

**Home Group study: week beginning 1<sup>st</sup> May 2021**

## **When the Going Gets Tough:**

### **4. Faith and Deeds**

In the News Sheet this week Dave quoted Ben Davies, the well-known Welsh preacher, formerly at Bracknell Family Church and a frequent visitor to us at Jubilee.

Ben, never one to mince his words, reportedly said: 'You middle-class English Christians are very good at talking about stuff. Good at holding meetings about stuff. Good at planning stuff. But you are incredibly poor at actually doing stuff'.

How do you react to this accusation? Is he just being prejudicial? (Maybe he should have listened to last week's sermon...!) Is it totally unjust? Or does he maybe have a point?

Assuming you have any time left, or are not too overcome with indignation:

#### **Read: James 2: 14-26**

In verse 17 what sort of action do you think James is talking about?

Do you agree that faith without action is 'dead'? Does that mean that faith does not have the power to save us? Can you think of any scriptures that suggest faith *is* sufficient to save us? Is James contradicting those scriptures?

We believe that all scripture is true. Think about how James can say such a thing when it seems to contradict lots of other scriptures. What conclusions do you come to?

What is James saying in the first half of Verse 18? (*'But someone will say, "you have faith, I have deeds".'* In other words they are saying that some people [just] have faith, while some people [just] do things.) How does the second sentence of the verse answer the first sentence?

#### **Read: John 15: 5-8**

These are of course the words of Jesus. What do you think he means by 'fruit'?

If we think of 'fruit' as 'actions', how does Jesus suggest here that faith and actions are linked to each other? Does that bring more clarity to what James is saying?

If so, in what way?

## **Application**

On Sunday Ben threw down three challenges to us at the end of his sermon. Can anyone remember what they were? *(They were: 1: Do you 'walk the walk'? 2: Do we bear fruit? 3: Are you committed to God at all costs?)*

1. **Do you 'walk the walk'?** Read **Matthew 25 35-40**. What does this say to us about 'walking the walk'? What sort of things might we do to 'walk the walk'?
2. **Do we bear fruit?** What fruit do members of the group think they are producing? How can we ensure we bear fruit (the John 15: 5-8 passage might be a good starting point)? Are there fruit members of the group feel they would like to be producing more? Take a few moments to pray for each other.
3. **Are you committed to God at all costs?** What do the Old Testament events related in James 2: 21-26 teach us about the nature of commitment? How can we begin to build such commitment into our lives? Again, pray for each other to develop a more wholehearted commitment to the things of the Kingdom of God.