



ALL IN FAITH

WEEK 2 | AMANDA BEGGS

There is a great market for religious experience in our world; there is little enthusiasm for the patient acquisition of virtue, little inclination to sign up for a long apprenticeship in what earlier generations of Christians called holiness. **Religion in our time has been captured by the tourist mindset.** Religion is understood as a visit to an attractive site to be made when we have adequate leisure... For some it is a weekly jaunt to church; for others, occasional visit to special services. Some, with a bent for religious entertainment and sacred diversion, plan their lives around special events like retreats, rallies and conferences. We go to see a new personality, to hear a new truth, to get a new experience and so somehow expand our otherwise humdrum lives.

- Eugene Peterson, *A Long Obedience in the Same Direction*

Jesus doesn't call us to be tourists. **Jesus calls us to be pilgrims.**

Matthew 7:13-14

“Enter by the narrow gate. For the gate is wide and the way is easy that leads to destruction, and those who enter by it are many. For the gate is narrow and the way is hard that leads to life, and those who find it are few.”

Question:

When it comes to my faith, am I a tourist or a pilgrim?

- The book of James is often referred to by scholars as the Proverbs of the New Testament.

James 2:26

For as the body apart from the spirit is dead, so also faith apart from works is dead.

- The grace we get from Jesus is a free gift, not earned through works. To be right before the Lord, all we have to do is confess with our mouth and believe that Jesus is who He says He is.

The book of James answers the question: **What does genuine faith actually look like?**

Genuine faith is a lived faith. It's a faith that transforms us from the inside out.

Tourists:

- Experience Driven: Pursue what feels good
- Convenience Oriented: Prioritize ease and comfort
- Non-Committal: Observes from a distance without deep engagement
- Consumer Mindset: What's in it for me?
- Short-Term Focus: Interested in instant results, not long-term formation

Pilgrims:

- Gospel Driven: Anchored in the hope of the gospel
- Focus on Formation: Embrace the discomfort as part of spiritual growth
- Deeply Committed: Participate fully and personally in the life of faith
- Discipleship Mindset: Fully submitted to Jesus as Lord
- Lifelong Journey: Marked by consistency, repetition, and faithfulness

- As tourists, we will never experience the abundant life Jesus has for us.

“We got dust on our Bibles, brand new iPhones. No wonder why we feel this way. We walk with our eyes closed, blind leading blind folks. And I'm done with those idols and dusty Bibles.”

- Josiah Queen, *Dusty Bibles*

TOURIST TRAPS:

1 Dusty Bibles

James 1:23-24

For if anyone is a hearer of the word and not a doer, he is a man who looks intently at his natural face in a mirror. For he looks at himself and goes away and at once forgets what he was like.

At once: immediately = completely changed

Forget: allowing something to escape by inattention or neglect

- If our spiritual intake comes exclusively from devotionals, TikTok clips, ChatGPT summaries, or The Chosen then we are falling into a tourist trap. We believe that we can have dusty Bibles and still have genuine faith, but **we are deceiving ourselves.**

James 1:25

But the one who looks into the perfect law, the law of liberty and perseveres, being no hearer who forgets but a doer who acts, he will be blessed in his doing.

Looks into: gaze intently, look with intense interest and attention.

Perfect law of liberty:

- Word of God
- Without error or deceit
- Brings freedom

Psalm 1:3

He is like a tree planted by streams of water that yields its fruit in its season, and its leaf does not wither. In all that he does, he prospers.

- The tree's roots are connected to its source.

Question:

When was the last time I picked up the Bible and read a passage that actually changed me?

2 Fruitless Faith

James 2:14-17

What good is it, my brothers and sisters, if someone claims to have faith but has no deeds? Can such faith save them? If a brother or sister is poorly clothed and lacking daily food, and one of you says to them, “Go in peace, stay warm and well fed,” but does nothing about their physical needs—what good is that? In the same way, faith by itself, if it is not accompanied by action, is dead.

John 14:15

If you love me, you will obey my commandments.

Galatians 5:6

The only thing that counts is faith expressing itself through love.

Ephesians 2:8-10

For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God—not by works, so that no one can boast. For we are God’s handiwork, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do.

→ Like a seed, our faith, if planted and tended to will bear fruit. **Good works are evidence of our faith.**

Tourist Faith: Observes the need and maybe even feels something about it but moves on.

Pilgrim Faith: Asks the Holy Spirit to reveal what action is required and obeys.

We are meant to respond to who God puts in our path, taking action as the Holy Spirit leads.

We feel restless because we feel purposeless. We want to know what God wants us to do and who we’re supposed to be.

→ True rest is found when we walk in the good works that God prepared in advance for us.

3 Wrong Equation

We measure ourselves by a standard that we believe to be true:

- Knowledge = Spiritual Maturity: The more we know the more genuine our faith will be.

James 2:18-20

But someone will say, “You have faith and I have works.” Show me your faith apart from your works, and I will show you my faith by my works. You believe that God is one; you do well. **Even the demons believe**—and shudder! Do you want to be show, you foolish person, that faith apart from works is useless?

Tourist Traps

- Knowledge = Maturity: Right belief without right action is nominal Christianity; being Christian in name, but not in practice.
- Good Behavior = Maturity: Right action without right belief is legalism: trying to earn God’s favor by being good.

Pilgrim’s Path

- Loving Obedience = Maturity: Right belief and behavior are fueled by love and trust.

Question:

How is my faith in Jesus actually showing up in my life?

→ We think rest comes from control, but genuine rest is found in surrender.

What if rest isn’t about God saying yes to us, but about us saying yes to God?

Until you sit and put your full weight in a chair, you can’t experience the rest it offers. Our faith is the same—**until we put the full weight of our trust in Jesus, we will never experience rest.**

The greatest expression of trust is obedience—even when it seems hard, and when we don’t understand.

→ Abraham was justified when he put Isaac on the altar as a sacrifice.

James 2:21-23

Question:

Where is God asking me for my full weighted trust?

Are you debating whether you should take a step of faith in Jesus, or whether you should wait until you can clearly see how to do what He has asked? **Simply obey Him with unrestrained joy.** When He tells you something and you begin to debate, it is because you have a misunderstanding of what honors Him and what doesn't. Are you faithful to Jesus, or faithful to your ideas about Him? Are you faithful to what He says, or are you trying to compromise His words with thoughts that never came from Him? Whatever He says to you, do it.

- Oswald Chambers, *My Utmost for His Highest*

