JAMES

REAL FAITH @ REAL LIFE

- Genuine faith must be lived out in **Spiritual Community**, not isolation.

When we're not in spiritual community:

- Church becomes something we **go to** instead of something we **are**.
- We're **isolated** from the Family of God.
- We have no place to use the **gifts** God has given us.
- We have nowhere to live out the "**one another's**".

- God designed the best **version** of **you** to be developed in spiritual community.
- We are cared for **best** by those who know us **most**.
- Our sense of spiritual fulfillment and belonging are closely tied to a shared **commitment** and a shared **life** together with other believers.

All the believers devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching, and to fellowship, and to sharing in meals (including the Lord's Supper), and to prayer. … And all the believers met together in one place and shared everything they had. …They worshiped together at the Temple each day, met in homes for the Lord's Supper, and shared their meals with great joy and generosity all the while praising God and enjoying the goodwill of all the people. And each day the Lord added to their fellowship those who were being saved. Acts 2:42-47 (NLT)

- When God's Spirit is at work in us, we will **take care of one another.**

You can develop a healthy, robust community that lives right with God and enjoy its results only if you do the hard work of getting along with each other, treating each other with dignity and honor.
James 3:18 (MSG)

13 Are any of you suffering hardships? You should pray. Are any of you happy? You should sing praises. 14 Are any of you sick? You should call for the elders of the church to come and pray over you, anointing you with oil in the name of the Lord. 15 Such a prayer offered in faith will heal the sick, and the Lord will make you well. And if you have committed any sins, you will be forgiven. James 5:13-15

How faith gets expressed in Spiritual Community:

- We have a shared spiritual **response** to the seasons of life.

Cast your burden on the Lord, and he will sustain you; he will never permit the righteous to be moved. Psalm 55:22
Be happy with those who are happy, and weep with those who weep. Romans 12:15
26 If one part suffers, all the parts suffer with it…. 1 Corinthians 12:26

Action Step:

Commit to getting into **spiritual community**.

16 Therefore confess your sins to each other and pray for each other so that you may be healed. James 5:16a

- When there is sin, we **acknowledge** it with others.

20 All who do evil hate the light and refuse to go near it for fear their sins will be exposed. 21 But those who do what is right come to the light so others can see that they are doing what God wants. John 3:20–21

9 But if we confess our sins to him, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all wickedness. 1 John 1:9

When we confess our sins to God we receive **forgiveness**, when we confess our sin to others we receive **healing**.

People who conceal their sins will not prosper, but if they confess and turn from them, they will receive mercy. Proverbs 28:13

…The earnest prayer of a righteous person has great power and produces wonderful results. 17 Elijah was as human as we are, and yet when he prayed earnestly that no rain would fall, none fell for three and a half years! 18 Then, when he prayed again, the sky sent down rain and the earth began to yield its crops. James 5:16b -18

Action Step:

Identify one person you are willing to confess a sin to, **then do it.**

19 My dear brothers and sisters, if someone among you wanders away from the truth and is brought back, 20 you can be sure that whoever brings the sinner back from wandering will save that person from death and bring about the forgiveness of many sins. James 5:19-20

My dear friends, if you know people who have wandered off from God's truth, don't write them off. Go after them. Get them back and you will have rescued precious lives from destruction and prevented an epidemic of wandering away from God. James 5:19-20 (Msg)

- When someone is **missing**, we go **get** them.

4 "If a man has a hundred sheep and one of them gets lost, what will he do? Won't he leave the ninety-nine others in the wilderness and go to search for the one that is lost until he finds it?" Luke 15:4

Action step:

Reach out to someone you know is drifting.

VISION:

TO CREATIVELY LOVE AND LEAD PEOPLE IN A GROWING RELATIONSHIP WITH JESUS.

Questions that can be used in Connection Groups:

These questions also work well for personal time with God.

- What scripture and/or point spoke most to you from the Talk on Sunday? Explain.
- When does gathering for church become simply "going to church" rather than living as part of the church?
- What makes it difficult to let other believers know us well enough to care for us?
- What gifts or strengths might God want you to use to serve your spiritual community?
- Which "one another" command is easiest for you to live out? Which is hardest?
- Acts 2:42–47 describes a committed, shared life. What part of that picture would most change your life today?
- How can believers respond together to hardship, joy, and sickness without minimizing anyone's experience?
- Why can confessing sin to a trusted believer help us move toward healing? What makes that difficult?
- How can a group create a culture of honesty, prayer, and restoration without shame or gossip?
- What does it look like to pursue someone who is drifting with both truth and compassion?
- As a connection group, how can we bring people into the spiritual community we love?

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Today's Talk..

JAMES

REAL FAITH REAL LIFE

Faith Expressed in Spiritual Community

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Sunday, October 11th, 2026