



JAMES

REAL FAITH IN REAL LIFE



daily devos
RADIATE STUDENTS

WELCOME!

Dear Students,

We are excited to introduce to you-the first of its kind in Radiate-your digital discipleship content, The Daily Devos! The last several weeks and months have been extremely challenging, especially when it comes to connecting with God. You may have been killing the game spiritually, or you may have had very little personal devotion time with the Lord. Wherever you've been, today can represent a fresh new start when it comes to connecting with God one-on-one.

It's our desire to put tools in your hands to grow your love and faith in Jesus wherever you are. Wednesday and Sundays are important, but a lot of you realized quickly that when those were taken away, you had been relying on them for your spiritual walk. We want to show you that the church is more than a building, and Jesus is the source of your spiritual growth. (And when it's time to start gathering together again, we hope you'll come ready to overflow with praise for what God's been doing in your heart while alone in your room.)

Here's how it works: every other Monday we will drop a 14-day discipleship guide on the Website. You can go through it on your phone or tablet or print it off and stuff it in the pages of your journal. It shouldn't take more than 15-20 minutes a day, so don't worry about time. This document is interactive, so you can use a PDF reader (Apple Books or Adobe Acrobat both work great!) and click the fields to type in your answers.

Each day, you will find the same format, but we encourage you to begin your time in prayer. Just like in 1 Samuel 3, Eli taught Samuel to pray, "Speak, Lord, for your servant is listening." Continue by reading the Bible verses at the top, and enjoy engaging with them through questions, prayer, and a real life missional moment.

This content will really be about what you take the time to put into it. You can skim the paragraphs in a minute and move on, or you can learn to enjoy taking your time digesting the richness of God's Word. We are praying for you as you learn to love Jesus and his Word more and more! We love you, and we are available for any questions you may have along your journey.

The RADIATE Staff

WEEK 1 | DAY 1

READ: [Acts 15:13-19](#)

REFLECT:

The book of James is all about how to live out real faith in real life. Today, we are going to look a little deeper at the man behind the book. It is so important when you study any passage of Scripture to look at the context, background information, author, audience, etc. – so you can understand it better and avoid misinterpreting the Bible.

Did you know that James and Jesus were brothers? They grew up in the same family together with the same parents. Can you imagine what it would be like to have Jesus as a brother?

Once Jesus died and rose, the church started getting off the ground and its history is recorded in the book of Acts. We find out in Acts 15 that Paul and his ministry partner were having an argument specifically about how to become a Christian.

Who spoke up in Acts 15:13? _____

A council (made up of church leaders throughout Jerusalem) was set up to debate and resolve issues like this, and James was one such leader. James says, “we should not make it difficult for the Gentiles who are turning to God.” And he came up with a plan to clear up the confusion.

Take a minute to think about these questions:

- Do you make following Jesus look harder than it needs to be?
- Do your conversations, social media, or (honestly) your face show people that following Jesus is awesome?
- Are you conditioning people to think that turning to God is about you? Or that you can take advantage of God by sinning as much as you want?

We as Christians should be people that live a godly life and show others that surrender to Jesus is worth it! James is going to give us really practical solutions for godly living. We shouldn't be fighting, making up rules that aren't in the Bible (like what was happening in Acts), or misrepresenting Jesus by treating people badly; we make it difficult for people to want to follow Jesus when they see us acting like that.

Instead, as Matthew 5:16 says, "...let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father who is in heaven." How do you represent Jesus?

Pray:

Dear God, surrendering to you is so worth it! I pray that I would live my life in a way that people want to know the Jesus I claim to represent. I pray that you would use me to bring people to you, not push them away from you. Speak to me through this study of James. Amen.

RESPOND:

How can I represent Jesus well to someone today? *(click to type)*

REAL LIFE:

Think of someone you've wronged in the last week. Go apologize to them, even if it's hard, and tell them "I'm sorry. I didn't represent Jesus well to you".

