



MAIN POINT	MAIN BIBLE VERSE
Faith isn't just what we hear. It's what we do.	James 1:19-27
Students will recognize the danger of self-deception when faith remains intellectual instead of lived out, and they will take one concrete step of obedience in response to God's Word this week.	
Teaching Script / Guide	

#### HOOK

- "What's something everyone knows they should do... but most people don't?"
  - Get enough sleep
  - Eat better
  - Stay off their phone late at night
  - Actually follow through on what they say they'll do
- We all have things we know... but don't actually live.
- Information isn't the problem. Application is.
- And here's the uncomfortable truth:
  - That same thing can happen with faith
    - You can:
      - know Bible verses
      - listen to messages
      - grow up in church
      - agree with everything
      - ...and still not actually be changed by any of it.

#### TENSION

- James says that kind of faith isn't just immature... It's deceptive.
- You can think you're growing... when nothing in your life is actually changing.
- That's dangerous because it creates the illusion of transformation without the reality of it.
- So this week isn't about facing trials...
  - It's not even about facing temptation...
  - It's about facing yourself in the mirror.... But even that might seem a little different than you think at first.

#### TEXT

- Read or invite a student to read James 1:19-27
- James 1:19-21 — The Right Posture
  - "Be quick to listen, slow to speak, slow to anger..."
    - That's an interesting place for James to start, isn't it?

- We'll see later on in the book that he talks about the ability to control our tongues, but I think this has to do more with something else. Our posture.
  - Before transformation happens, posture matters.
    - If you're always:
      - Defensive
      - Interrupting
      - justifying yourself
  - You can unintentionally block yourself from hearing what God may want to say to you – either directly, through His Word, or even from others who love you.
  - James says we need humility, because You can't be transformed by truth you won't receive.
- **James 1:22 – The Warning**
  - James continues: "Do not merely listen to the word... and so deceive yourselves."
    - This is the core issue. Listening without obedience creates **self-deception**.
  - And this isn't a judgement thing. Let me ask for some vulnerability here. Raise your hand if you've ever felt like like you're doing something spiritual... But nothing is actually changing.
  - We've all been there. Some of us are there now.
    - You can sit in environments like this every week and slowly convince yourself you're growing... when you're just consuming.
    - So what can we do to fight against that?
- **James 1:23–25 – The Mirror**
  - James gives us the image: God's Word is like a mirror.
    - It shows you:
      - what's out of alignment
      - what needs to change
      - what's actually true about you
    - But the problem isn't seeing it. The problem is seeing it and walking away unchanged.
  - James says it's like a man...
    - "He looks at himself and goes away and at once forgets what he was like."
    - That's crazy. Imagine looking in a mirror, seeing something clearly off...and doing nothing about it.
  - James says that's what it's like to hear truth and not respond.
    - But the one who **looks carefully and continues in it**– that's the one who is changed.
    - Let me ask you, when you hear, read, or sit under the Word of God... what do you do next?
    - Do you start asking questions?
    - Do you allow it to challenge you?
    - Do you try to put it into practice?
  - James goes on to say that when you do, it reveals itself in the way our lives are changed.
  - **James 1:26–27 – What Real Faith Looks Like**
    - James gets very practical. He describes three ways that real faith shows up.
      - **Your words** – how you speak
      - **Your compassion** – how you treat people, especially the vulnerable
      - **Your character** – how you resist being shaped by the world
    - Faith isn't invisible. It's visible in everyday life.

## TRUTH

- Real faith is not measured by what you hear.
- It's measured by what you do with what you hear.

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## APPLICATION (Lean into conviction + clarity)

- Ask:
    - Where are you hearing truth... but not living it?
    - Where has your faith become something you **consume** instead of something you **practice**?
  - This isn't about doing everything perfectly. It's about responding honestly. It's about not trying to do faith without Jesus.
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- You can't do faith with Jesus and not have it transform you.
  - Transformation doesn't happen through intention. It happens through **obedience** to the living King Jesus.
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#### GOSPEL INVITATION (Critical for this week)

- Here's where this could get heavy... so we need to land this in the right place.
    - You don't obey God to earn His love. You obey because you already have it.
  - The goal isn't perfection. It's transformation.
  - And the good news is:
    - Jesus didn't just speak truth. He lived it perfectly on your behalf.
  - So when you fail—and you will— You don't run from God. You run back to Him. And through His grace and the power of the Spirit, He begins to change you from the inside out.
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#### INVITATION

- Some of you already know what God is calling you to do. You've heard it before. You've felt that conviction, but you've been putting it off.
  - This week is your moment to respond. Not to hear more... But to **do something with what you've already heard.**
  - Pray: "God, show me one thing... and give me the courage to actually live it out."
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