

LIFE GROUP LESSON October 7 to October 13, 2018

“Why Do We Waiver In Our Faith?” (*James 1:1-8*)

● **WELCOME** God’s People (15 minutes)

● **WORSHIP** God (10 minutes – song, reading of Psalms or prayers of thanks/praise). You can use prayers of thanksgiving or adoration as your time of worship

● **Live by God’s WORD** (45 minutes)

Faith is essential because it’s required for our salvation. However, even after accepting Christ, believers are to continue living by faith. Some of us may have great faith while others have only a little. But we can also be characterized by wavering faith—up one day, down the next. Genuine faith is the confident conviction that God will do what He promised. However, if we take our eyes off Him and start looking at our circumstances, our confidence in Him could start to wobble. We will all experience situations like this because the Lord tests our faith in order to make it stronger.

James contains practical advice for those whose faith fluctuates because of difficult circumstances (1:1-8).

When we start doubting, we’re driven and tossed about like the surf of the sea. James says a doubleminded man is unstable in all his ways and should not expect to receive anything from the Lord. To be double-minded is to go back and forth in our thinking. We may begin with strong confidence in God, but as time goes by and the difficult situation continues, we may start to doubt that He will do what He’s promised. Doubting and questioning are not necessarily the same thing. Questioning is seeking to gain further information or understand whether we’re accurately hearing from the Lord. Doubting, on the other hand, involves believing what we think, see, or feel rather than what we know God has said. It’s natural for us to question or doubt when we’re suddenly overwhelmed by a distressing event. The Lord understands our struggle and wants us to come to Him with our pain and confusion. We may have to take time to pray, listen, and evaluate before we know what He’s saying. Sometimes God has to sift our thinking by reminding us of His truth or His faithfulness to us in a similar situation.

Why do we doubt? Even if we’ve trusted the Lord for many years, certain conditions may cause our faith to waver. **A situation goes against our human reasoning** - For instance, if we give part of our income to the Lord, it seems like we won’t have enough. But Jesus said, “Give, and it will be given to you” (Luke 6:38). Anytime we rely on our own logic, we’ll miss God’s best for our lives. **We allow feelings to overcome our faith** - Lord calls us to do something that seems impossible or unreasonable, we can be certain that He will equip us for it. However, if we let feelings of fear, inadequacy, or unworthiness cause us to doubt His promise, we could miss the opportunity through disobedience. Because the Holy Spirit lives within us, we can live a supernatural life in His power if we’ll just obey Him. We’re called to live by faith, not fear. **We don’t see God in certain circumstances** - The Lord has promised to take care of us, but it may not be in the way we want. We may think that the Lord couldn’t possibly be in the midst of a difficult or painful situation, but He is. According to Romans 8:28, He promises to work all things for our good if we love Him and are called according to His purpose. **We listen to negative counsel** - When we’re trying to discern the will of God, we must be careful whom we ask for guidance. Some friends might offer to help us seek the Lord’s direction through prayer, but others may simply tell us what we want to hear or what they’d do in that situation. **We may be ignorant of God’s ways** - Spiritually speaking, we must ignore our watches and calendars because God’s timing is not ours. He alone knows what to do, and when to do it. His delays do not

mean He's forgotten us. **We might feel guilt over past sins** - Sometimes we doubt that God could possibly forgive us for something we did in the past. Even after we've confessed it, we still carry a heavy load of guilt. The problem is one of unbelief because 1 John 1:9 says, "If we confess our sins, He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." As believers, there's nothing we have to do to earn His forgiveness since Christ paid for all our sins on the cross. Although we may still have to deal with the consequences, our guilt has been removed. **We could be listening to the devil** - He's always trying to deceive us and put doubts in our minds so we won't trust the Lord (John 8:44).

Suggested Questions for Discussion and Growth

1. How would you describe your current faith? Is anything presently causing you to doubt God? If so, what can you do to strengthen your confidence in Him?
2. What kinds of situations typically tempt you to doubt the Lord? What Scripture passages address these issues?
3. Have you ever faced a fork in the road that determined your future? If so, did you believe God or allow your reasoning or feelings to govern your choice? What happened as a result of your obedience or disobedience?

●Impact God's WORLD (20 min)

1. Think about ways to grow your group and give birth to a new group.
2. Pray for your lost relatives, co-workers. Ask the Lord to help be a good example.
3. Your group might think about visiting an elderly person or couple.

ANNOUNCEMENTS – 3 minutes:

1. Share: ●any planned group activity ●important church announcements ●next meeting time
2. Keep a copy of the church bulletin to help remind the group of important events.

CLOSING – **Please turn in your attendance each week. It helps us evaluate our progress.**