



**WE ARE
THE CHURCH**

ST. LUCAS UCC

*Transforming lives
as the hands and feet of Christ*

SMALL GROUP DISCUSSION GUIDE

September 9

Living Faith

By Rev. Eric Moeller

What Is This?

This brief guide is intended for use individually, or in small groups. It's your chance to dive deeper into the issues raised in the weekend sermon and to connect a Biblical story with your daily life.

Revisit the Text

Mark 7: 24-30, James 2: 1-17; <https://bit.ly/2QIW240>

Big Ideas Raised

- Mark's account of Jesus' encounter with a Gentile woman, an outsider to the Jewish people, shows a human side of Jesus that ultimately results a conversion towards non-Jewish people, and helps him to see that his mission is intended for all God's children.
- The passage from James reveals that the early church, though as all disciples were seeking to follow in Jesus' way, continued to struggle with bias and judgmental attitudes, in this case privileging the rich (also called oppressors) in the community and further marginalizing the poor. The passage constitutes a call to those with wealth, power, and privilege to be converted toward their neighbors and embody the royal law that you 'love your neighbor as yourself.' Furthermore, faith goes beyond spirituality to involve the body and bodily needs. Faith that doesn't translate to actions of discipleship is dead. A living faith is a faith of action.
- A more current example of conversion is Archbishop Oscar Romero of El Salvador, who was assassinated in 1980 after living out his own conversion to the poor, and using his resources for the purpose of addressing the root causes of their poverty, also known as seeking social justice.
- All of this taken together constitutes a call to the disciples of Christ to what Dean Brackley, S.J., called 'downward mobility.' This is a call to live and act in contact and solidarity with the marginalized and poor.

Questions Meant to Dig Deeper

- Jesus experienced a conversion through an encounter with someone unlike him, and believed to be outside of God's love. Are there people we as individuals or a community perceive as outsiders and need conversion toward in order to live the Gospel more fully? Are there people who are asking us to see and hear them in a new, loving, caring way?
- Have you ever experienced an encounter with a person unlike yourself who changed the way you perceived others, or other groups of people?
- Are there ways that you can imagine engaging in 'downward mobility'?
- How do you live your faith?

Revisit the Sermon

For a recording or a manuscript of this weekend's sermon, please visit:

<https://www.stlucasucc.org/sermons-resources>