WEEK 1 | DAY 2

READ: [James 1:1](#)

REFLECT:

James is a letter. Who was it written to, based on verse one?

I don't know about you, but the greeting is one of those phrases I sort of gloss over in order to get to the "good stuff". But the recipient of this letter has more to do with us than we may realize.

Definitions:
"twelve tribes": a Jewish reference, having to do with the twelve tribes of Israel, the houses of God's people set up in Deuteronomy.
"the Dispersion" or "Diaspora": an area/group of people at the time that were "dispersed" outside of their original location of Palestine .

James is writing to Jewish Christians that fled town because of persecution. A lot of other New Testament letters (like Ephesians) are to a church in a specific city. But this is a letter giving pastoral advice to hurting people peppered all over the region. James is God's mouthpiece calling out to this scattered group saying, "I've got you! I haven't forgotten you!" These are people who are in new places and unknown circumstances, and they just need some advice for how to live a godly life in this new season.

Do you need advice for how to live a godly life in this new season? Yes No

God's Word is amazing because it contains a letter written 2,000 years ago to people in a totally different culture. And yet you can find peace for what YOU are going through right now. No, James was not written to you. And no, it's not wise to read into the text to make it say what you want it to say to fit your life. But it's cool that we can relate on some small level to what the "twelve tribes in the Dispersion" were going through.

COVID-19 has brought a lot of change. But God doesn't change (Hebrews 13:8), his Word is still living and active (Hebrews 4:12), and we can always trust what he says (Isaiah 40:8). Even in the intro to James, he is calling to you, saying, "I've got you." Will you trust him no matter what lies ahead?

Pray:

I trust you, God! You tell me you are Provider, Deliverer, Savior, Father, Friend, Comforter, Peace, and more... and I believe you! Remind me throughout the day of specific ways you've been faithful, and I'll praise you for them.

RESPOND:

How has your life changed because of COVID-19? *(click to type)*

What has been the hardest part about adjusting to a new normal?

REAL LIFE:

Reach out to a friend that you know is struggling. Remind them that God cares about the details of their life. Pray with them right then and there.

WEEK 1 | DAY 3

READ: [James 1:1-8](#)

REFLECT:

I used to think that James 1:2-4 and James 1:5-8 were two totally separate concepts.

Sermon Number One: “Count it all joy, my brothers, when you meet trials of various kinds” (vv. 2-4)

Sermon Number Two: “Be Wise/Don’t Doubt” (vv. 5-8)

But this is where going verse by verse through a book of the Bible is so helpful. It wasn’t meant to be split up. You wouldn’t get a long message from a friend and say, well, I’ll read it one sentence per day, and maybe take the weekends off... No one would do that! In the same way, James is a letter meant to be read all at once. With that in mind, let’s see how sermons one and two jive.

ONE: “Count it all _____, my brothers, when you meet trials of various kinds, for you know that the testing of your faith produces _____.”

Have you heard that before? Count your trials (AKA hard times) as joy? That’s pretty hard to do WITHOUT verse 3. It’s like saying, hey stop being so sad! And then not telling you what you have to actually be happy about. But James assures us that our trials can cause us to grow in our faith (steadfastness), and they ultimately draw us closer to God.

TWO: (And here’s the connection between the two sections) When you see tough times as a good thing, you’ll realize you need wisdom for it, which comes from God.

People sometimes use this passage to say, well, you shouldn’t have doubts about God. Did you know that having doubts/questions is ok? This passage is saying don’t doubt that God can give you wisdom to deal with trying situations. Don’t be ½-in-½-out with God’s ability to come through. It doesn’t say don’t you dare ever ask questions.

Summary: In tough times you may doubt, but you can ask for wisdom, and God will strengthen your character, ultimately causing you to be closer with him.

Pray:

God, without doubting that you can give it, I ask you for wisdom in the hard things that I'm facing. I am asking you for it, because I acknowledge that you're the one who gives it. You promise to give it generously, so thank you!

