You can make APOSTOLIC DISCIPLES.
We can help.

Curriculum Preview Guide
ADULTS
• Free Powerpoints for teachers
• Reengineered Student Workbook with daily Bible study prompts and personal application segments designed to help you become a better disciple

YOUTH
• Interactive focus for Junior High and discussion focus for Senior High
• Teacher resource packet with posters and supply lists for easy teacher prep
• Student Handbooks to reinforce the lesson

CHILDREN
• Lesson plan restructured to feature a forty-five-minute CORE section
• Updated Home Connection and new family devotional included
About the Curriculum

Teaching was a key ingredient of Jesus’ instructions for the ongoing work of evangelizing and discipling all nations (Matthew 28:20). One of the ways pastors live out their calling is by equipping teachers who serve under their leadership with the skills and resources necessary to help ensure the transformative power of the gospel reaches everyone who attends a local church. Therefore, the selection of resources is critical to this calling.

Are your teaching tools . . .

**Apostolic?**
Good curriculum intentionally weaves key doctrines throughout teaching resources and student activities. That’s great when the curriculum is Apostolic. It’s harmful when the materials are not. Avoid doctrinal landmines by using Apostolic curriculum.

**Systematic?**
Ongoing teaching is the most effective way to ensure students are grounded in God’s Word. The systematic teaching plan of curriculum helps more thoroughly cover the whole of Scripture rather than leaving the gaps that sometimes occur when there is no overarching scope and sequence.

**Easy to Use and a Time Saver?**
Teaching tools that are biblically accurate, infused with creativity, and easy to use enable teachers to focus on spiritual preparation and building relationships with students rather than scrambling to find lesson content each week.

**Affordable?**
You get what you pay for. If you do the math and calculate the price of your time, you may be surprised to see that the work of creating your own material or reworking non-Apostolic material is staggering. Let Apostolic designers, writers, and editors create solid material you can customize for your unique needs.
Adult Lesson Manual

The classic hardback is an indispensable study and teaching tool. It includes the fifty-two Word Aflame adult lessons for the entire year.

The paper copy of the thirteen lessons for each quarter easily slides in and out of your Bible for convenient transport to church.
The Heart of a Leader

FOCUS THOUGHT
God chooses leaders, not based on how they look, but according to what is in the leader’s heart.

FOCUS VERSE
I Samuel 16:7
But the Lord said unto Samuel, Look not on his countenance, or on the height of his stature; because I have refused him: for the Lord seeth not as man seeth; for man looketh on the outward appearance, but the Lord looketh on the heart.

LESSON TEXT
I Samuel 16:1–7, 11–13
1 And the Lord said unto Samuel, How long wilt thou mourn for Saul, seeing I have rejected him from reigning over Israel? fill thine horn with oil, and go, I will send thee to Jesse the Beth-lehemite: for I have provided me a king among his sons.
2 And Samuel said, How can I go? if Saul hear it, he will kill me. And the Lord said, Take an heifer with thee, and say, I am come to sacrifice to the Lord.
3 And call Jesse to the sacrifice, and I will shew thee what thou shalt do: and thou shalt anoint unto me him whom I name unto thee.
4 And Samuel did that which the Lord spake, and came to Beth-lehem. And the elders of the town trembled at his coming, and said, Comest thou peaceably?
5 And he said, Peaceably: I am come to sacrifice unto the Lord: sanctify yourselves, and come with me to the sacrifice. And he sanctified Jesse and his sons, and called them to the sacrifice.
6 And it came to pass, when they were come, that he looked on Eliab, and said, Surely the Lord’s anointed is before him.
7 But the Lord said unto Samuel, Look not on his countenance, or on the height of his stature; because I have refused him: for the Lord seeth not as man seeth; for man looketh on the outward appearance, but the Lord looketh on the heart.

11 And Samuel said unto Jesse, Are here all thy children? And he said, There remaineth yet the youngest, and, behold, he keepeth the sheep. And Samuel said unto Jesse, Send and fetch him: for we will not sit down till he come hither.
12 And he sent, and brought him in. Now he was ruddy, and withal of a beautiful countenance, and goodly to look to. And the Lord said, Arise, anoint him: for this is he.
13 Then Samuel took the horn of oil, and anointed him in the midst of his brethren: and the Spirit of the Lord came upon David from that day forward. So Samuel rose up, and went to Ramah.
of consistent political pressure and frequent physical harm was demonstrated in his final speech given the night before his death. He stated, “Only when it is dark enough can you see the stars.” Within twenty-four hours of uttering these words, the man was gone, and his movement saw its darkest hour. Yet his words would carry on and inspire others to take up the mantle and lead the movement forward.

This is simply one statement of many spoken by this iconic leader, demonstrating his passion and understanding that leaders must be strong of heart, even in the face of their own demise. A leader’s heart cannot waiver or falter from the path ahead. When others lose heart, a leader’s heart is encouraged because a leader sees the end result, or even more, a leader sees the glory that will be given to God. When other’s hearts fail them because of fear, a leader’s heart will be strengthened in the fire of the trial. Leaders realize the power of God is on their side.

### OUTLINE

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### CONTEMPLATING THE TOPIC

Martin Luther King Jr. was killed at the age of thirty-nine. According to the autopsy report, he had the heart of a sixty-year-old man. Doctors believed his heart had aged due to the significant stress caused by his work as the prominent leader of the civil rights movement. While his physical heart was in poor shape, his spiritual heart was stronger than ever. His resilience in the face of that stress is a testament to the power of God’s love and the perseverance of those who serve Him.

### CULTURE CONNECTION

**MERCIFUL MARINES**

Smoke came pouring out of a building in Washington, D.C. The cause of the fire was unknown, but many of the residents were helpless to escape. The Marine barracks was only a short distance away. Marines stationed there saw the smoke, and about one hundred soldiers came running to the rescue. With their assistance, the fire department and paramedics were able to rescue all the residents, treat them for injuries, and shelter them safely until their loved ones arrived (www.foxnews.com).

