

Word Aflame Jr. High

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Jr. High Teacher's Manual

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Unit 1: Faith That Works—A Study of James

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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Unit 2: The Oneness of God

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Unit 3: Money Habits

Aim: In today's society the "I want it now" mentality has consumed the vast majority. Instead of exercising responsibility and restraint, irresponsible decisions are made with very expensive consequences. This series gives students the tools to become good stewards, develop priorities, and create responsible habits with their finances.

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Theme Development

Unit 1: Faith That Works—A Study of James

- This unit explores issues of faith and encourages us in ways of building, maintaining, and exercising our faith from James' perspective.
- The unit will focus on imagery that is indicative of biblical times.
- Consider the use of costumes, dressing as a disciple and acting as the main character of this story for the next four weeks.
- Consider the use of the Teachers Resource Packet (TRP) if props and settings are not possible.

Unit 2: The Oneness of God

- This unit explores the necessity of education and belief in the oneness of God.
- Consider the usage of lesson posters and imagery that changes from week to week.
- Consider the use of a large "1" as a backdrop.
- Consider the use of the Teachers Resource Packet (TRP) if props and settings are not possible.

Unit 3: Money Habits

- This unit will address stewardship, investment, and the proper use of money.
- This unit offers a practical look at working a job and giving God what He deserves while also teaching important lessons about money.
- Consider the use of money imagery from piggy banks to large water cooler money holders, even using fake money from board games. Utilizing imagery from Monopoly or Life board games may assist in creating an immersive overall theme for this unit!

Embark: This opening section is meant to elicit discussion and promote activity to encourage the learning process of students while creating a fun and engaging atmosphere.

Explore: This section is the basis for the lesson with various biblical references, key points, as well as personal examples to effectively convey the big idea in a logical and practical manner.

Expand: This section is intended to provide a consolidated yet effective means of closure perpetuated by closing discussions, activities, or prayers.

LESSON 1


DO SOMETHING

WEEK OF SEPTEMBER 1, 2019

BIBLICAL PASSAGE

Romans 8:28; II Corinthians 10:5;
James 1:1–27 

BIBLE POINT

If our faith is alive, it will provoke us to action. 

SUPPLIES

Wooden building blocks (2 or 3 sets), timer, optional: battery-operated remote-control car with remote and batteries

Legend:



PowerPoint Slide



Student Handbook



Activity

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.

EMBARK

A. Option 1 — Discussion


1. *Instruct teens to use their student handbooks for this exercise.*
2. Is it better to say you will do something and then not do it or to follow through and actually do what you say? Why?
3. Are good intentions enough? Why or why not?
4. Why is it frustrating when someone promises to do something, but then does not deliver?
5. Is potential enough? Why or why not?



B. Option 2 — Object Lesson

1. *You will need a remote-control car with a remote that both require batteries.*
2. *Place batteries in the remote only, not in the car.*
3. *Have a student attempt to demonstrate the remote-control car and its capabilities (without batteries).*
 - a. Why doesn't the car do anything?
 - b. The remote has power; why can't it move the car?
4. *After a few minutes of trying to move the car, put batteries in the car and let the operator take it for a spin.*
5. *Discuss with students what they thought about the situation. Ask them to explain, from their point of view, why the car failed to work without batteries, even though the remote had batteries. How does this apply to our lives? Is our potential for the kingdom of God any good if we aren't connected to the power?*




EXPLORE

A. Benefits of Trials




1. Can we say with confidence that God is a healer if we have never needed God to heal us? Can we say that God is a provider if we have never needed God to provide for us? Trials are like tests; they show what we have learned.
2. *Read James 1:2–7 and Romans 8:28.* 

- a. How can we consider a trial to be “joy”?
- b. How does Romans 8:28, “All things work together for good,” relate to James 1:2?
- c. This passage explains to us that while everything we experience may not be good, we can trust that everything we experience will be for our good. Can you think of something that is not pleasant in the moment but is beneficial long term?
- d. **Trials have purpose; they are not meaningless.**   The difficulties we face produce perseverance, and perseverance produces maturity.
- e. Why do you take tests and quizzes in school? Passing a test or quiz demonstrates that you have gained knowledge about a particular subject. Do trials work the same way?

