

## Home group discussion questions—31st January 2016

### 'Live it out' James 2:14-26

**Read** James 2: 14-26

1. The Apostle James and the Apostle Paul certainly knew each other and had a number of sustained conversations. This passage can be viewed, not as James contradicting Paul, but as James offering the congregations a corrective to possible misunderstandings about some of the early teaching of Paul. What in essence is the corrective he offers?
2. In this passage James offers four illustrations to make his point, two negative and two positive. Look at the two negative ones (15-16 and v.19). What is the sort of faith he is concerned to critique? Where do we see it today?
3. James moves on to illustrate his point with two positive illustrations (Abraham and Rahab.) What they had in common (and maybe the reason they are linked) is that they both offered hospitality to strangers – i.e. acts of mercy that flowed from faith. Thinking first of Abraham: for Paul **Genesis 15:6** was key; for James **Gen 22:13-14**. James point is that *the faithfulness* of Abraham in being willing to sacrifice Isaac was the outflowing of his *faith* in God. In what ways is it important in the church today to insist that *faith and faithfulness* are linked? What does **Hebrews 11:8-12** have to say about the matter?
4. The illustration from Rahab is intriguing. What does this illustration add to the argument?
5. Perhaps a good way of summing up this section of James is to say that Paul and James are 'pushing back' against two different things. Paul is pushing back against a Jewish insistence on keeping the works of the law to define the people of God; James is pushing back against an 'easy believism' as a misunderstanding of Paul. Which danger do you think is most prevalent in the church today?
6. As we look around at the world church (and maybe in our own lives!) we can see a lot of areas where being a Christian makes worryingly little difference to morality, life-style and politics. How can true saving faith be better fostered? What parts of this whole letter can help us?
7. How can we as a home group help each other to live out our faith?

**Pray for** true disciple-making to happen in our church through a new mentoring scheme, through Awake, through our home groups and more.