James clarifies: it's not just the words you say or the feelings you have that save you; it's the kind of faith that naturally leads to action. He illustrates with the example of Rahab. She was declared righteous because she risked her life to hide the Israelite spies. Her action proved her faith in God was real! Like a body without a spirit is dead, your faith is useless if it doesn't lead to good works. True faith is always alive and active.

🔄 How does verse 26 compare a body without a spirit to faith without works?

↓ What does this passage expose about the spiritual condition of a person who claims to believe but never changes his or her behavior?

→ What is the implication if we claim to have faith but live exactly like the rest of the sinful world? How should we look different from the world?

MEMORIZE

Let's map out this week's verse. Write out **James 2:17**. Underline the important nouns in the verse. Circle the important verbs. Put an appropriate symbol next to any word that might be important.

PRAY

Father, thank You for the gift of salvation by faith alone and for the Holy Spirit who prompts me to action. Help me actively demonstrate my faith so that my life truly reflects You.

Day 04

EPHESIANS 2:8

READ & RESPOND

This week, we've established that our actions are the evidence of our faith, but they do not save us. Salvation is a gift from God, received by grace alone, through faith alone, in Christ alone. When we accept this gift and make Jesus the Lord of our lives, the Holy Spirit comes to live in us. This Holy Spirit guides our hearts and works to make us look more like Christ—a process called *sanctification*. As we become more like Him, we display His characteristics. Jesus was never idle; He constantly met spiritual and physical needs. Likewise, we should do good works in His name that bring glory to God and draw the lost to Him.

 According to this verse, what is the only way a person can be saved?

 What does this verse tell us about God's plan that He completely removed human effort from the way a person is saved?

 Since salvation doesn't come from works, what does this tell us about our own human ability to reach God on our own?

MEMORIZE

Go for a walk! Recite **James 2:17** aloud while walking. Assign one phrase to a set number of steps (for instance, walk five steps while saying the first phrase).

PRAY

Father, thank You for the gift of my salvation. I do not deserve it and could never earn it. Help me live my life in a way that brings honor and glory to You.

Day 05

1 THESSALONIANS 1:2-4

📍 READ & RESPOND

In his letter to the Thessalonians, Paul wrote to tell them how much he thanked God for them. Paul wasn't just thankful that they existed; he was thankful for the evidence of their faith! They worked because of their faith. They labored because of their love, and they endured because of their hope in Jesus Christ. Their actions showed that their faith was genuine. Because of this, Paul recognized that they were the chosen, loved people of God. Likewise, people should notice the good work, the deep love, and the strong hope that come from our faith in our lives too!

↓ Verse 4 says that we are chosen by God. How does this concept of being chosen affect how you view your own value?

→ How does your life show that your faith is real? What is the evidence?

↻ Paul prayed for others. Write a two-sentence prayer of thanksgiving to God for the work, love, and hope you see in a specific person.

📍 MEMORIZE

Once you know **James 2:17**, teach it to someone else—a sibling, a parent, or a friend. Explain what it means and why it's important.

📍 PRAY

Lord, I pray for my brothers and sisters in Christ. Give them the strength and courage they need to work, love, and endure for You.