This untimely event was probably not on the soldiers’ agenda that day, but to them it was imperative to help these people. The burning building was a residence for senior citizens, and all the people the Marines helped that day were elderly. However, the age of those in need did not matter to the Marines. People were in need, and the Marines were there to help.

When God is looking for someone to lead, we would expect Him to choose from the elite. He could pick from the most handsome, the strongest, or the most intelligent. But when God is looking for leaders, it does not matter how old, how smart, or what the person’s background is. God looks for the precious commodity of availability, and He equips those who are willing to serve.

### Every lesson begins with a Culture Connection to introduce the lesson topic through a present-day scenario.

The outline shows the trajectory of the lesson at a glance.
I. GOD SENT SAMUEL TO ANOINT A NEW KING

As a leader, especially in a spiritual capacity, the task of removing someone you lead from a prominent position can be extremely stressful. This can be an emotionally turbulent event for the leader due to the time invested mentoring and grooming the individual, and this can also cause a feeling of personal failure within the heart of the leader at that individual’s shortcoming. Even more, there is the difficult task of finding a suitable replacement during a period when the leader may experience some insecurity based on the previous poor choice of a candidate. Samuel certainly experienced all of this as he faced the difficult task of separating himself from Saul and seeking his replacement.

The situation Samuel faced was challenging. Although Samuel may have been angry and disappointed at Saul’s disobedience to the command of the Lord, Samuel must have felt some responsibility for failing to influence the king. Additionally, the disheartened Samuel had to be stirred out of his depression by God. The Lord stated in I Samuel 16:1, “How long wilt thou mourn for Saul, seeing I have rejected him from reigning over Israel? fill thine horn with oil, and go, I will send thee to Jesse the Bethlehemite: for I have provided me a king among his sons.”

The idea that Samuel mourned Saul as though he had died demonstrates the level of depression Samuel suffered. Only when God stirred him was he able to see that God was in control and had a plan. Like many of us in our time of suffering and loss, Samuel had to trust in the Lord completely. He had to trust God to help him work past his insecurities and move forward to anoint the next king.

A. Jesse’s House in Bethlehem

God chose the next king from the house of Jesse in Bethlehem. We can attest that his family was favored by God as his great-grandfather, Boaz, a man from the tribe of Judah, married Ruth, a Moabitess who turned away from the ungodly ways of her people and embraced the God of the children of Israel. After finding favor with God, Ruth bore a son, Obed. The inclusion of a Gentile woman into the tribe of Judah and the prophecy concerning this lineage is given in Ruth 4:14–15: “And the women said unto Naomi, Blessed be the Lord, which hath not left thee this day without a kinsman, that his name may be famous in Israel. And he shall be unto thee a restorer of thy life, and a nourisher of thine old age: for thy daughter in law, which loveth thee, which is better to thee than seven sons, hath born him.” Later Obed would have a son named Jesse. The background of this family demonstrates faithfulness to God and shows that the family had favor with God. This was significant not only to the son of Jesse being anointed king, but it proved significant to all the prophecies of the Messiah coming from the lineage of Jesse, and eventually the Messiah’s birth in Bethlehem.

Do we find favor with God when we choose to follow His plan over our own ambitions? Explain.
B. Sacrifice and Consecration

Samuel had concerns that if Saul discovered his intent to anoint a new king, Saul would try to kill Samuel. Samuel was in Ramah, but the route to Bethlehem would take him through Gibeah. A prophet, or seer, traveling through the land would draw attention, and should word of it get to Saul, it might arouse his suspicion. But God provided Samuel with a legitimate reason for his visit to Bethlehem by telling him, “Take an heifer with thee, and say, I am come to sacrifice to the Lord. And call Jesse to the sacrifice, and I will shew thee what thou shalt do: and thou shalt anoint unto me him whom I name unto thee” (I Samuel 16:2–3). Because the house of God had not yet been established in Jerusalem, the place of sacrifice could be set up in any town of the prophet’s choosing. By inviting Jesse and his family to the sacrifice, this would also conceal the additional intent of the prophet. Offering a sacrifice was not simply a cover-up; making a sacrifice to God before anointing a king would have been part of the process. Sacrifices were offered for many reasons under the Mosaic law, so offering a sacrifice alone would not have been cause for suspicion. With God’s perfect plan in place, Samuel went forward in faith to execute God’s command to anoint a new king.

II. GOD LOOKS ON THE HEART

An old expression says, “Beauty is in the eye of the beholder.” Human beings are an interesting species in that we are visually stimulated. We are quick to size up an individual’s abilities, intelligence, and many other attributes simply by that person’s appearance. Marketing firms have paid millions of dollars to research the various ways to visually stimulate people in order to sell their products. Every day we are inundated with visual cues that give us direction, cause us to think on certain things, or simply voice an idea to provoke thought on a given subject. Billboards are still widely used as a powerful marketing tool. Some studies say we humans receive almost 90 percent of our information visually. Perhaps this is why we are quick to judge things by what we see. Another old expression says, “You can’t judge a book by its cover.”

Samuel was displeased when the elders of Israel approached him asking for a king. Unfortunately, his sons were described as dishonest, taking bribes and perverting justice. Samuel could not dispute what had become obvious to all the people, so he petitioned God on behalf of the people for a king. God chose Saul only to grant the people their choice. Saul is described in the Bible as a handsome man, taller than the other men. Samuel must have been impressed, as were others. The people had asked for a king, and Saul certainly looked the part.