RESPOND:

Where do you usually go for help? *(click to type)*

Read [Psalm 121:1-2](#). Where does your help really come from?

REAL LIFE:

Talk to a friend who says they are a Christian, but they may be pulling a 1 Kings 18:21 and “limping” between following God and not. Ask how you can lovingly hold them accountable.

WEEK 1 | DAY 4

READ: [James 1:9-18](#)

REFLECT:

Let's talk temptation.

Temptation literally means a pull toward something wrong...to make proof of, to test, to try someone's faith, to attempt to examine.

Temptation is not sin. Temptation can lead to sin. But temptation can also be resisted and result in a person NOT sinning. When we sin, we are giving in to temptation, but being tempted is not sin.

How do we know that? Well, Jesus was tempted. (You can look at [Matthew 4](#), [Mark 1](#), and [Luke 4](#) for those stories.) But Jesus was also without sin. (Proof of this is found at [2 Corinthians 5:21](#); [Hebrews 4:15](#), and [1 Peter 2:22](#).)

When we are tempted, we are being lured by what? (see verse 14)

1 Corinthians 10:13 says, "No temptation has overtaken you that is not common to man. God is faithful, and he will not let you be tempted beyond your ability, but with the temptation he will also provide the way of escape, that you may be able to endure it."

This verse has great promises awaiting us. That first part tells us that whatever you're facing, someone else has too. And God is always going to help you and show you a better choice to make in the moment. That is so reassuring for when you feel like sinning is the only choice!

Pray:

God, I pray that you would help me to resist temptation today. Show me that there is a better way. Guide me to the Bible for help. Put people around me that I can be honest with about my struggles. Thank you for always being with me.

RESPOND:

What is one of your biggest temptations? Where are you when this temptation strikes? How can you put safeguards in your life to resist this? *(click to type)*

REAL LIFE:

Open up to a trusted friend or adult about a temptation that you deal with. Allow them to hold you accountable and be someone you can text or reach out to when you're struggling. On the flip side, the next time a friend of yours confesses something they are dealing with, offer yourself to be an accountability friend to them.

WEEK 1 | DAY 5

READ: [James 1:19-21](#)

REFLECT:

What does James say EVERY person should be?

Quick to _____, Slow to _____, Slow to Get _____

Draw a circle (use the markup tool) around whichever one (or two!) is hardest for you.

Think about the last time this has happened to you...

- ***My friend is telling me something.***
- ***Something they say reminds me of something I want to say.***
- ***As soon as I can get a word in - maybe I don't even wait for that - I say my thing.***

Can you relate? At the end of the day, I'm treating that person like they are just a supporting actor in a movie about ME. It's usually selfishness that causes me to talk over someone and not listen. (Technically, there could be an emergency, like their hair is on fire. In that case, it's a good thing to interrupt!)

Today's first challenge is really simple: practice keeping your mouth shut! For some of you, you're like - I've got this! And some of you are already sweating, because it's going to be hard. If this is something you struggle with, here are a couple of practical reminders: 1) Count to five in your head before you say what you want to say. 2) If interrupting is something you struggle with, remind yourself that it is not fun when someone does it to you.

Now let's look at the third part for a second. When was the last time you got angry? _____

Maybe you had a great reason to get angry. Maybe someone wronged you or someone else, and they shouldn't get away with it! Whether your anger is justified or not, Ephesians 4:26 says, "Be angry and do not sin." In other words, anger is not the sin, but it can QUICKLY lead to sin (like jealousy, lying, gossip, or even violence).

If you get angry really quickly, you can turn around and sin quickly. But if your anger is slow, you can watch your reaction more closely and avoid sin more easily.

Proverbs 17:27-28 says, “The one who has knowledge uses words with restraint, and whoever has understanding is even-tempered. Even fools are thought wise if they keep silent, and discerning if they hold their tongues.”

