



JAMES

REAL FAITH IN REAL LIFE

PARENT GUIDE



daily devos
RADIATE STUDENTS

Dear Parents,

We are excited to introduce to you-the first of its kind in Radiate-your customizable discipleship content! The last several weeks and months have been extremely challenging, especially when it comes to connecting with God. It's our desire to put tools in students' hands to grow their love and faith in Jesus wherever they are. The purpose of this material is to equip YOU to walk alongside your student in their discipleship journey. Whether you have decided to come back on BHBC's campus or not, we are praying that you step up as the spiritual leader in your home to model for them Bible reading and prayer, and to go deeper in what they are learning on their own.

Here's how it works: Every two weeks, we will drop some online content on www.bhradiate.com on the student page on Monday morning. The parent section will have a PDF like this one that is a supplemental resource - a parent guide. You are welcome to read along in your own time with the Lord what the students are reading.

Each day, your student will see the following sections: Read, Reflect, Respond, and Real Life.

Read: Bible reading for the day

Reflect: a breakdown of biblical principles from the passage

Respond: challenging questions to think through

Real Life: action steps or mission moments to live it out

For the customizable parent content, we have taken the fourteen days of content and gone a little more in depth. Gather your family around the table and go deeper together. You will want to read ahead though! Because in the Respond section, we ask that you answer these questions for yourself first. Then you can talk through both your answers and your student's answers.

And it's customizable, meaning you can pick however many nights a week you plan to do this with your family and let it mold to your own family time with the Lord. You can also pick which days you want to talk through if you don't plan to do all 14 but you think the content from one day is more relevant than another. Just go back when you know your student has read it!

On the days that your student may not have read or seems quiet about opening up around the table, that's ok! Here are some conversation starters that may be helpful to engage your student in a spiritual conversation:

What stood out to you the most about today's content?

What's one thing you're going to do after reading today's content?

Is there anything you want to talk about?

How can we pray for you today?

How can we help someone in need today?

What questions do you have for me?

How do you feel like today's content relates to your life?

We are here for you, Parents, and want to be a sounding board for any questions or concerns you may have. We are also interested in your feedback, because this is the first time we've done something like this! But know that we are behind you and praying for you as you disciple your students.

The RADIATE Staff

Week	Day	Date	Read	Review	Respond
1	1	August 17th	Acts 15:13-19	Who is James?	How can I represent Jesus well to someone today?
1	2	August 18th	James 1:1	Who was James Written to?	What has been the hardest part about adjusting to a new normal?
1	3	August 19th	James 1:1-8	Joy and Wisdom in Trials	Read Psalm 121:1-2. Where does your help really come from?
1	4	August 20th	James 1:9-18	Temptation	What is one of your biggest temptations?
1	5	August 21st	James 1:19-21	Quick to Listen, Slow to Speak, Slow to Get Angry	What are you going to do the next time you get angry?
1	6	August 22nd	James 1:22-27	Doers not Just Hearers	With God's help, what Scripture do you need to put into practice today?
1	7	August 23rd	James 2:1-13	The Sin of Partiality	What are some reasons you may show favoritism?
2	1	August 24th	James 2:14-26	Faith without Works is Dead	What parts of your life are you holding back from God?
2	2	August 25th	Ephesians 2:8-10	The Plan of Salvation (Pt. 2 of James 2:14-26)	Have you given your life to Christ?
2	3	August 26th	James 3:1-12	Taming the Tongue	What did you find in your Bible reading today?
2	4	August 27th	James 3:13-18	Earthly Wisdom vs. Godly Wisdom	In what ways do you struggle with selfish ambition and jealousy?
2	5	August 28th	James 4:1-12	What Causes Fights?	What can I look like today for me to "draw near to God"?
2	6	August 29th	James 4:13-17	Living with Open Hands	Are you willing to pray for God's will to be done over your own plans?
2	7	August 30th	James 5	Yes and No	What is holding you back from putting your full "yes" on the table when it comes to living for Jesus?

WEEK 1 | DAY 1

READ: Acts 15:13-19

REFLECT:

Today was all about the author of the book of James. 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. The book of James is all about how to live out real faith in real life.

A council (made up of church leaders throughout Jerusalem) was set up to debate and resolve issues like the one in Acts 15, 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.

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. 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?

RESPOND:

How can I represent Jesus well to someone today?

