

## Going Deeper - Weekly Sermon Discussion Guide

### Gospel of James - Faith & Deeds

August 16, 2020



This section of James is probably one of the scariest places in the Bible for a lot of Christians. In James 2:14-26, Jesus' half-brother doesn't hold any punches when he says our faith is fake if we don't also show the physical actions that go with it.

Growing up in a Christian home, I was blessed to know Jesus from a young age. Throughout my childhood and even into my young adult life, I had believed that believing that Jesus had died on the cross for my sins and was resurrected on the third day, was enough. That I wasn't saved through work/deeds/actions. Now I understand this is the definition of a "lukewarm Christian." I'm going to tell you a secret... this is exactly where the evil one wants us to live for the rest of our life.

You see, it's hard to make an impact in this world if we don't actually do anything. One of the great things about the letter of James is that there is no misunderstanding. "You believe that there is one God. Good! Even the demons believe that - and shudder." This passage from verse 19 hits me to my core. Faith without deeds is dead or fake.

I don't believe that my upbringing as a Christian was wrong, it just wasn't finished. Knowing who God is and what Jesus did for me as a sinner is step one. There is now a life filled with purpose and action that comes after. If we do not have a life with action, then what is the purpose of having faith? We are to be lights in this world and we can only do that if we show that light to others.

My prayer is that you and I stand courageous and lean on Jesus as an example of how to live in our own lives. Am I worried about my salvation? No. I do, however, want to stand before God and know that I did my best with the time I had. Work won't get me salvation. I already have that. My salvation is the motivator which makes me want to work and take action in this world.

1. Do you relate to being a "lukewarm Christian?" If you do, how did you get there and do you want to become unstuck? What is one action item you can do today to start the process of incorporating the deeds James writes about into your own life?
2. How would you explain these passages to a Christian who is misinterpreting James? To the Christian who says through faith he is saved and he does not need to work in order to be saved? Knowing the answer to this question will ensure you have full understanding yourself. So, go for it!