

"DO YOU BELIEVE?"

James 1:22–25; 2:14–17 (ESV)

THE BIG IDEA:

True saving faith is not passive intellectual agreement; it is an active, sacrificial allegiance to Jesus Christ that transforms how we live every day.

I. THE QUESTION THAT DEMANDS AN ANSWER

- * Jesus asked directly: "Do you believe?" (John 11:26, 9:35, Matthew 9:28).
- * In 1896, Charles Sheldon challenged believers to ask: "What Would _____?"
- * The film *Do You Believe?* asks: "If you believe in the cross of Christ, what are you going to _____ about it?"

II. THE DANGER OF BEING "HEARERS ONLY"

- * "Be doers of the word, and not hearers only, _____ yourselves." (James 1:22)
- * God's Word is a spiritual _____ (James 1:23–24). To hear without acting is foolish and irrational.
- * Lip service does not equal salvation: "Not everyone who says to me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter the kingdom of heaven, but the one who _____ the _____ of my Father..." (Matthew 7:21)

III. FAITH WITHOUT WORKS IS DEAD

- * Gospel Truth: We are justified by grace alone, through faith alone, in Christ alone (Ephesians 2:8–9). Good works do not earn salvation.
- * However, works are the unavoidable _____ of genuine faith (James 2:17).
- * Intellectual agreement is not enough: "Even the _____ believe—and shudder!" (James 2:19)

IV. THE LAW OF LIBERTY AND LIVING IT OUT

- * Obedience to Scripture is the "law of _____" (James 1:25). Real freedom is being freed from sin to live as God intended.
- * Three Diagnostic Questions:
 1. In my Relationships: Have I received grace, yet refuse to _____?
 2. In my Stewardship: Do I believe God owns all, yet hoard my _____?
 3. In my Witness: Do I believe eternity is real, yet stay _____?

V. THIS WEEK'S CROSS CHALLENGE

Hold your wooden cross this week as a daily reminder and commissioning tool:

1. When anxious: Remember Christ's finished work (1 Peter 2:24).
2. When tempted: Ask "What Would Jesus Do?" and choose obedience.
3. When seeing someone in need: Step out in practical love (1 John 3:18).