A. None of the First Seven Sons Were Chosen

When Samuel arrived in Bethlehem, the elders of the town trembled at his coming, even asking if he had come in peace. Samuel assured them he had come in peace, desiring to offer a sacrifice to the Lord. He instructed them to sanctify themselves and to go with him to the sacrifice. Samuel invited Jesse and his sons to the sacrifice,
taking the opportunity to consecrate them. As each son passed by, Samuel began to assess each of them. The first of the sons to catch his eye was Eliab, whose name means “God is my father.” Samuel declared that Eliab must be the one. God quickly corrected Samuel, giving him a refined guideline, “Look not on his countenance, or on the height of his stature; because I have refused him: for the Lord seeth not as man seeth; for man looketh on the outward appearance, but the Lord looketh on the heart” (I Samuel 16:7).

Samuel began using spiritual discernment to assess the remaining six sons as they passed by. When Samuel viewed the last son, he realized God had not chosen any of them. Samuel had thought the first son he had seen was surely the chosen one; however, God had chosen David to be king.

» How often do we make important decisions or choices based on our instincts rather than relying on direction from God? Explain.

B. Are These All of Your Sons?

When Samuel had seen the last of Jesse’s sons, he quickly sensed something was wrong. He had worked and walked with God for years. Had he missed something? He told Jesse the Lord had not chosen any of the sons who were present. In an instant, godly wisdom presented a question in Samuel’s mind. He asked Jesse if all his sons were present. Jesse stated that the youngest son was not present; he was tending to sheep.

When artists put their work out on display, only the pieces that are complete will be available to the viewing public. Unfinished work is not usually placed on display unless it is the intent of the artist to demonstrate the process of creation. Jesse put his most mature sons on display for Samuel to view. Since David was the youngest, his duty was to care for the flock while his brothers tended to other business. The idea that all seven of the older siblings would be passed over in favor of the youngest was simply not business as usual. However, God does not always conduct business as usual. Jesse did not exclude David out of shame, but this was simply tradition. Typically, within the families of this era, the greatest responsibility and blessings fell to the eldest son. When the time would come, the father would pass on the inheritance to the eldest son, who in turn would care for the rest of the family. However, if Samuel had requested that Jesse bring all his sons, David should have been included, regardless of tradition.

» Do people ever hold things back from God because they feel the things may be irrelevant? How can this hinder the plan of God in our lives?

III. DAVID WAS CALLED TO THE HOUSE

In the southeastern part of the United States, the expression “called to the house” is not synonymous with good things. Typically it means there is trouble at home.
Depending on the situation, it will either encourage the individual to hurry home or cause the individual to move at a glacial pace. Either way, the need to return home after being summoned by the aforementioned phrase does not bode well for the individual.

Samuel instructed Jesse to send someone to get David and have him brought before Samuel. Likely whoever went to retrieve David from the fields stated his father had summoned him at the command of the prophet. An obedient son would only need to know his father alone had summoned him to be motivated to move swiftly. This assumption is based on the cultural norms of the time, when parents were held with the highest regard. When David arrived, the Bible describes him as being ruddy, or red in the face. This could indicate he returned to his father's house from the fields with great haste.

A. This Is the One

We have all made major decisions in our lives, like purchasing a home or car, or electing to accept or decline a promotion. These decisions end up making a significant impact on our lives. There is no way to compare the aforementioned scenarios to making a spiritual decision, yet we all know that something within us told us, “This is the right one.” Without a doubt, we knew which decision was the one. When we maintain a strong relationship with God, the Holy Spirit becomes our inner voice, directing our paths, even for what may seem like trivial decisions.

Samuel had arrived in Bethlehem, made his sacrifice, and had assessed the seven sons of Jesse who were presented to him. When Samuel finished and realized none of them were the one God had sent him to anoint, he discovered there was another son who was not present. Jesse sent for David. Once David arrived, Samuel heard the voice of God stating, “This is the one.”

» What difference would it make in our choices if we focused on hearing from God every day?

B. David Was Anointed

Samuel heard God command him to take the oil and anoint the future king. The Scripture tells us Samuel took the horn of oil and anointed David in the midst of his brothers, “and the Spirit of the Lord came upon David from that day forward” (I Samuel 16:13).

Whenever a leader passes authority to another, it is imperative it be done in a manner that validates the person’s authority over others. Samuel did not have to anoint David in front of his brothers, yet this display was not insignificant. Years ago, a pastor in a local church began to travel frequently. During the church service prior to each departure, he would let the congregation know he would be gone and would announce the name of the person who would be in charge during his absence. This was a normal occurrence in that church for many years. Many did not see the
relevance at the time, but years later, a younger pastor took over the church. Over time he began to lose many of the subordinate leaders within the church without understanding why. One day a well-respected elder pulled him aside and stated the importance of publicly naming or anointing those to whom he delegates his authority, in order to remove all doubt and argument over who is in charge.

**IV. GOD VALUES WHAT IS IN YOUR HEART**

The heart is where the essence of a human being is stored. Jesus explained in Matthew 15:18–19, “But those things which proceed out of the mouth come forth from the heart; and they defile the man. For out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, blasphemies.” This is not to say that everything we say or think is purely evil. In other words, the evil things we harbor in our hearts will come out of our mouths and will be seen by our actions at some point. Thus we ought to pray as the psalmist prayed, “Create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a right spirit within me” (Psalm 51:10). We must surrender our carnal nature to the Spirit of God and allow Him to change our hearts.

The spiritual leader’s prayer life must be strong. Leaders cannot rest upon past achievements, nor can they quit at every crisis or failure. Only when a leader’s heart is strong in the Lord can a leader be bold as a lion. God considers the heart because true repentance begins there. Words can be used to deceive. Lengthy, righteous-sounding prayer does not fool God. Psalm 19:14 states best what our daily desire should be, “Let the words of my mouth, and the meditation of my heart, be acceptable in thy sight.”