I don't know about you, but Proverbs gives a swift kick to the old ego sometimes, reminding me that it's not about me. If I let the Holy Spirit give me self-control, the slow to speak and slow to anger thing goes hand in hand. And in fact, even if I'm a fool, I'll be smart if I keep my mouth shut sometimes!

Pray:

Thank you, God, for being slow to get angry with me. You listen and you are kind. One fruit of the spirit is self-control; so Holy Spirit, give me an extra dose of that for when I'm tempted to be quick to speak, slow to listen, or quick to get angry. Calm my anger and teach me to control it.

RESPOND:

What are you going to do the next time you get angry?
Check all that apply.

- React in the heat of the moment
- Take deep breaths and count to five
- Go behind that person's back for revenge
- Pray that God gives you self-control
- Pretend that you're not mad

REAL LIFE:

Ask a friend “what is God doing in your life right now?” Don't interrupt, don't interject, and when you think they are done, wait a few seconds to see if they want to say anything else. Do the same with a friend that doesn't know Jesus, except you can ask them, “who is Jesus to you?” and model the patient kindness of Jesus.

WEEK 1 | DAY 6

READ: [James 1:22-27](#)

REFLECT:

Have you ever tried to cram for a last-minute quiz? Right before class you've got the study guide out, and you're trying so hard to remember the material. Then when the quiz comes, your mind is 100% empty. What's my name again? What class is this?!

But there are other times when you read a test question, and you don't even have to think about it. You did the practice problems, worked with the tutor, and familiarized yourself with the content. Or maybe school is not your jam, and it's in a game where you're thinking, "I know exactly what to do here." Why? Because you've practiced, you're prepared, and you've seen this move before.

James says it like this in today's reading: you look in a _____ and walk away immediately forgetting what your face looks like.

This is an analogy where the mirror is the Bible. And we've all been there: read, read, read, and five minutes later, what did I just read? James 1:21 in the NLT says, "...Humbly accept the word God has planted in your hearts, for it has the power to save your souls." And then do what it says!

God's Word is not a study guide that you skim before you move on with the rest of your day. It's something to be practiced, lived out, and repeated. If you listen to God's Word but don't do what it says, you're missing the point. Verse 25 says there is blessing in it for you when you put it into practice.

What is the blessing, you ask?

Consistent time in the word will grow your relationship with God. Obeying God, even if it's hard, is one of the best feelings. Trusting God's promises can get you through some really hard times. These are definitely blessings!

Pray:

Spirit of Truth, guide me in all truth today. Teach me to be a doer of the word, not just a hearer. As things come up today, remind me of Bible verses I've read before. Show me how I can actually DO what you say. Give me a hunger and thirst for more and more of you.

RESPOND:

Think about the last thing you read in the Bible or the last sermon you heard. Have you DONE it or just listened to it? Maybe you are really struggling with a certain attitude or situation. Look up some Bible verses about what you're going through. With God's help, what Scripture do you need to put into practice today?

REAL LIFE:

The next time a friend comes to you for advice, instead of thinking of something off the top of your head – go to the Bible! Ask each other, “Does the Bible have anything to say about this?” (I guarantee you it does, but you may have to do a little work to find it.) Then talk through how they can put into practice God's Word, not your words.

WEEK 1 | DAY 7

READ: [James 2:1-13](#)

REFLECT:

Don't you love it when the Bible is super direct? Yes, that makes it hard to read sometimes, because the conviction is REAL. But honestly, it helps when you read something like James 1:9, "... you are committing sin..." Boom! Straight forward. Crystal clear.

What does James say is a sin? _____

Partiality isn't a word we all use day-to-day; but if it is a sin, it's important enough that you need to know what it means! A simple Google search of the word will tell us...

Partiality:
unfair bias in favor of one thing or person compared with another; favoritism.

Ouch. So many times, we treat people worse based on how they look, dress, talk, etc., compared to someone else. That is favoritism. James is specifically talking about judging someone based on their socio-economic status to get ahead and feel better about ourselves. And meanwhile God really doesn't see us like that.

What are some ways you have shown favoritism?

