



**Ephesians 2:8-9** God saved you by his grace when you believed. And you can't take credit for this; it is a gift from God. Salvation is not a reward for the good things we have done, so none of us can boast about it.

**James 2:14-26** What good is it, dear brothers and sisters, if you say you have faith but don't show it by your actions? Can that kind of faith save anyone? 15 Suppose you see a brother or sister who has no food or clothing, 16 and you say, "Good-bye and have a good day; stay warm and eat well"—but then you don't give that person any food or clothing. What good does that do?

17 So you see, faith by itself isn't enough. Unless it produces good deeds, it is dead and useless.

18 Now someone may argue, "Some people have faith; others have good deeds." But I say, "How can you show me your faith if you don't have good deeds? I will show you my faith by my good deeds."

19 You say you have faith, for you believe that there is one God. Good for you! Even the demons believe this, and they tremble in terror. 20 How foolish! Can't you see that faith without good deeds is useless?

21 Don't you remember that our ancestor Abraham was shown to be right with God by his actions when he offered his son Isaac on the altar? 22 You see, his faith and his actions worked together. His actions made his faith complete. 23 And so it happened just as the Scriptures say: "Abraham believed God, and God counted him as righteous because of his faith." [g] He was even called the friend of God. 24 So you see, we are shown to be right with God by what we do, not by faith alone.

25 Rahab the prostitute is another example. She was shown to be right with God by her actions when she hid those messengers and sent them safely away by a different road. 26 Just as the body is dead without breath, so also faith is dead without good works.

## Icebreaker

What was the worst job you have ever had?

## Conversation Starters

1. Have you ever been part of a group where what you *do* determines your status in that group (e.g. work, a club, etc.)
2. What is the purpose of rules or chores that a parent establishes for their children?
3. What do you think God's purpose is for the way of living he has established for us?
4. In your faith background, have you ever felt like you needed to "earn" something, or that you're working your way toward something? Share with the group.
5. Have you ever compared your faith to someone else's faith? What kinds of comparisons did you make? Do you think God is making those comparisons?
6. Paul says we are saved by grace, through faith, and not by works. James says our faith is dead without works and questions whether that kind of faith can save us. Do you think Paul and James are contradicting each other? Why or why not?
7. Share about a time when something you *did* actually had an impact on your faith.
8. What are some "acts" that might give your faith "life?" (These will be unique to each individual).