

## MY ACTIONS

*“I will show you my faith through my good deeds.”*

**When was the last time you were in a group of people and you just slowed down long enough to watch people? What did you notice about people?** Some people prefer to sit back and observe people before talking or getting involved with people. Other people immediately dive into conversation with the people around them. Some people work hard. Some people hardly work. Some people play hard. Some people hardly ever play. You can tell a lot about a person just by watching their behavior. **What are some things you have already gotten to know about the people in this group just by watching their behavior?**

We usually form first impressions of people within the first 5 minutes of meeting them. Sometimes our first impressions are accurate. Other times they are not accurate. In order to understand people’s behavior, we must form a personal relationship with them. Forming relationships takes a lot of time, energy, and shared experiences for us to truly know one another. When we don’t make time to get to know one another, it’s easy to misunderstand and misjudge people. **But the more we take time to listen to peoples’ stories and experiences, the more we will understand why they do what they do.** When we make time to come alongside one another and get to know each other, and try to put ourselves in one another’s shoes, we will also become a much more accepting and understanding community.

**All behavior is motivated by some desire or need.** But the same behavior in two different people could mean very different things. For example, let’s take the sport of golf. Some people golf because they are competitive, and they thrive on challenge. Some people golf just to have fun. Some people golf to escape work or family or stress. Some people golf just to spend time with their friends. Some people golf to take out their frustrations whacking a golf ball so they don’t take out their frustrations on people. Some people golf for a living. So is golfing a good or a bad behavior? I guess it all depends.

- **What words best describe the behavior of the people around you?**
- **What words best describe your behavior?**
- **Does your behavior allow you to get your needs met?**
- **If there’s one behavior I could change that would help us get along better, it would be \_\_\_\_\_.**

James, the half brother of Jesus Christ, once wrote these words:

*“What’s the use of saying you have faith if you don’t prove it by your actions?...Faith that doesn’t show itself by good deeds is no faith at all—it is dead and useless...I will show you my faith through my good deeds...Just as the body is dead without a spirit, so also faith is dead without good deeds.”* (James 2)

- **What do you think James was trying to say?**
- **What’s in your heart eventually affects what you say and do. Who or what has the biggest impact on your behavior?**

*“Health Talks”* are designed to help us learn to talk and deal with one another in ways that build understanding and a healthy, growing, supportive, Christian community.