God values all people, regardless of money, family, race, gender... and is "not wishing for any to perish but for all to come to repentance" (2 Peter 3:9). So, when we treat people differently for surface-level reasons, we are not reflecting the God that "so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son" (John 3:16).

Pray:

God, I'm sorry for playing favorites. I realize now that it's a sin, and today, let me be a "doer" of the word and not just a "hearer". Lead me into situations where I can choose to love people different from me. Convict my heart if I show favoritism, and show me in the moment how I can change course and be kind to all.

RESPOND:

What are some reasons you may show favoritism?

REAL LIFE:

Think of the last time you treated someone poorly because you didn't think they would "benefit" you. Reach out to that person. Apologize to them. Find a way to be kind to them now.

WEEK 2 | DAY 1

READ: [James 2:14-26](#)

REFLECT:

You may have caught on by now that James is a master at word pictures and illustrations for making a point. He'd be a great preacher to listen to. In today's reading, he describes a scenario. If you've ever been on a mission trip or participated in a #radiatego or mission/service project, you may have been in a position to give something away like food, a jacket, or a Bible. Imagine for a second...

You're in the slums of Kenya, and you meet a family that has no food and is not sure how they are going to pay for school this week. You sort of stumble into their home, because it's on uneven ground that's barely hanging on to the side of a hill. You see the rain dripping through the cracks in the ceiling. You've had a pleasant conversation, learned their names, and heard their stories. You get up to leave and say, "Hope y'all have a great day. You know what, y'all have a good meal tonight and stay dry. And while you're at it, hope you can find a way to pay for school, because God's gonna take care of you!" And then you leave.

Huh?! It seems like that situation is missing something right? A bag of food, a gift with a bucket or a tarp, or a gospel presentation... There's something missing that ends up making this scenario pretty silly. Well, James paints a similar picture for us, and he's trying to make a point about faith. The NLT says in verse 20, "How foolish! Can't you see that faith without good deeds is useless?"

Let's pause here and remember. Who was the letter of James written to (see day 2 if you need help)? _____

These Jewish Christians in a new place needed to be reminded that if they say they have faith in Jesus, they need to show it! Even in a new situation, even around new people, even when things are scary.

Don't hear what James is NOT saying. He's not saying that you earn your way to heaven by doing good deeds. He's not saying that God loves you if you do good things for him. He's not saying that it's faith + works that gives salvation (more on that tomorrow).

He's saying, if you say you're a Christian and someone looks at your life, they should be able to tell. We're not asking you to judge your friend and say that because he does this-this-and-this, he must not be a Christian. We're saying that when YOU tell someone you're a Christian, are they shocked? You are like a fruit tree, and what's inside is going to come out (see [Matthew 7:17-20](#)). Can your family tell? Can your friends tell? Can the world tell that you're in love with Jesus?

Pray:

Father, I love you! And I am praying that you would show me any area of my life that I am holding back from you. Take full control of my life, so that people will look at my life and see that I love you. I commit to living for you today.

RESPOND:

What parts of your life are you holding back from God? Are you ready to give it ALL to him?

REAL LIFE:

Just like you don't tell someone "God bless" without backing it up, you don't do something nice for someone and not tell them who you're doing it for. Pick a neighbor, family member, or friend that you can do a service project for. Do the project, and then tell them Jesus is the reason you did it. See where the conversation takes you. Then tell us how it went. Send an email to stories@burnthickory.com.

WEEK 2 | DAY 2

READ: [Ephesians 2:8-10](#)

REFLECT:

There is a delicate balance between what Paul said in Ephesians 2 and what James said in James 2. In fact, it's been the subject of debate for hundreds of years, so don't worry if you're still trying to understand.

Based on today's reading, how are you saved? _____

Faith ALONE is what will save you by the grace of God! Faith is how you enter into a relationship with Jesus. Works/good deeds are simply a result of that faith. Good deeds are not what save you. In fact, it's the ultimate good work of JESUS, his death and resurrection, that saves you. It's not anything you do that saves you, so you can't take the credit. Because think about it: if you earned your way to heaven by doing enough good things, you'd probably get a nice little ego about it.