» **Do you seek to purify your heart in the presence of God through prayer every day?**  
   **Explain.**

**INTERNALIZING THE MESSAGE**

Vince Lombardi is credited for the famous quote, “Leaders are made, they are not born.” Though it may seem the great leaders throughout history have been born with something special that others do not have, each person is born with different gifts and must learn to develop those gifts to their fullest potential. It is in the development process that great leaders emerge. One commonality among great leaders is they usually have at least one mentor who greatly influenced them during the development process. Jesus demonstrated through His mentorship of the disciples how important it is to develop strong future leaders. Throughout the Bible we see individuals from different eras and circumstances failing or succeeding on one common factor: the condition of their relationship with God. Only when we maintain a strong relationship with Jesus will we have a strengthened heart to endure any trial we may encounter.
The Heart of a Leader - Lesson 4

The Heart of a Leader: Lesson 4

The Focus Thought, Focus Verse, and Lesson Text are included.

Word Aflame Curriculum

ADULT

The Student Workbook gives students the tools to not only follow the major points of each lesson but also further their personal discipleship and devotion throughout the week.

The Approach section contains daily lesson highlights (see prompts in Lesson Outline) to give the adult student information to guide their daily devotion and discipleship. Some classes may prefer for their students to use this information to become familiar with the lesson before class, or even follow along during class.

Each daily lesson highlight contains two Ask and Apply questions to enhance students’ daily devotion and discipleship.

The Culture Connection is included.

The Focus Thought, Focus Verse, and Lesson Text are included.
Senior High Teacher’s Manual

The manual includes three four-week series and a thirteenth review lesson.
Lesson 2
Prove It
Week of September 8, 2019
Unit 1 Faith that Works – A Study of James

Biblical Passage
James 2:1-2

Bible Point
Actions will prove that our faith is at work.

Supplies
none

Unit Aim:
God is calling us to action. As we study the Book of James, we will be challenged to develop our potential and become doers of the Word. It’s time to get to work!

Embark
A. Option 1 — Discussion
1. Instruct teens to use their student handbooks for this exercise.
2. Have you ever heard someone say, “Don’t believe everything you hear?” What does that mean to you?
3. Have you ever believed something that you heard that turned out to be untrue? How did you respond?
4. What does the expression “seeing is believing” mean to you?
5. What is the value of proof?

B. Option 2 — Practical Example
1. What is proof?
2. After some discussion on how they would define proof, give the definition from Merriam-Webster: “evidence or argument establishing or helping to establish a fact or the truth of a statement.”
3. Ask the class to relate the definition of the word proof to their faith:
   a. Is there enough proof in your life to prove that you’re a Christian?
   b. Is there any evidence in your life that would prove you’re not a Christian even if you say you are?
   c. Is there evidence in your life to prove the faith you profess?
4. Your world deserves a real Christian.
   a. People are tired of people simply talking about Jesus. It’s time for us, the church, to show people Jesus with our actions.
   b. James chapter 2 builds on the first chapter. Last week we ended with a call to action, to do something. This week this concept is reinforced. It’s time to prove our faith!

Legend:
PowerPoint Slide
Student Handbook
Activity

Also Available
Junior–Senior High Teacher’s Resource Packet
• Supply lists for easy teacher prep
• Posters to go along with lessons
• Discussion guides
Unit Aim: God is calling us to action. As we study the Book of James, we will be challenged to develop our potential and become doers of the Word. It’s time to get to work!

**LESSON 2**

**PROVE IT**

**WEEK OF SEPTEMBER 8, 2019**

**Unit Aim:**

Instruct teens to use their student handbooks for this exercise.

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3. Have you ever believed something that you heard that turned out to be untrue? How did you respond?

4. What does the expression “seeing is believing” mean to you?

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EXPLORE

A. The Equality of All People

1. Read Romans 3:23.
   a. The ground at the foot of the cross is level.
   b. If this verse is true, then everyone is either currently a sinner in need of the grace of God or a forgiven sinner who has been forgiven by the grace of God.
   c. If God has accepted and forgiven all of us and if we are truly Christ-like, shouldn’t we be doing the same?

   a. The passage opens with a difficult question: how can we claim to have faith in our glorious Lord Jesus Christ if we favor some people over others?
   b. Comparing this to Romans 3:23, do you agree that James was telling the church that we cannot favor some people over others if we are true believers? Why do you think that is?
   c. Verse five indicates Jesus chooses the poor in this world to be rich in faith.
   d. Think about this: the twelve disciples were predominately fishermen, not salaried executives.

   • If you had to choose between being poor in this world and rich in faith or rich in this world and poor in faith, which would you choose?

   • Can our choice be proven by how we live now?

4. Have you ever noticed how we can be quick to explain our mistakes away by justifying or minimizing our actions! Or worse, we compare our sin to the sins of others.
   a. When it comes to comparing, why is it that we always compare ourselves to someone who has seemingly done worse?
   b. We say something like, “Well, at least I haven’t done what Josh did.”
   c. Do you think this is the way God looks at sin?

   a. God doesn’t grade on a curve.
   b. How does God’s view of sin differ from ours?
   c. We sometimes assign a scale to sin. We put the big ones like murder at the top but then create scenarios for when it is okay to not tell the truth. Yet God says sin is sin, and it separates us from Him.
6. **Mercy wins. Every time.**
   a. Mercy triumphs over judgment (James 2:13b, NLT)
   b. James reminds us that as Christians who have all experienced the grace of God in our lives, we should be quick to extend mercy to those who have wronged us.
   c. How can we expect to be given mercy if we refuse to give mercy?

