

## SCRIPTURE

**[NIV]** “What good is it, my brothers and sisters, if someone claims to have faith but has no deeds. Can such faith save them? Suppose a brother or a sister is without clothes and daily food. If one of you says to them, “Go in peace; keep warm and well fed,” but does nothing about their physical needs, what good is it? In the same way, faith by itself, if it is not accompanied by action, is dead.”

**[NRSV]** What good is it, my brothers and sisters, if someone claims to have faith but does not have works? Surely that faith cannot save, can it? If a brother or sister is naked and lacks daily food and one of you says to them, “Go in peace; keep warm and eat your fill,” and yet you do not supply their bodily needs, what is the good of that? So faith by itself, if it has no works, is dead.

**[MSG]** Dear friends, do you think you’ll get anywhere in this if you learn all the right words but never do anything? Does merely talking about faith indicate that a person really has it? For instance, you come upon an old friend dressed in rags and half-starved and say, “Good morning, friend! Be clothed in Christ! Be filled with the Holy Spirit!” and walk off without providing so much as a coat or a cup of soup—where does that get you? Isn’t it obvious that God-talk without God-acts is outrageous nonsense?

## THOUGHTS TO CONSIDER

- 1) What word or phrase is the Spirit bringing to my attention?
- 2) As this week was Reformation Day, what might one of the Reformers have said about this passage as it relates to freedom and servanthood?
- 3) One of the natures of the Church – as we affirm in our creedal statements (especially the Nicene Creed) – is that it is **apostolic**. How does this scripture inform our living out this nature? What might that look like with “skin” on?
- 4) As this is also a celebration of the saints – those who have gone before us – when your turn to crossover arrives, what do you want people to say about you? Where is the evidence of faith in your life?
- 5) Name at least one tangible way that your family of faith (congregation) might contextually put faith in action.