We're not so naïve that we think that every single person that will read this devotion has a relationship with Jesus. So really, up to this point in our Daily Devos, you may think that salvation IS all about works, because we've focused a lot on godly living. James was already speaking to Christians though, not telling people how to become a Christian. Devotion to Jesus and to living for him is a desire that comes AFTER you give your life to him. It's not what gets you TO him. So how do you get to God?

“The Roman's Road” is just a name for a collection of verses in the book of Romans that walks you through the plan of salvation. And you may have learned a variation of what is listed below in a kid's ministry or evangelism training class.

The Romans Road:

Romans 3:23 “for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God”

Romans 3:10 “as it is written: ‘None is righteous, no, not one’”

Romans 5:12 “Therefore, just as sin came into the world through one man, and death through sin, and so death spread to all men because all sinned”

Romans 6:23 “For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.”

Romans 5:8 “but God shows his love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.”

Romans 10:9-10 “because, if you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. For with the heart one believes and is justified, and with the mouth one confesses and is saved.”

Romans 10:13 “For ‘everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved’”

RESPOND:

Have you given your life to Christ? Yes No

If you checked “no”, what is keeping you from doing that today?

Pray:

God I need you. Thank you for sending your son Jesus to die for me. Forgive me of my sin, come into my life, and be my Savior and King. And may I never be ashamed!

If you checked “yes”, who have you told about it recently?

REAL LIFE:

If you checked “no” above, reach out to Chip, Eli, Katie, a LifeGroup leader, or parent, and tell them that you need Jesus. If you checked “yes” above: take the Romans Road and start memorizing it. Keep it near you all the time, and be ready to share it with someone else this week.

WEEK 2 | DAY 3

READ: [James 3:1-12](#)

REFLECT:

James says in verse 2, if you don't struggle in a certain way, you are a perfect man.

What way is that? _____

Check all the statements that are TRUE:

- I've lied at least once in my life.
- I've talked behind someone's back.
- I've had an attitude with my parents.
- I've bent the truth/told a "white lie".
- I've said something I immediately wished I could take back.

We all checked a box or two (or five!) above, right? James is right to say that if you are able to control your mouth, you're the perfect human being...because we all struggle with this! Honestly, the whole series could be this topic for 14 straight days, and we'd still need help.

Proverbs 18:21 says, "Death and life are in the power of the tongue..." so we have some real power to destroy someone with one sentence and build that same person back up with another sentence. That is some serious weight!

(A Loving Disclaimer: Words that you TYPE are included in this. Even if didn't say it out loud, you typed it out on your phone. That counts here too. Lying in a text is just as wrong as lying to someone's face. OK, we got that out of the way!)

Take a moment today and pick a minimum of THREE of the verses in the box below. Today, we're going to let God's Word speak for itself. And in true "taming the tongue" fashion, our words will end so you can hear from God himself.

*[Psalm 19:14](#); [Proverbs 10:19](#); [Proverbs 12:14](#);
[Proverbs 13:3](#); [Proverbs 15:1](#); [Proverbs 15:28](#);
[Proverbs 17:27](#); [Proverbs 25:25](#);
[Proverbs 29:20](#); [Matthew 15:11](#); [Romans 10:10](#);
[Ephesians 4:29](#); [James 1:26](#); [1 Peter 3:10](#)*

RESPOND:

What did you find in your Bible reading today? From the checklist at the beginning of the day, what do you need to work on the most?

Pray:

God I confess that my mouth does not always honor you. I admit that I sin because of my words that I say, type, or think. I'm sorry for how I've hurt you and others because of something I said. Only you have the power to tame my mouth, and I surrender that over to you today.