**B. The Absence of Works**

2. No works means dead faith.
   a. James asks a rhetorical question but one that must be answered in our minds. What good is it if you say you have faith but don’t show it by your actions?
   b. God has not called you to be an undercover Christian. You are not called to blend in with your surroundings.
   c. Consider Philippians 2:15 where we are commanded to shine like stars!
3. Talk is cheap. We have all heard that expression. But James’ application to our lives in verses 15-16 is that we are being called to make a difference.
   a. This doesn’t mean that we simply acknowledge the needs around us; it means that we do everything we can to meet the needs.
   b. Can your faith be proved by your actions?
5. James asks the reader to consider the life of Abraham. He was the Patriarch. He had followed God in the ultimate leap of faith and was the guy they would later write a song about: “Father Abraham, had many sons…”
   a. Abraham was considered righteous because his faith was proved when he was willing to offer his only son Isaac on the altar.
   b. Verse 22 says that Abraham’s faith and his actions were working together and his faith was made complete. What does this mean?
   c. Verse 24 tells us that a person is justified by what he does and not by faith alone. How does this contrast with the idea that we just need to believe on God and it doesn’t matter how we live our lives?
6. As soon as James finished talking about the patriarch Abraham, he swung to the complete opposite end of the spectrum and brought up a woman by the name of Rahab.
   a. Rahab, even though she was a prostitute according to verse 25, was considered righteous when she gave lodging to the spies from Israel who had come to spy out the land of Jericho.
   b. If everyone from Abraham to Rahab must prove their faith by their actions, can we exempt ourselves from this stipulation?

**C. Connecting James 1 and James 2**

1. Faith without works is dead. If your faith is truly alive, it will be proven by what you do.
UNIT 1 Faith That Works – A Study of James

• Prove It

1. James 1 is about eliminating excuses. Just because we go through trials doesn’t mean that we are given a free pass to sit in sorrow. Trials happen, but there is a purpose in the trial.
   a. Consider Joseph. In Genesis 40:6, right in the middle of his extended stay in Pharaoh’s prison, the Bible says that Joseph saw that the Pharaoh’s butler and his baker were dejected.
   b. In spite of his own trial, Joseph showed concern for those around him. He took action.
   c. You might not know how that story ended. Several years later, the butler remembered Joseph, and shared the story with Pharaoh. In one day, Joseph went from the prison to the palace.

2. James 2:22 demonstrates Abraham’s faith and his actions working together.
   a. Abraham was called by God to do something. He left the land of his fathers. He experienced trials.
   b. But his example proves the progression in James 1 and 2. The trials produced a faith in him that was strong enough to trust God when God asked him to offer his only son as a sacrifice.

3. James 2 opens with instruction that we should not show favoritism in the church, or that the ground at the foot of the cross is level.
   a. James 2 concludes with a comparison between Abraham and Rahab who both were considered righteous because their faith lead them to action.
   b. Consider the way one theologian put it, “Only he who believes is obedient; and only he who is obedient believes.”
   c. Don’t blame God for the trials; credit Him for the gifts.

4. Read James 1:17.
   • Every good thing we have in our life is from God. Do you agree with this statement or not?
   • How does this relate to our example of Abraham from James 2? (Isaac was his gift from God, and he was willing to take that gift and offer it in worship back to the giver.)
   • What would you do if God asked for you to offer your gift back to Him?

5. So what are the results of our faith?

6. James 1:19 tells us to be quick to listen, slow to speak, and slow to become angry.
   a. How hard is this?
   b. Have you ever found yourself interrupting someone else because you thought you knew what they were going to say and you had a response?

7. James 2:17 tells us that faith by itself, if it is not accompanied by action, is dead.
   a. What does this mean?
b. Do you think we can establish that God cares about how we act?

   a. James concludes chapter 1 with a call to action. It is not enough to simply listen to the Word of God. As mature believers, the Word that we hear should lead us to action.
   b. James doubled down at the conclusion of chapter 2 with a challenge to “prove it.” Faith without deeds is dead.
   c. According to James, if your faith isn’t causing you to act, do you truly believe?

EXPAND

A. Option 1 — Prayer
   1. Close in prayer for students to understand that as Christians, we are called to treat everyone the same.
   2. Pray that students will actively look for opportunities to prove their faith.
   3. Pray that students will have the determination to put action with their words.

B. Option 2 — Call to Action
   1. Split everyone into groups.
   2. Give each group five minutes to come up with an action plan.
   3. Ask each group to come up with several things students in the class can do as a group to put their faith in action.

C. Option 3 — Testimony
   1. Ask for volunteers from the group to share proof of their faith by things they have done for others.
   2. Consider sharing a personal story as well.

The Expand section provides closing discussion points and prompts for leading students in a time of prayer for the Spirit to move in their lives.
Junior High Teacher’s Manual

The manual includes three four-week series and a thirteenth review lesson.
A Unit Aim gives an overview of the material for the four-week study.

A Bible Point gives the main idea for the week’s lesson.

A simple list of supplies directs the teacher in lesson prep.

The Embark section provides two opening activity options.

The Explore section provides the teaching points of the lesson in an easy-to-follow outline style.
Unit 1: Faith That Works—A Study of James

• Prove It

need of the grace of God or a forgiven sinner who has been forgiven by the grace of God.

b. If God has accepted and forgiven all of us and if we are truly Christlike, shouldn’t we be doing the same?


a. The passage opens with a difficult question: “How can you claim to have faith in our glorious Lord Jesus Christ if you favor some people over others?”

b. Comparing this to Romans 3:23, do you agree that James was telling the church we cannot favor some people over others if we are true believers? Why do you think that is?

c. One of the first things we notice about people is how they are dressed. We are quick to judge a book by its cover, meaning we immediately make assumptions about people based on what they are wearing. In a culture that is obsessed with brands and image, we must protect against this mentality creeping into the church.

(d) James 2:5 indicates **Jesus chooses the poor in this world to be rich in faith**. Consider this: the twelve disciples were predominately fishermen, not salaried executives.

e. If you had to choose between being poor in this world and rich in faith or being rich in this world and poor in faith, which would you choose? Can our choice be proven by how we live now?

B. The Reality of Sin and Mercy

1. Have you ever noticed how we can be quick to explain our mistakes away by justifying or minimizing our actions? Or worse, we compare our sin to the sins of others.

(a) When it comes to comparing, why do we always compare ourselves to someone who has seemingly done worse? We may say something like, “Well, at least I haven’t done what Josh did.”

