

James: Practical Faith

Faith that shows up in real life — fourteen days in the book of James.

14 days · about 10 minutes a day · for the whole family

How to use this

Pick a time you already gather — dinner, or just before bed — and keep it there. The whole thing takes about ten minutes.

1. Read the passage together. On a busy night, just read the memory verse — that counts.
2. Read the short devotion out loud.
3. Talk through the questions. Let everyone answer in their own words; there are no wrong answers.
4. Say the memory verse together, and try to remember it tomorrow.

DAY 1 Trials and Temptations James 1:1-8

James opens with a surprising idea: we can find joy even when hard times come, because God uses them to grow our faith and make us strong. When we don't know what to do, he says, we can simply ask God for wisdom — and God gives it generously, never scolding us for asking. That's the kindness of a Father who loves to help His children. So when something feels too hard this week, we don't have to pretend or panic; we can come to God and trust Him to lead us.

TALK ABOUT IT

1. Why do you think God would let hard times grow our faith instead of just removing them?
2. What does it tell us about God that He gives wisdom generously and without scolding?
3. When something feels confusing this week, how could your family ask God for wisdom together?

MEMORY VERSE · JAMES 1:5

“But if any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask of God, who gives to all liberally and without reproach; and it will be given to him.”

DAY 2 Riches, Trials, and Temptation James 1:9-18

James reminds us that money and status don't make a person truly rich — God's love and His good gifts do. He also makes something clear: God never tempts us to sin; every good and perfect gift comes down from our unchanging Father. When we're tempted, the pull comes from inside us, not from God, who only ever wants our good. The very best gift He gives is new life — He chose to make us His own children through His word of truth, which points us to Jesus.

TALK ABOUT IT

1. What are some of the 'good and perfect gifts' God has given your family?
2. Why is it important to know that God never tempts us to do wrong?
3. How does it change your day to remember that God is good and never changes?

MEMORY VERSE · JAMES 1:17

“Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of lights, with whom can be no variation, nor turning shadow.”

DAY 3 Hearing and Doing James 1:19-27

James gives wonderfully practical advice for every family: be quick to listen, slow to speak, and slow to become angry. He says we shouldn't just hear God's word and walk away unchanged — we should actually do what it says, like really looking in a mirror and then acting on what we see. A faith that loves God shows up in the way we care for people who are hurting and the way we live each day. By God's grace, the gospel doesn't just change what we believe; it changes how we love.

TALK ABOUT IT

1. Why do you think God puts 'quick to listen' before 'quick to speak'?
2. What is one thing you've heard from the Bible that you could actually do this week?
3. Who is someone your family could care for the way James describes?

MEMORY VERSE · JAMES 1:22

“But be doers of the word, and not only hearers, deluding your own selves.”

DAY 4 Favoritism Forbidden James 2:1-13

James warns us not to treat people differently based on how rich, important, or impressive they seem. God doesn't play favorites, and He calls us to love our neighbor as ourselves — the rich, the poor, the popular, and the overlooked alike. This matters because every person is made in God's image and deeply loved by Him. And here's the heart of it: God showed us mercy in Christ when we didn't deserve it, so we get to show that same mercy to others.

TALK ABOUT IT

1. Why is it tempting to treat important-seeming people better than others?
2. How does remembering God's mercy to us help us be kind to everyone?
3. Who is someone at school, church, or in our family who could use extra welcome this week?

MEMORY VERSE · JAMES 2:8

“However, if you fulfill the royal law, according to the Scripture, “You shall love your neighbor as yourself,” you do well.”

DAY 5 Faith and Deeds – Part I James 2:14-19

James asks a pointed question: what good is it to say we have faith if our lives never show it? If a friend is cold and hungry, kind words alone won't help — real faith does something. James isn't saying our good works save us; the Bible is clear that we're saved by grace through faith in Jesus, not by anything we earn. But true faith is alive, and a living faith naturally produces love and action, the way a healthy tree produces fruit.

TALK ABOUT IT

1. What is the difference between just saying you believe something and really living it?
2. Why can't good works ever earn God's love, yet still matter so much?
3. What is one caring action your family could do this week to put faith into practice?

MEMORY VERSE · JAMES 2:17

“Even so faith, if it has no works, is dead in itself.”

DAY 6 Faith and Deeds – Part 2 James 2:20-26

James points to Abraham, whose deep trust in God showed up in the way he obeyed and followed Him. His actions didn't earn God's friendship — they proved that his faith was real and alive. In the same way, when God gives us faith in Jesus, that faith grows roots and bears fruit in how we live. We don't work to be loved by God; because we are loved by God, our lives begin to look more like His.

TALK ABOUT IT

1. How did Abraham's actions show that his faith in God was real?
2. If faith is like a tree, what kind of 'fruit' might grow in your family's life?
3. How does knowing we're already loved by God free us to do good things?

MEMORY VERSE · JAMES 2:26

“For as the body apart from the spirit is dead, even so faith apart from works is dead.”

DAY 7 Taming the Tongue – Part 1 James 3:1-6

James says something every family knows is true: our words are small but powerful. He compares the tongue to a tiny spark that can set a whole forest on fire, or a small rudder that steers a huge ship. The words we speak can build people up or tear them down in a moment. None of us can fully control our words on our own — but that's exactly why we need God's help and the gentle work of His Spirit to make our speech kind.

TALK ABOUT IT

1. Why do you think such small words can have such big effects?
2. Can you remember a time when words helped you, or words hurt you?
3. What could your family pray for God's help with when it comes to how we talk?

