

Decaf faith

What good is it, dear brothers and sisters, if you say you have faith but don't show it by your actions? Can that kind of faith save anyone? Suppose you see a brother or sister who has no food or clothing, and you say, "Good-bye and have a good day; stay warm and eat well"—but then you don't give that person any food or clothing. What good does that do?

So you see, faith by itself isn't enough. Unless it produces good deeds, it is dead and useless. (James 2:14-17)

Dear children, let's not merely say that we love each other; let us show the truth by our actions. (1 John 3:18)

Every Thursday morning, I meet with a group of guys at Cracker Barrel. One of my buddies recently started drinking decaffeinated coffee. When I asked him about it, he complained that their regular coffee was bitter and that the decaf tasted better.

Seriously? So what's the point of drinking coffee at all?

Decaf can be deceptive. It looks like real coffee. It smells like real coffee. It even (sort of) tastes like real coffee. But it doesn't deliver the goods. It doesn't awaken the senses, refresh the soul, or sharpen the mind. You get the warmth and the smell and the taste of coffee—but they're just empty promises.

I submit that there will be no decaf in heaven. We will enjoy only real coffee to the glory of God forever and ever. Amen.

Why am I talking about decaffeinated coffee? Well, just like coffee without caffeine is dead, James tells us in our passage that faith without works is dead.

James is talking to believers. He is NOT saying that deeds play any part in saving anyone. He is saying that if anyone is saved, that good deeds—life-giving deeds—will follow.

Many Christians have decaf faith. They rattle off Bible verses from memory, they tithe, and they never miss church. And they are probably good neighbors. But decaf faith has no power to produce Christ-like behavior in the one who has it. Genuine faith is life changing. Genuine faith will compel us to represent Jesus at work, in the marketplace, and in our neighborhood.

We need genuine faith. Decaf faith will never Serve the City.

Pray

Stir up genuineness in me, Holy Spirit. Whatever it takes, please let people see You in me. I want to be a Kingdom asset.

DAY **18**
Thursday, January 25th

RECURRING NEEDS

Revival
Repentance
Wisdom
Marriages
Families
Sick/Grieving
Depression/Mental illness
City Church
Church leaders
Children
Youth
Singles
Senior citizens
Volunteers
Teachers and support staff
Emergency personnel
Business community
Elected officials
Missionaries
Worldwide church
The lost

REFLECTIONS
