



Faith in Real Life - James 4:11-17 Faith in the god of me

FOR DISCUSSION: (Page 1)

TRADITIONAL MODEL:

Why do you think it's so easy to talk about what's wrong with other people?

Which of the three ways to *speak ill of* is most convicting to you and what do you think you could do to change that behavior?

1. Speaking falsely: you know it's not true
2. Speaking ignorantly: you think it's true, but you're wrong
3. Speaking uncharitably: it's true, but you're assassinating character not helping

What are some of the specific statements James makes about slandering others? 4:11-12 What do those statements mean? What are some implications of those statements?

What do you think is the essence of what James writes in 4:13-14?

In your opinion, when does good planning become boastful arrogance? What areas in your life (beside business) do you think the same principles can apply?

When have you been cornered by a "me-monster?" In what situations do you find yourself being kind of a me-monster?

What does James say in 4:17 about *the good we know we ought to do*?

In what ways have you evaluated your moral standing by the things you've eliminated from your life? How does v17 change your perspective?



FOR DISCUSSION: (Page 2)

In what areas are you realizing you need to give God more access to?

If *Faith in real life allows God to be God*, which of the following three areas would you like pray about?

- In how we treat people
- In success
- In why we're here

CONTEMPLATIVE MODEL:

What are you learning about God from this message?

What are you learning about yourself from the message?

What questions does this message bring up for you?

What is God doing in your heart lately?

What things do you feel are getting in the way from what God wants to do in you?

What is the biggest thing causing you concern these days? (something to pray about)



Leader Guide **Faith in the god of me** **James 4:11-17**

Faith In Real Life

Honest, realistic and practical words about faith in a real life world from the Epistle of James.

OUTLINE & SCRIPTURES

James 4:11 Brothers, do not slander one another. Anyone who speaks against his brother or judges him speaks against the law and judges it. When you judge the law, you are not keeping it, but sitting in judgment on it. 12 There is only one Lawgiver and Judge, the one who is able to save and destroy. But you--who are you to judge your neighbor? 13 Now listen, you who say, "Today or tomorrow we will go to this or that city, spend a year there, carry on business and make money." 14 Why, you do not even know what will happen tomorrow. What is your life? You are a mist that appears for a little while and then vanishes. 15 Instead, you ought to say, "If it is the Lord's will, we will live and do this or that." 16 As it is, you boast and brag. All such boasting is evil. 17 Anyone, then, who knows the good he ought to do and doesn't do it, sins.

God invites us into a growing relationship with him that over time transforms us into the likeness of Christ. But have you ever noticed that after while how the opposite starts to happen – that God starts to look a lot like us?

PLAYING GOD:

1. I'm playing God when I judge others

4:11 Brothers, do not slander one another.

Slander can be:

1. Speaking falsely: *You know it's not true*
2. Speaking ignorantly: *You think it's true, but it's not.*
3. Speaking uncharitably: *It's true, but you're using it to assassinate their character.*

James is not prohibiting awareness, discernment or even confrontation of injustice or unrighteousness.



Slander is talking to everyone but the person who could most benefit from the conversation. James says, slander breaks God's law

James 4:11 Anyone who speaks against his brother or judges him speaks against the law and judges it. When you judge the law, you are not keeping it, but sitting in judgment on it.

Le 19:18 "Do not seek revenge or bear a grudge against one of your people, but love your neighbor as yourself. I am the LORD.

James says, you're playing God

12 There is only one Lawgiver and Judge, the one who is able to save and destroy. But you--who are you to judge your neighbor?

2. I'm playing God when faith has no effect on my decisions

"God loves you and has a wonderful plan for you life vs. God loves me and I have a wonderful plan for my life?"

13 Now listen, you who say, "Today or tomorrow we will go to this or that city, spend a year there, carry on business and make money."

God is not against planning or making money

Lu 14:28 "Suppose one of you wants to build a tower. Will he not first sit down and estimate the cost to see if he has enough money to complete it?"

James is addressing:

1. Boastfulness (pride)

16 As it is, you boast and brag. All such boasting is evil.

2. False assumptions

14 Why, you do not even know what will happen tomorrow. What is your life? You are a mist that appears for a little while and then vanishes.

3. Independence from God

15 Instead, you ought to say, "If it is the Lord's will, we will live and do this or that."

Faith in real life places our faith at the center of decision-making:

1. Does it violate God's law? (of course!)

You cannot accomplish the will of God by breaking the law of God

2. Faith in real life asks what does God want and where might God be leading me?



15 Instead, you ought to say, “If it is the Lord’s will, we will live and do this or that.”

3. I’m playing God when I deny God full access to who I am becoming

17 Anyone, then, who knows the good he ought to do and doesn’t do it, sins.

We give God access to help us stop bad habits that aren’t good for us anyway

We measure our spirituality by the things we don’t do (legalism)

James is giving us an entirely different perspective of what it means to live real life faith.

Faith in real life allows God to be God – fully.

What is the Gospel?

The Gospel is the “good news” that Jesus entered into our broken world to rescue us from sin. The good news is that through Christ’s redemptive sacrifice on the cross, sinners are pardoned, the undeserving are given grace, and the broken are restored. There is no sin too heinous for God’s forgiveness. There is no person so good in-and-of-themselves that does not require forgiveness. Salvation is a free gift of God to anyone who genuinely acknowledges their brokenness and confesses saving faith in the Son of God. It doesn’t take strong faith, just genuine faith in order to be saved.

An example of how you could pray:

Heavenly Father, I acknowledge that I’m broken and a sinner. I believe that Christ died on the cross for sin, and through his resurrection overcame sin and death. I believe in you. I thank you for saving me.

The good news does not end with a confession of faith. New faith can grow into deep faith if cultivated. Let someone at Sunridge know about your new-found faith, and inquire about our new believer’s resource: [God Time: Your First 31 Days](#). Follow Christ wholeheartedly by professing your faith publicly through baptism, learning the Bible by attending church regularly and pursuing the unique calling of Jesus in your life!