REAL LIFE:

Talk openly with your student about a time you had to go and apologize for something you did that misrepresented Jesus. This is not about you being a good Christian and apologizing, it's about being humble and authentic as you share about a time you messed up. Be honest, because your student is going to be challenged to do the same thing today, and you can model for them what you learned from that situation.

WEEK 1 | DAY 2

READ: James 1:1

REFLECT:

Today, we talked about how James is writing to Jewish Christians that fled town because of persecution. The book is a letter giving pastoral advice to hurting people peppered all over the region. The author, 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. (Relatable!)

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?

RESPOND:

How has your life changed because of COVID-19?
What has been the hardest part about adjusting to a new normal?

REAL LIFE:

Answer these for yourself first, then ask your student how they answered these questions. Let them talk for as long as they need to. Ask questions to prod them along, but don't interrupt once they get going. Then, share with them how you have had to adjust to a new normal as well. It hasn't been easy, but we know God's got us.

Who is a family that we know has been struggling? Maybe they lost a job or a loved one in the past few months. Talk about what you can do as a family to serve them, pray with them, and tell them that God cares for them.

WEEK 1 | DAY 3

READ: James 1:1-8

REFLECT:

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 two seemingly disconnected subjects connect.

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 make us closer to God.

TWO: (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.

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

RESPOND:

Where do you usually go for help? Read Psalm 121:1-2. Where does your help really come from?

REAL LIFE:

Talk to your student about doubt. 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.

Ask: if you could ask God any question, what would it be? Then, model for your student that asking God questions is safe. For example, don't answer right away or say anything potentially threatening to embarrass them when they ask a question. Do your best to control your reaction or not get upset by the question. Be sympathetic to their struggle. Talk about doubts you personally have had before. Then talk to them about how we can always trust God, even when we don't know an answer.

Do you know someone that has doubts about the existence of God? Bring this person up, and ask your student what they would say to them?

WEEK 1 | DAY 4

READ: James 1:9-18

REFLECT:

Today's Daily Devo is all about temptation. Your student learned that 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.)

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."

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?

REAL LIFE:

If your student is not willing to open up about temptation, that's ok! Talk to them about having a godly, trusted person a little ahead of them in life to be able to confide in about their spiritual walk. Today, if the conversation is lacking, it's ok. Ask some of the "general" table talk questions off the parent page. For example, "How can we help you feel appreciated in our family?"

WEEK 1 | DAY 5

READ: James 1:19-21

REFLECT:

Today we talked about how James said EVERY person should “Be quick to listen, slow to speak, slow to get angry. We encouraged them to work on two things: speaking less and controlling anger. It will be really helpful for them today if you are patient with them.

Two tips we gave: Count to five in your head before you say what you want to say. If interrupting is something you struggle with, remind yourself that it is not fun when someone does it to you.

RESPOND:

What are you going to do the next time you get angry?

REAL LIFE:

It will be cool for your student to see you practicing these two tips as well. They will be hyper-sensitive to interrupting and talking over each other, so not only practice those things, but talk about them. Do you feel heard in our family?

And if anger is something you struggle with, confess that to your student. Talk about ways that you are going to work on controlling your anger.

Ask your student, “Who is Jesus to you?” and “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.

WEEK 1 | DAY 6

READ: James 1:22-27

REFLECT:

Using the examples of school and sports, we compared what James said about going away from the mirror, forgetting what they saw. Talk to your student about arenas in their life where they feel comfortable and where they feel uncomfortable, like on the ball field, in a social setting, or in the classroom. Talk about why they feel that “I’ve got this” feeling some places and not others.

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.

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. Talk through how to look up verses or where to find them. With God’s help, what Scripture do you need to put into practice today?

REAL LIFE:

What are some blessings you have experienced from reading the Bible? If you struggle with consistent quiet time with the Lord, be honest. If you don’t struggle, talk about how maybe you did at first. Commit to consistent Bible Reading and prayer together as a family.

The next time your student 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 just 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:

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

The focus of today in James was partiality. Sometimes we treat people worse based on how they look, dress, talk, etc., compared to someone else, and that is favoritism. James is specifically talking about judging someone based on their socio-economic status to get ahead and feel better about ourselves. The funny thing is God really doesn't see us like that.

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).