(b) Do you think this is the way God looks at sin?


3. God does not grade on a curve.

(a) How does God’s view of sin differ from ours?

(b) We sometimes assign a scale to sin. We put the big sins like murder at the top; then we create scenarios for when it is okay to not tell the truth. Yet sin is sin, and it separates us from God.

4. Mercy wins, every time.

(a) **Mercy triumphs over judgment** (James 2:13b, NLT). Consider this: the Book of James reminds us that as Christians who have all experienced the grace of God in our lives, we should be quick to extend mercy to those who have wronged us. How can we expect to be given mercy if we refuse to give mercy?
C. The Absence of Works
1. No works means dead faith.
2. Read James 2:14–20. Consider Philippians 2:15 where we are commanded to "shine as lights in the world."
   a. Why can't we see stars during the day?
   b. Like stars, our purpose is to shine when it is dark. Our faith should be impacting the lives of everyone around us.
3. James asked a rhetorical question, but one that must be answered in our minds. What good is it if we say we have faith but do not show it by our actions?
4. God has not called us to be undercover Christians. We are not called to blend in with our surroundings. Consider Philippians 2:15 where we are commanded to "shine as lights in the world."
   a. Why can't we see stars during the day?
   b. Like stars, our purpose is to shine when it is dark. Our faith should be impacting the lives of everyone around us.
5. Talk is cheap. We have all heard that expression. But James' application to our lives in James 2:15–16 is that we are being called to make a difference. This does not mean we simply acknowledge the needs around us; it means we do everything we can to meet the needs.

D. Heroes of Faith
1. Can your faith be proven by your actions?
3. In these verses we are asked to consider the life of Abraham. He was the patriarch. He had followed God in the ultimate leap of faith and was the guy a song was later written about: "Father Abraham, had many sons . . . ."
   a. Abraham was considered righteous because he proved his faith when he was willing to offer his only son, Isaac, on the altar.
   b. Verse 22 says Abraham's faith and his actions were working together and his faith was made complete. What does this mean?
   c. Verse 24 tells us we are justified by what we do and not by faith alone. How does this contrast with the idea that we just need to believe on God and it does not matter how we live our lives?
4. As soon as James finished talking about the patriarch Abraham, he swung to the complete opposite end of the spectrum and brought up a woman named Rahab.
   a. Even though she was a prostitute according to verse 25, Rahab was considered righteous when she gave lodging to the spies from Israel who had come to spy out the land of Jericho.
   b. If all people from Abraham to Rahab must prove their faith by their actions, can we exempt ourselves from this stipulation?
5. Faith without works is dead. If our faith is truly alive, it will be proven by what we do.
E. Connecting James 1 and James 2
1. The first two chapters of James sound a clarion call to action.
   a. James 1 is about eliminating excuses. Just because we go through trials does not mean we are given a free pass to sit in sorrow. Trials happen, but there is a purpose in the trial.
   b. Consider Joseph. In Genesis 40:6, right in the middle of his extended stay in Pharaoh's prison, the Bible says Joseph was considered righteous because his faith led him to action. We know how that story ended. Several years later, the butler remembered Joseph and shared the story with Pharaoh. In one day Joseph went from the prison to the palace.
2. James 2:22 demonstrates Abraham's faith and actions working together.
   a. Abraham was called by God to do something. He left the land of his fathers. He experienced trials.
   b. But his example proves the progression in James 1 and 2. The trials produced a faith in him that was strong enough to trust God when God asked him to offer his only son as a sacrifice.
3. James 2 opens with instruction that we should not show favoritism in the church—that the ground at the foot of the cross is level. James 2 concludes with a comparison between Abraham and Rahab—both were considered righteous because their faith led them to action.
4. Consider the way the theologian Dietrich Bonhoeffer put it, "Only he who believes is obedient, and only he who is obedient believes."

F. God's Good Gifts
1. Do not blame God for the trials; blame Him for the gifts.
2. Read James 1:17. a. Every good thing we have in life is from God. Do you agree with this statement or not?
   b. How does this relate to our example of Abraham from James 2? Isaac was his gift from God, and Abraham was willing to offer that gift in worship back to the giver.
c. What would you do if God asked you to offer your gift back to Him?

G. The Results of Our Faith
1. As long as I have faith, it does not matter how I act. Is this true or false?
2. False. James wrote about our conduct and actions in James 1 and 2.
3. James 1:19 tells us to be quick to listen, slow to speak, and slow to become angry.
   a. How hard is this?
   b. Have you ever interrupted someone because you thought you knew what that person was going to say and you had a response?
4. James 2:17 tells us that faith by itself, if it is not accompanied by action, is dead.
   a. What does this mean?
   b. Do you think we can establish that God cares about how we act?

H. Proving Our Faith
2. James concluded chapter 1 with a call to action. It is not enough to simply listen to the Word of God. As mature believers, the Word we hear should lead us to action.
3. James doubled down at the conclusion of chapter 2 with a challenge to “prove it.” Faith without deeds is dead.
   a. What does this mean?
   b. According to James, if our faith is not causing us to act, do we truly believe?

EXPAND

A. Option 1 — Prayer
1. Close in prayer for students to understand that as Christians, we are called to treat everyone the same.
2. Pray that students will actively look for opportunities to prove their faith.
3. Pray that students will have the determination to put action with their words.

B. Option 2 — Testimony
1. Ask for volunteers from the group to share proof of their faith by things they have done for others.
2. Consider sharing a personal story as well.
**Unit Aim**

God is calling us to action. As we study the Book of James, we will be challenged to develop our potential and become doers of the Word. It is time to get to work.

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**EMBARK**

1. Have you ever heard someone say, “Don’t believe everything you hear”? What does that mean to you?

2. Have you ever believed something you heard that later turned out to be untrue? How did you respond?

3. What does the expression “seeing is believing” mean to you?

4. What is the value of proof?

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**Bible Point**

Actions will prove that our faith is at work.