B. Trusting the Process



1. Almost everything we do is a process. This is true both in the natural and in the spiritual. Consider toddlers who are learning to walk; they don’t take off running the moment they stand on their own two feet. The process of walking advances through various stages. Living for God is the same.
 - a. Considering the concept of process, how does one become mature and complete according to James 1:4?
 - b. What can we do if we find ourselves lacking wisdom according to James 1:5?
2. We need to ask God for wisdom. **The Book of James tells us God gives wisdom generously to those who ask for it, without finding fault.**  
3. *Read James 1:6–7.* 
 - a. What should our attitude be when we ask God for wisdom?
 - b. Can we expect to receive anything from God if we do not believe He will give it to us?
4. Anyone who asks God for something but doubts that God will answer the request is compared to a wave of the ocean. How does this relate to us?
 - a. Waves are not stable. They are not predictable. They are controlled by external sources like wind. Our faith should cause us to have some stability. Just because the wind blows against us does not mean we have to be moved.
 - b. Water will always choose the path of least resistance, the easiest possible route. Does faith always take the easiest route?

C. Double-Minded


1. *Read James 1:8.* 
2. **The definition of double-minded is “wavering in mind, undecided, or insincere.”**  
3. We cannot expect to grow in God if our minds are wavering about God.

- a. Living for God only on Sundays and Wednesdays is not going to lead to growth.
- b. If we remain undecided, our walk with God will be unstable.



D. Stages in Our Walk with God

1. Stages in the process of living for God are not designed to last forever.
2. While everyone claps and cheers for a one-year-old who takes a few wobbly steps, the response is certainly different for a three-year-old who still only takes a couple of steps without falling. We celebrate every new step in the development of a child, but we also recognize that there should be another stage coming that continues to demonstrate development.
3. In living for God, the same principle is true. **Christians should be growing and maturing in their faith.**   Just like in our natural life, our spiritual life will be constantly marked by change and growth. Growth is not always a fun experience, but it is absolutely a necessary one.
4. James 1:9–11 deals with this principle. When believers are in humble circumstances (that is Bible talk for not having much in the way of material things), they should still have peace in the fact that they are children of God. When believers are rich, they should have the humility to remember it is God who causes us to prosper.

Activity – Relating Trials to Growth




1. *Form two or three groups. Give each group a set of wooden building blocks.*
2. *Inform groups they have one minute to build the tallest tower possible. Repeat this exercise twice.*
3. *Then inform groups they have three minutes to build the tallest tower possible, and it must endure you blowing on it.*
4. *Once the exercise is complete, ask the following questions:*
 - a. *What did you learn about growth and stability?*
 - b. *Did you build differently when you knew the tower had to stand up to an outside force?*
 - c. *How do you think this relates to the way Jesus builds us?* 

E. The Reality of Trials


1. Trials happen. How are we supposed to act during trials?
2. **Sometimes trials in our lives are caused by temptations.**  
 - a. When we are being tempted, we cannot blame God.
 - b. God is immune to evil; he is completely unaffected by it. God will not tempt us with evil.
3. If God is not tempting us, where does the temptation come from?
 - a. Each one of us is tempted by our own evil desires. Does this mean we are all tempted by the same things?
 - b. No, we recognize that we are all different. We desire different things.

- c. We need to recognize that our temptations do not lead us to good things.
4. Here we find another process at work. What starts as a temptation progresses quickly into sin. If it is not dealt with, sin continues to lead us down the wrong road and eventually will lead us to death. Can sin lead to a natural death? What about a spiritual death?
5. Temptation is like a bird. You cannot control whether a bird flies over your head. However, you can control whether or not that bird builds a nest on your head.


F. Acknowledging God

1. **Do not blame God for the trials; credit 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. Without breath in our bodies, we would not even be alive. Genesis 2:7 tells us God breathed life into man, and only then did man become a living soul.
 - c. Is the fact that God is unchanging a gift? Why or why not?

G. A Right Approach

1. *Read James 1:19–21.* 
2. Why does James instruct us to be quick to listen and slow to speak?
 - a. Have you ever responded too quickly to a situation without knowing the whole story?
 - b. It is better to listen carefully and wait before speaking so we do not say something we will regret later.
3. How does anger prevent us from having a righteous life that God desires?

H. Taking Action

1. *Read James 1:22–27.* 
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. What does God ask us to do in verse 26?
4. Get control of your mouth. The words you say indicate whether your religion is worth anything. If you are a believer, you must be careful to speak with the “filter” of the Holy Spirit attached to your mouth.
5. Look after orphans and widows. Do you think James was asking us to simply see them?
6. Keep yourself from being polluted by the world.

EXPAND

A. Option 1 — Prayer

1. *Close in prayer for students to understand that trials will come.*
2. *Pray that students will see that trials bring good things and to trust the*

process that is at work in them.

- 3. Help students remember that the good things in life come from God, and God wants them to do something about their faith.*

B. Option 2 — Testimony

- 1. Ask for volunteers from the group to share how they have grown from difficult circumstances they faced.*
- 2. Consider sharing a personal story as well.*