

## STUDY 1. QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

1. **Read through any part of James and share your insights about the following.**
  - a. Does the letter seem to follow themes? What are some of them?
  - b. Does it seem very “theological” or practical?
  - c. If it is addressed to a number of churches, what do you think the problems in those churches would have been?
  - d. Why do you think we have called this series “Christian Living for Dummies”?
2. **See Matthew 6:30, 8:10, 14:31, 17:20; Acts 16:5, Romans 5:1.**
  - a. How is the word ‘faith’ used in these passages?
  - b. Looking at these approaches of faith, which element would be your strength?
  - c. What would be your weakness?
  - d. If you prayed as the apostles prayed, “Lord increase our faith,” how would God answer that prayer for you?
3. In one church, in a time of financial crisis, they had some positive things happen. In what ways was faith apparent in the following comments:
  - a. A leader in the Church Board said, “I believe that God will bless us.”
  - b. A young person said, “I am going to increase my offering.”
  - c. Another said, “I want others to come to understand the Christian Faith.”

## FAITH IN THE LETTER OF JAMES

4. **Read James 1:2-3**

...because you know that the testing of your faith produces endurance (Jas 1.3, NRSV).

  - a. What is it that tests your faith?  
Personal conflict? Illness? Disappointments? Emotional illnesses? Something else?
  - b. Are any of these happening now?
  - c. Have you emerged as a stronger Christian because of this test?
5. **Read James 1:6**
  - a. In what way is the word faith here used?
  - b. What is being asked for here? (See verse 5).
6. **Read James 2:14-17**
  - a. What type of faith is James talking about here when he says that “faith without works is dead”?
  - b. See James 1:17, 27, 19, 2:5-6, 3:5-6, 4:1
  - c. In the light of those verses, what do you think James means by “works”?
  - d. Are any members of your group people who show an active faith? How do they do it? In what way do their “works” make a difference to themselves?/ To others?
7. **See Romans 3:27-31.**

Doesn't it say that we cannot be saved by works? Is this a contradiction with what James teaches? What do you think Paul means?
8. **See 1 John 3:18.**
  - a. How does this fit in with what James is saying about faith?
  - b. Has God ever challenged you to be more involved in Christian service? How did this challenge come about? How did you respond?
9. The apostles asked Jesus, “Lord, increase our faith” (Luke 17:5). In the light of what we have learnt about faith in this study, what would happen to you if you prayed that prayer.