**Bible Passages**

Matthew 5:13–16; Romans 3:23; Galatians 6:10; Philippians 2:15; James 2
THE EXPEDITION

1. Jesus chooses the ___________ in this world to be rich in faith.

2. _____________ triumphs over judgment.

3. We are not called to blend in with our ____________________.

4. Abraham was considered righteous because he ______________ his faith when he was willing to offer his only son, Isaac, on the altar.

5. James 1:19 tells us to be quick to ____________, slow to ____________, and slow to become ____________.

EXPLORE

1. What would you do if God asked you to offer a gift He gave you back to Him?

_________________________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________________

2. What does "faith without action is dead" mean?

_________________________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________________

3. If our faith is not causing us to act, do we truly believe? Why or why not?

_________________________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________________

4. How did Rahab act on her faith?

_________________________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________________
EXPAND

CALL TO ACTION
What are some specific actions you can take to prove your faith in Jesus? Write down your thoughts below.
_________________________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________________

A LITTLE EXTRA FOR THE ROAD
When we read in James “faith without works is dead,” we may think, “If we have faith, but it does not show up in our actions, then our faith is meaningless.” However, the truth goes a little deeper. Consider water. Water contains two molecules: hydrogen and oxygen. Without hydrogen, it is no longer water; it is oxygen. It is not that the water becomes worthless or unusable; it is not even water anymore. The same is true concerning faith. It is not that faith without action is worthless; it is not even faith anymore. Actions are part of the “molecular structure” of faith. We cannot have genuine faith without proving it through actions.

Next Week’s Bible Point:
The motives driving our faith and actions must be right.
To show the layout of a typical lesson, we have provided a lesson from the Beginner teacher’s manual, which is written to be age-appropriate for a 1st or 2nd grade student. To view a sample lesson for Toddler, Kindergarten, Beginner, Primary, or Preteen go to apostolicdiscipleship.com.
Each lesson’s opening page maps out the necessary supplies and preparations for each section.

The CORE section is designed for teaching periods around 45 minutes. It contains the lesson essentials: an opening activity, the Bible narrative, and a life-application activity.

The Bible Point states what the Bible narrative reveals about God.

The Life Application states how students will apply the lesson to their hearts and minds.

The EXPANDED section is designed to supplement teaching periods longer than 45 minutes. The teacher can work in these additional activities as time and teaching style allow.
Teacher Devotional

Read I Samuel 16:1–13. Prayerfully consider what this passage says:

About God
When no one is looking, what do your actions tell God? In private, do your words and actions build up or tear down those you lead? God is not impressed by fame or fortune, rather He looks at the heart of a leader to judge success and failure.

To You as a Teacher
“My way or the highway”—this adage does not belong on the lips of God’s servants. Our heart should be ever reaching for the things that please God. We must remove ourselves from the equation, placing God’s kingdom and Word at the forefront of our hearts. We do this by being sensitive to His Holy Spirit, which can only happen if we have a devoted prayer life.

To Your Students
Do you look forward to class time with your students? Is your heart in the work of God? God probes your heart and uses those talents, gifts, and abilities He placed within you. He then anoints you as you joyfully minister to your students. Look at each student carefully and see what God has placed in each one of them. Encourage each student to use these talents, gifts, and abilities for God. Pass to the next generation the desire to have a heart toward God.

CORE (designed for a teaching period around 45 minutes)

EXCITE AND ENGAGE
Welcome
The Museum of Israel’s Golden Age is filled with Bible history that shows how God leads His people.

Lead students to the God’s Leaders wall and recall the Bible artifacts from the first three lessons. Think of the leaders we have studied.

• Which man was a good leader who obeyed God? Samuel
• Which man stopped being a good leader? King Saul

Collect offering. Give each student this lesson’s attendance picture (trp) 1 to glue in a frame on the attendance chart (trp) 1.

Lead students to the God’s People wall. God leads His people. How does He lead us to salvation? Review the New Birth poster (trp).

Visit the God’s Word wall and review the unit 1 MB poster (trp). Have you ever heard someone say, “I have a heart for that” or “I love it with all my heart”? Our verse says God looks at the heart. When we use the word heart in this way, we are not talking about the muscle that pumps blood in our body. What does it mean when we talk about the heart in this way?

Stop by the God’s Help wall and allow students a few minutes to explore the interactive museum items.

Each lesson begins with a Teacher Devotional, a section to help the teacher prayerfully reflect on the Scripture text and Bible lesson to prepare for the lesson.

From the moment students enter the classroom, teachers will EXCITE AND ENGAGE them.

Teachers welcome students with an introduction to the Bible Point, as well as take attendance and offering.

An Opening Activity will EXCITE them with a sensory experience and ENGAGE them in a fun, thought-provoking, team-building activity to lay groundwork for the remainder of the lesson.
The RELATE AND RECEIVE section reveals the lesson’s biblical narrative.

First teachers prompt students to share personal stories and prior experiences to prepare their minds to RELATE to the experiences of the Bible characters.

Then students RECEIVE God’s story through an interactive, age-appropriate presentation.

The Bible Lesson Verse quotes the perfect take-away passage that encapsulates the essence of the Bible lesson as it relates to the Bible Point.

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Open Activity: Inside My Heart

God looks at our hearts. He is interested in how we feel. People look at our faces. They are interested in how we look. Our faces can show what is in our hearts.

Introduce the Life Application: I want to have a heart for God.

Distribute activity papers and pencils. On the front page, students circle the emoji faces that show someone who has a heart for God. They should cross out the emojis that reflect a heart that is not right. As they work, discuss what each emoji stands for and how it can show the emotion in the heart.

RELATE AND RECEIVE

Access Prior Experience: Has someone ever asked you to look for something, but you could not find it? How did that feel?