RESPOND:

What are some ways you have shown favoritism?
What are some reasons you 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. Is there a certain group of people that your family has not had much interaction with? Spend some time planning a day to go serve, like at a homeless shelter or feeding students in need. Our church has some great connections serving in our community that you can jump right into. Visit www.burnthickory.com/missions for more info.

WEEK 2 | DAY 1

READ: James 2:14-26

REFLECT:

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).

James is 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?

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:

We're not so naïve that we think every single person reading 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 on godly living. James was already speaking to Christians though, not telling people how to become a Christian. Devotion to Jesus and 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. Here it is:

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:

This is your chance as a parent to walk with your student through the plan of salvation. You may have done this before, or this may be a brand new topic of discussion in your family. Ask your student: In your personal opinion, what do you think it takes to get to heaven? If the answer is anything other than Jesus or has to do with good deeds, church, reading the Bible, that's not it! Go through the Romans Road. If the answer is Jesus, ask your student to talk to you about the time they gave their life to Jesus. You may know the answer. But do your best to listen. Your student is flexing their muscle of sharing their testimony to a safe person in their life. Let them talk to you about who Jesus is to them. If you need help or need to pray with your student to receive Christ, we are a resource available to help you through this, but you've got it, Parent!

WEEK 2 | DAY 3

READ: James 3:1-12

REFLECT:

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 to Students AND Parents: words that you TYPE are included in this. Even if you didn't say it out loud, you typed it out on your phone. That counts here too. Slander in a text or social media post is just as wrong as slander in someone's face. OK, we got that out of the way!)

Your student was asked to pick a minimum of THREE of the verses from 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:

Ask your student: What did you find in your Bible reading today? If they did not really look up the verses, take this opportunity to do some Bible study together as a family and talk about a few of the verses above.

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." Your student was challenged to try to go the WHOLE day only saying words "good for building up". Ask them how it went. (It's ok if it did not go well - the point is to do inventory on how much we say words we shouldn't, and to learn to control that.)

Now instruct each member of the family to pick three people that you know you'll see tomorrow and pray for them specifically. Pray that you'll be able to speak words that build them up tomorrow and not tear them down. It doesn't have to stop with this one day devotional.

WEEK 2 | DAY 4

READ: James 3:13-18

REFLECT:

At this point in the letter, James has explored some heavy topics and probably stepped on a few toes. Don't forget from Week 1, 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 Week 1, 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?

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:

Your student was challenged to see if there is someone in their life that they seem to always butt heads with, ask themselves: Am I jealous? Am I being selfish?

The next time you find yourself at odds with a person, stop and ask yourself those two questions, and see where godly wisdom takes you. Talk about how you are going to take that challenge as a family.

WEEK 2 | DAY 5

READ: James 4:1-12

REFLECT:

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.

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 up on a familiar passage. “Draw near to God, and he will draw near to you.” Maybe you’ve seen it 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.

RESPOND:

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

REAL LIFE:

Tonight at the beginning of dinner, make a commitment as a family to refrain from any type of gossip. Two practical ways to know if you’re gossiping is A) if it starts with “did you hear”? or B) you would not want the person you’re talking about to hear what you’re saying.

James 4:11 says, “Do not speak evil against one another...” so when you come to a point where you’re tempted, stop! Course correct. Compliment that person. Change the subject. Tell a story without using names.

At the end of dinner, ask how hard or easy was that exercise? How many times did you have to stop, and did that number surprise you? How can we as a family be known as people that refuse to gossip?

WEEK 2 | DAY 6

READ: James 4:13-17

REFLECT:

If there was ever a passage of Scripture for how to navigate 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, are not in control of our calendars or schedule. But the reality is, 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, and we can trust that he always will be.

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.

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:

Your student was challenged to introduce the phrase "if the Lord wills" or "Lord willing" into your vocabulary for the day. Ask them how it went.

Let your student see that you are have been disappointed as well, but that you have put your plans in a right perspective before God. This season may have been hard on your family, but talk to your student about the best parts of it and the family memories you enjoyed.

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! For some of you, this is the first time in a long time that you've had intentional, discipleship moments with your student. Wasn't it awesome?

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! Visit the Parent Page at bhradiate.com to find the next download.

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!

RESPOND:

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

REAL LIFE:

Tell your kids your own faith story. What was your life like before you met Jesus? What happened when you met Jesus? What has he done in your life since?

Talk through those questions with your family as well. And challenge each other to share their testimony with at least one person this week.