REAL LIFE:

Ephesians 4:29 says, "Let no corrupting talk come out of your mouths, but only such as is good for building up, as fits the occasion, that it may give grace to those who hear." Try to go your WHOLE day only saying words "good for building up". In other words, test it out, where you only say words that lift others up.

WEEK 2 | DAY 4

READ: [James 3:13-18](#)

REFLECT:

What did James say we can ask God for, in [James 1:5](#)?

At this point in the letter, James has explored some heavy topics and probably stepped on a few toes. Don't forget from Days 1 and 2 of this series, we said James would be giving practical tips and solutions for godly living. Then out of what seems like nowhere, "Hey, who of you has this whole wisdom thing down?" Um... none of us, James.

It's like he calls a time out. You may feel like you're doing a really bad job at controlling your mouth, being slow to get angry, resisting temptation, not showing favoritism, living in a way that people SEE you're a follower of Jesus, doing and not just hearing the word...

But don't forget! You can ask God for wisdom through it all. And maybe you doubted on Day 3 when you asked God for wisdom. Maybe you weren't sure if he could give it. But how's it going doing it on your own? Are you ready to receive the wisdom he has to give?

People with earthly wisdom:

- Bitter jealousy
- Selfish Ambition
- Boasting
- Lying

People with God's wisdom:

- Pure
- Peaceable
- Gentle
- Open to reason
- Full of mercy and good fruits
- Impartial and sincere

Some days I'm the person on the left. Some days I'm the person on the right. And then by the afternoon, I'm back to the left. This list clearly shows me that I must constantly ask God for his wisdom to get through every single moment of every single day.

Again, remember back to Week 2 Day 1, this is not saying one person is a Christian and one is not... but it's saying that when you are a follower of Jesus, after his grace has saved you, you should desire to be the person on the right.

Pray:

Father, I am not wise without you. Apart from you, I can do nothing good. Without your wisdom guiding me, my life will become a train wreck in a second. I need you! Will you please give me your wisdom today?

RESPOND:

James points out the top two attributes of a person with earthly wisdom are jealousy (being envious of someone) and selfish ambition (self-promotion). In what ways do you struggle with each of those?

REAL LIFE:

If there is someone in your life that you seem to always butt heads with, ask yourself: “Am I jealous? Am I being selfish?” The next time you find yourself at odds with that person, stop and ask yourself those two questions, and see where godly wisdom takes you.

WEEK 2 | DAY 5

READ: [James 4:1-12](#)

REFLECT:

Go back and re-read the “Respond” from yesterday. What are two qualities that may be an issue?

1. _____
2. _____

We left you on a bit of a cliff-hanger, and you may have felt that tension. That was sort of a “Delivery One of Two” in our journey together. The letter of James is so rich, and maybe you didn’t realize that this little five-chapter book in the back of the Bible packed such a big punch! Well, James is really going for it now. He wraps up what we threw out in the “Real Life” from yesterday. If you’re fighting with someone, if you’re arguing, if you’re in nit-picky fights...don’t blame the other person. Your own passions and (here’s that phrase from yesterday) selfish ambitions are at war inside of you.

We are not saying that all arguing/conflict is your fault. If you are in an abusive, violent, or harmful situation, James/we are not saying that it’s because you are being selfish. Reach out to a Radiate Staff member and let us know what you’re going through. We’re here for you, and we love you!

Think about it. When you get jealous, you want to tear that person down so you can be lifted above them. When you are promoting your own self, you will say things that you may not even realize are hurtful, because you’re not thinking about the other person as much as yourself.

This is when it’s so cool to study an entire book of the Bible. Sometimes we come upon a familiar passage! “Draw near to God, and he will draw near to you” may be one you’ve seen as a decorative quote or given as a piece of advice. But it’s cool that in the context of the jealousy and selfishness that you’re struggling with, you can come to God. You can submit to his leadership. You can ask him for grace. And yes, he will be right there when you do!

Pray:

God, thank you for your promise that when I draw near to you, you will draw near to me. I can resist the devil, and he will flee from me! I submit to you today and pray that you help me calm my jealousy and selfish ambitions. I give those to you.