Bible Lesson: David Anointed King (1 Samuel 16:1–13)

Gather students near the lesson artifacts (wool, staff, and anointing oil) at the God’s Leaders wall. Select a volunteer to read the Bible leader summary.[trp] Our museum is filled with items and stories about God’s leaders. We learned about two men who lived during Israel’s golden age—a time when things went well for Israel and they had great leaders. Today we will once again see how the anointing oil was used and learn about the next great leader God chose.

To prepare for the lesson:

- Dress three volunteers in robes to play the roles of Samuel, Jesse, and David.
- If you have enough students, give seven “brothers” headpieces to wear.
- Give David the sheep’s wool and shepherd’s staff. Send him to the far side of the room.
- Give Jesse a cane and have him sit in the lesson area.
- Give Samuel the anointing oil and have him stand near the doorway.

Instruct the actors to move as the story is told.

- In the last lesson, when King Saul disobeyed God, what blessing did he lose? He would no longer be king.

After that, God spoke to Samuel, “Go to Bethlehem. Call Jesse and his sons to come and worship. I have chosen one of Jesse’s sons to be the next king.” Instruct Samuel to look up as if listening to God.

Samuel obeyed. Samuel carries the anointing oil and walks across the room. He went to Bethlehem and called the people to come and worship. Jesse came with his sons. Jesse stands next to Samuel. David’s seven brothers line up behind Jesse.

David remains across the room.

Samuel went to Jesse’s house to see Jesse’s sons. Samuel knew one of them would be the next king of Israel. He asked to see each son. As each son is introduced, the son stands beside Jesse in front of Samuel. As each son is rejected, that son moves to one side and the next son stands in front of Samuel.

Jesse introduced his oldest son, Eliab. Eliab was the tallest and strongest. Samuel was sure Eliab would be Israel’s next king, but God whispered, “No, not him.” While Samuel could see how handsome or strong or tall each of Jesse’s sons were, God was looking at their hearts.

Jesse’s second son, Abinadab, stepped forward. God whispered to Samuel, “No, not him.”
David Anointed King (I Samuel 16:1–13)

Inside My Heart

RELATE AND RECEIVE

Jesse nodded. “Yes. He is the youngest. He is in the field taking care of the sheep.” Jesse sent for David to come and meet Samuel.

David loved God. Every day as he took care of his sheep, he would worship God. He had a heart for God. Imagine how David felt when he heard that Samuel wanted to meet him.

David walks to Samuel. When Samuel saw David, God whispered to Samuel, “Yes, that’s him.” Review the unit verse. God saw David’s heart. It was a good heart—a heart that loved God. God knew David would make a good leader.

Samuel took out his oil and anointed David. Help Samuel anoint David with a dab of oil. God chose David to be the next king of Israel because David had a heart for God.

APPLY AND ACT

Life Application: I want to have a heart for God.

I want to have a heart for God. Distribute the heart puzzle pieces and allow students to put the puzzle together. Once assembled, read the memory verse together.

When you have a heart for God, you hear what He says. Lead students to the New Birth poster (189) and explain how being born again gives us a heart for God.

Prayer and Call to Action

Show the prepared heart shape (189). Let a student open the top of the heart to reveal the sin inside (black tissue paper).

Before we repent, our hearts are dirty and full of sin. Lead students in a prayer of repentance to get rid of the sin.

After the prayer, remove the black tissue from the heart, showing how God forgives our sin. Encourage students to review the emojis on their activity papers during personal prayer this week.

Home Connection

• For students who did not receive one last week, send home a copy of the unit 1 RC calendar (189).

• For each student, send home a copy of the lesson 4 RC devotion 3, or show parents the URL on the back of the activity paper.

• During pickup, show the emoji faces to parents and encourage them to take time to pray with their children about each face and how it relates to the heart.

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The Teacher’s Resource Packet and Activity Paper are commonly used as essential tools in helping the teacher tell the story.

**EXPANDED** (designed for a teaching period over 45 minutes)

**WORSHIP AND THE WORD**

**Worship**

As you play “When the Spirit of the Lord” from Shout Praises Kids, show students how to have a heart filled with worship by using demonstrative worship (e.g., clapping, leaping, singing, raising hands).

Play “With All My Heart” by Integrity Kids Music as you demonstrate how to worship and pray.

**Memory Work:** I Samuel 16:7

Gather near the Discover God’s Word wall. Allow students to recite the verse individually. Compliment every attempt.

Place the unit 1 MV cards (TRP), face down in a 3 x 5 grid. Students take turns turning over a card. If it is the next word in the verse, the student takes the card and lays it on the table. Repeat until all verse words are in correct sequence.

On the memory verse charts (MV), help students stamp one square after studying the verse.

**REINFORCE AND REVIEW**

**Activity Paper**

God chose David because he had a heart for God. On the back of the activity paper, ask students to help Samuel through the maze so he can anoint David as king.

**Option 1: Making Repentant Hearts**

Give each student two heart shapes, black tissue paper, and tape. Help them make their own heart filled with sin as shown in Prayer and Call to Action. After their hearts are made, allow students to tell how to repent and have the sin removed.

**Option 2: Life Application Red Light**

Have students stand across the room from you. You turn toward the wall and begin saying the Life Application: I want to have a heart for God. While you are speaking, students hurry across the room to reach you. At any moment, you can pause and turn around, at which point students must freeze. If they move, they are out. The student closest to you must remember where you paused and recite the rest of the Life Application. If correct, the student takes your place and play continues. If incorrect, the next closest student recites. For each round, students start again at the far wall.

**Option 3: JBQ Chutes and Ladders**

Use the Chutes and Ladders game from lesson 2 (page 21) to ask questions from a JBQ Quiz.
CHILDREN’S ACTIVITY PAPERS

Available for each level, the Activity Paper provides fun age-appropriate activities to drive home the lesson material. Order one activity paper per student.