



The BOOK of JAMES

WHAT VIBRANT *faith* LOOKS LIKE

Key Scriptures

James 4

13 Who is wise and understanding among you? Let them show it by their good life, by deeds done in the humility that comes from wisdom. 14 But if you harbor bitter envy and selfish ambition in your hearts, do not boast about it or deny the truth. 15 Such "wisdom" does not come down from heaven but is earthly, unspiritual, demonic. 16 For where you have envy and selfish ambition, there you find disorder and every evil practice.

17 But the wisdom that comes from heaven is first of all pure; then peace-loving, considerate, submissive, full of mercy and good fruit, impartial and sincere. 18 Peacemakers who sow in peace reap a harvest of righteousness.

Ezekiel 22:30

30 "I looked for someone among them who would build up the wall and stand before me in the gap on behalf of the land so I would not have to destroy it, but I found no one.

Closing the Gap

James 4:1-12 shows us how being scattered and distant from God can harden our hearts, causing us to both miss and misinterpret the things that lead to healthy lives and relationships. If we're not careful to "close the gap," it can make us mis-appreciate what we have, mis-diagnose the cause of the problems in our lives, mis-behave in our actions towards others, and misjudge who God is and how He sees us.

Think about it.

The three main points from last weekend's sermon:

- We can close the gap when we focus on what we have and fight to stay thankful.
- We can close the gap when we "stay down." God pours His grace on us when we are humble before Him.
- We can close gap when we choose to love others and leave the judging to God.

Share your insight.

1. In what ways do you feel like you most distance yourself from God and others? How can you close the gap? Discuss your answer.
2. How does focusing on and being thankful for what you do have change your perspective on what you don't have?
3. Think about a time when you felt distant from God. In what ways did the gap cause you to misjudge how He sees you as His son or daughter?
4. Read Ezekiel 22:30. In this verse, God was looking for someone who could stand in the gap to pray, intercede and keep the connection between Him and the people. God is calling us to be that someone!

Pray for one another.

- "SURRENDER, AND STAND UP!"
- Pray for someone you know who has a great need.
- Pray for our city and nation: for revival and renewal in the land.
- Pray for people who still live in fear of COVID to be set free from their fear.
- Pray this together:
Jesus, thank You for wanting to be close to us. Soften our hearts, Lord, so we don't miss the good You have for us. Help us to be thankful for what we have, to be humble in spirit, and to love others well. We surrender our lives to You!