MEMORY VERSE · JAMES 3:5

“So the tongue is also a little member, and boasts great things. See how a small fire can spread to a large forest!”

DAY 8 Taming the Tongue – Part 2 James 3:7-12

James points out something a little uncomfortable: with the same mouth we praise God, we sometimes hurt the people He made. He says a spring can't pour out both fresh and bitter water — and our words show what's really in our hearts. The good news is that God is in the business of changing hearts. As Jesus makes us new from the inside out, our words can slowly become more loving, honest, and full of grace.

TALK ABOUT IT

1. Why is it strange to praise God and then speak unkindly about people He made?
2. What do you think our words reveal about what's in our hearts?
3. How could your family ask God to make your words more like Jesus this week?

MEMORY VERSE · JAMES 3:10

“Out of the same mouth comes blessing and cursing. My brothers, these things ought not to be so.”

DAY 9 Two Kinds of Wisdom James 3:13-18

James describes two very different kinds of wisdom. One kind is full of jealousy and selfish ambition, and it leads to fighting and disorder. But the wisdom that comes from God is pure, peace-loving, gentle, and full of mercy and good fruit. We can't manufacture that kind of wisdom on our own — it's a gift God gives as we walk with Him. A family that asks God for His wisdom becomes a place of peace instead of constant conflict.

TALK ABOUT IT

1. What is the difference between the two kinds of wisdom James describes?
2. Which quality of God's wisdom would help your family most right now?
3. How could you be a peacemaker in your home or among your friends this week?

MEMORY VERSE · JAMES 3:17

“But the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceful, gentle, reasonable, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality, and without hypocrisy.”

DAY 10 Submit to God James 4:1-10

James gets honest about where our fights and arguments really come from: the selfish wants battling inside us. But he doesn't leave us there — he points us home to God. 'Come near to God,' he says, 'and he will come near to you,' and 'God gives grace to the humble.' When we stop trying to run our own lives and humbly turn back to Him, He welcomes us with grace. That's the heart of the gospel: God lifts up those who come to Him with open, honest hands.

TALK ABOUT IT

1. Where do you think most of our family arguments really come from?
2. What does it mean to 'come near to God,' and how can we do that?
3. Why does God give His grace to people who are humble?

MEMORY VERSE · JAMES 4:8

“Draw near to God, and he will draw near to you. Cleanse your hands, you sinners; and purify your hearts, you double-minded.”

DAY 11 Judging Others and Planning James 4:11-17

James gently warns us not to tear each other down with our words or set ourselves up as everyone's judge — that role belongs to God, who is good and fair. He also reminds us that we don't actually control tomorrow, so it's wise to hold our plans loosely and say, 'If it is the Lord's will.' This isn't meant to scare us; it's meant to free us. We can dream and plan, while resting in a God who holds every one of our days in His loving hands.

TALK ABOUT IT

1. Why is it better to leave judging others up to God?
2. How does it feel to know that God, not us, holds tomorrow?
3. What is a plan your family has that you could give to God and trust Him with?

MEMORY VERSE · JAMES 4:14

“Whereas you don't know what your life will be like tomorrow. For what is your life? For you are a vapor, that appears for a little time, and then vanishes away.”

DAY 12 Warning to the Rich James 5:1-6

James gives a strong warning to people who pile up money for themselves while treating others unfairly. He reminds us that earthly riches don't last — they rust and fade — and that God sees how we treat the people who work for us and depend on us. This isn't saying money is evil; it's calling us to be honest, generous, and fair. God cares deeply about justice, and He invites us to use whatever we have to bless others rather than only ourselves.

TALK ABOUT IT

1. Why do you think riches that 'rust and fade' can't make us truly happy?
2. What does it tell us about God that He notices how people are treated unfairly?
3. How could your family use what you have to be generous to someone this week?

MEMORY VERSE · JAMES 5:1

“Come now, you rich, weep and howl for your miseries that are coming on you.”

DAY 13 Patience in Suffering James 5:7-12

James encourages us to be patient when life is hard, like a farmer who waits for the rains and the harvest. He points us toward the day the Lord will return to make everything right, so we can stand firm and not give up hope. He reminds us of Job, who suffered greatly yet saw that the Lord is full of compassion and mercy. When waiting is painful, we don't wait alone — we wait with a God who is near, kind, and faithful to the end.

TALK ABOUT IT

1. What helps you be patient when something good takes a long time?
2. How does remembering that Jesus will return give us hope while we wait?
3. When someone in our family is struggling, how can we show them God's compassion?

MEMORY VERSE · JAMES 5:7

“Be patient therefore, brothers, until the coming of the Lord. Behold, the farmer waits for the precious fruit of the earth, being patient over it, until it receives the early and late rain.”

DAY 14 The Prayer of Faith James 5:13-20

James ends his letter by reminding us to bring everything to God in prayer — when we're hurting, when we're happy, and when we're sick. He tells us prayer is powerful and that we should pray for one another and confess our sins, because God loves to heal and forgive. He also shows us the beautiful work of gently bringing back a friend who has wandered from the truth. From start to finish, James calls us to a faith that prays, loves, and never gives up on one another.

TALK ABOUT IT

1. Why do you think God invites us to pray about everything, good and hard?
2. Who is someone your family could pray for by name this week?
3. How can we lovingly help a friend who has wandered come back to God?

MEMORY VERSE · JAMES 5:16

“Confess your offenses to one another, and pray for one another, that you may be healed. The insistent prayer of a righteous person is powerfully effective.”

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