RESPOND:

What can it look like today for me to “draw near to God”?

REAL LIFE:

The next time you're talking with your friends or family and someone comes up in conversation, you may be tempted to join in the gossip. James 4:11 says, “Do not speak evil against one another...” so do what you need to do to remove yourself from the situation. Change the subject, compliment that person and refuse to speak badly about them, or leave. If someone asks you why, tell them.

WEEK 2 | DAY 6

READ: [James 4:13-17](#)

REFLECT:

If there was ever a passage of Scripture for how to see COVID-19, this is it! Concerts, vacations, school, church, parties, camps, birthdays...so many plans were made and broken in the last six months. Every single person experienced some kind of loss, big or small.

What are some of your plans that were cancelled because of COVID-19?

COVID-19 has shown us that nothing that we can see is certain. Right now, we are not in control of our calendars or schedules... but we never were to begin with. We are not any less in control than we were back in February. We are just more aware of the lack of control that we have. God was always in control.

God knew this would come. He knew the secret sorrow that you would carry because something was taken from you during this season. He knew it before it even happened. And he's here with you.

Proverbs 16:9 We can make our plans, but the LORD determines our steps.

Psalm 37:23 The LORD directs the steps of the godly. He delights in every detail of their lives.

Do us a favor. This may seem a bit weird, but go with it for a second. Take both of your hands and turn them palms facing up, as if someone were about to hand you something....

Pray:

God, I open my hands to you. My life is yours to do with it what you want. Your will is way better than mine, and I want to live my life in a way that my heart is open, just like my plans. You know my future, and you know what I need. Teach me to have open hands and an open heart to what you want to do in and through me.

RESPOND:

What is something you're planning right now? Are you willing to pray for God's will to be done over your own?

REAL LIFE:

Introduce the phrase "if the Lord wills" or "Lord willing" into your vocabulary for the day. Trust God with the changes he may make with your plans. If someone asks you what that means, tell them you're learning to give God control, because he's got it anyway.

WEEK 2 | DAY 7

READ: [James 5](#)

REFLECT:

Today is the day we wrap up our adventure through James. Thank you for following along with us and being willing to participate. Some of you may have started the habit of a semi-regular personal devotion time. Keep it up! Some of you have read your Bibles on occasion but have never done it every day. We're so proud! We will be launching another two-week Daily Devo series tomorrow, so be on the lookout for how to continue this awesome habit. Don't break it - keep going!

Are you ready to commit to another two-week devo?

Yes No

Because your reading was a little longer today, we will just look at one verse to wrap up our time together. Go back and read [verse twelve](#).

Parent: Have you finished all your work from school today?
Me: No, but I will when I finish this game.

Friend: Are you going to Radiate Wednesday night?
Me: Yes, probably, but I don't know if I have something else going on.

We are all guilty of it! But here's where the Bible is once again so cool - it is not an outdated list of rules and old dudes that talk weird. God's Word gives practical, helpful, godly advice for how to live your life. Next time someone asks you a "yes" or "no" question, test this out! DO the word of God today. Answer "yes" or "no" and leave it at that.

And we will leave you with this last thought... have you said "Yes, but..." to Jesus? It's time to let your "yes" be yes. Go all in with Jesus, and don't hold anything back! But we'll warn you, if you pray this prayer and really mean it, God will do things that may change your whole life. Make sure you really consider what you're saying.

Pray:

I'm putting my full "yes" on the table, God. I'm saying "yes" to wherever you want to take me and whatever it may cost me. A full on "yes" to you may mean losing friends or things, and it may mean being led way outside of my comfort zone. But it's worth it to me because YOU are worth it!

RESPOND:

What is holding you back from putting your full "yes" on the table when it comes to living for Jesus?

REAL LIFE:

Post on your social media that you completed the James Daily Devos. Tell your friends and family. Be loud and bold and proud about your life in Jesus. He's worth it.