

October 18, 2026

Pastor Andy McClellan

Series Title: James

Sermon Title: “The Faith that Doesn’t Save”

Text: James 2:14-26

1. A **DEAD** faith is **WORTHLESS** to those in need, vv. 15-17 (*see also 1:22; Proverbs 3:27-28; Matthew 25:34-46; Titus 3:1-8; 1 John 3:17-18*).
2. A **DEMONIC** faith is **USELESS** to save, vv. 18-20 (*see also John 2:23-25, 8:39-47; Matt. 7:21-23; Mark 1:24, 12:28-31; Romans 1:20-32; Titus 1:16*).
3. A **LIVING** faith is **DEMONSTRATED** by its works, vv. 20-26 (*see also Genesis 15:6, 22:12; Joshua 2:1-15; Matt. 7:15-20; 12:33-37; John 8:30-47; Rom. 1:5, 3:24-30, 4:1-9, 16:26; Galatians 2:16, 3:6, 5:6; Ephesians 2:8-10; Hebrews 11:31*).

FOR FURTHER STUDY & DISCUSSION

1. When something is emotionally moving today, people will often say something like, “*you’d have to have no pulse to not be affected by it.*” What is meant by that expression? In 2:14, James opens this section with a question. Given the context (1:26-2:13), what good should our faith produce? Why is our care for others such an important demonstration of our faith? If we are dismissive to others’ needs, how might our faith be questioned as having no pulse? How is Titus 3:1-8 helpful for us?
2. In v. 19, James points out that demons believe. What do they believe, how do they respond from that belief, and why is having a faith like theirs insufficient to save (see cross references in point 2 above)? What does a “demonic” faith like that look like today?
3. Some claim that James (2:24) is contradicting the teachings of Paul (Gal. 2:16; Eph. 2:8-9). Why is that not the case? According to James, what kind of faith can’t save a person? According to Paul (Rom. 1:5, 16:26; Gal. 5:6, Eph. 2:10) what does saving faith always produce? With that in mind, why is it better to read James and Paul as complementary rather than contradictory? Why are they both necessary to our walk of faith? What’s the result to our daily living when we over-emphasize one to the neglect of the other?
4. In light of this passage, what’s the problem with saying, “He’s a Christian, but he’s not walking with the Lord?” What’s the difference between a believer who is struggling with sin, and one whose walk contradicts what they say they believe? While we can’t judge any person’s heart, how should we pray for those who once professed faith in Jesus, but whose lives don’t demonstrate that faith? Spend some time praying for them.
5. What change in your own life has this text exposed or revealed? God is gracious to both forgive and empower. Pray for yourself, using Eph. 2:8-10 as your guide.

NEXT WEEK: James 3:1-12, Jonah Carpenter

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