James

Lesson 1: You've Got Issues

**Lessons in this series:** **1**[2](http://www.teensundayschool.com/51/lesson/my-favorite.php) [3](http://www.teensundayschool.com/55/lesson/watch-your-mouth.php) [4](http://www.teensundayschool.com/64/lesson/the-time-of-your-life.php) [5](http://www.teensundayschool.com/65/lesson/must-be-the-money.php)

LESSON OBJECTIVES

Goals

1. To familiarize students with the book and person of James  
2. To help students understand that we all have common issues we must deal with  
3. To equip students with what they need to overcome and learn from their issues

Topics

Burdens, Difficulties, Temptation, Trials

Scripture Memorization

James 1:2-4

OPENING PRAYER (5 to 10 minutes)  
   
GROUP BUILDING (5 minutes)

Small groups are at the core of developing life changing friendships. Communication is at the core of successful small groups. Take a few moments to discuss the importance of active listening. For a teaching tip on the subject:

Active listening will dramatically improve the way in which you communicate.

The points below will help you master the art of active listening; a skill to seek to help you better communicate with others in your small groups, Bible studies, and life in general.

**Listen Attentively**  
Do not listen half-heartedly; focus on the person communicating.  
Concentrate on what is being said.  
Listen with your ears but also with your eyes and other senses.   
Follow and understand the speaker as if you were walking in his or her shoes.  
Focus on what the speaker is saying, not on how you plan to answer.  
Try not to interrupt until the speaker has concluded his or her statements.   
You should be able to repeat back in your own words what the speaker just said.  
   
**Use Nonverbal Communication to Encourage the Speaker and Show Your Interest**Facial expressions: smile and make eye contact  
Posture: face the speaker, lean forward  
   
**Give Feedback**  
Listen for key words of interest on which to comment and ask questions.   
Actively respond at the appropriate times in the conversation.  
  
**Listening Environment**Is the space conducive to listening?  
Are there avoidable distractions?  
   
**Benefits of Active Listening**  
Active listening encourages dialogue, tends to open people up and creates deeper relationships within the group.

GETTING STARTED (10 minutes)

We’re going to be studying James. (Discuss the following facts about James.)  
• Half brother of Jesus  
• Did not believe in his brother until after the resurrection  
• Became a leader in the early church  
• Writes this letter in about 49 AD  
• His letter is very practical, filled with ideas on how to live out your faith  
  
We’re going to be very practical for the next 5 weeks.

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| Workbook Activity  **Trials & Temptations (Part 1)** Write down two or three trials that you face today. 1. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ 2. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ 3. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_  **Finding Joy in the midst of Trials** How might God use a trial to stretch and mature you? Don’t be tricked into doubting God or letting your faith in Him be shaken. How can you bring honor and glory to God in the way you handle trials. |

Today, we’re going to jump right in and look at James 1:1-18.  
   
We will just call this lesson “I’ve Got Issues” because we all do. In the first chunk of his letter, James tells us about 4 that we all encounter from time to time. For some of you, you might connect with 2 or 3. Some of you might really struggle with one of these. We’re going to take some time in a few minutes to individualize this stuff and dig deeper in the areas we need to, but first, let’s read our text. Listen for the four issues that James says we all deal with.

DIGGING IN (30 minutos)

**Read James 1:1-18**

Who thinks they caught some of the issues we’re going to talk about? What are they??

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| **The Big 4:** | Trials (verse 2) | Lack of Wisdom (verse 5) |
|  | Humble Circumstances (verse 9) | Temptation (verse 13) |

**Discusion Questions:**  
1. Let’s look at trials first. According to James, how should we respond to trials?*(Consider it pure joy.)*2. Why is that an appropriate response? *(Because trials lead to maturity.)*3. How should we respond to a lack of wisdom? *(Ask for it.)*4. Why should we respond in this way? *(Because God wants to dish it out to us.)*5. In humble circumstances, how should we respond? *(Take pride in the circumstance.)*6. Why take pride? *(Because riches—and the rich—pass away like wildflowers.)*7. Finally, how should we react to temptation? *(Don’t blame God for it.)*8. Why shouldn't we blame God? *(Because good things come from God. Temptation comes from the devil and ourselves.)*

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| Workbook Activity  **Trials and Temptations (Part 2)** Write down two or three temptations you struggle with. 1. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ 2. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ 3. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_  **The Source of Temptation:**Temptation does not come from God, but rather from your own evil desires.  Do not dwell on the evil desire while ignoring the danger that it poses.  You become your own worst enemy when you start to justify your sin. When you are disobedient and act on the evil desire, it becomes sin.  **Combating Temptation:** Once you determine that your temptation comes from your own evil desires, it will be easier to overcome those temptations.  Pray and be ready – Matthew 26:41 Guard our heart – Proverbs 4:23, Phil 4:8-9 Hide God’s Word in your heart – Psalm 119:9-11, Romans 1:2, James 4:7  If all else fails, run! – 2 Tim 2:22 You will not run if you haven’t done the first three points above.  Remember God is faithful and will provide a way out. – 1 Cor 10:13 God doesn’t want us to fail. |

MAKING IT REAL (10 minutes)

James is a practical writer, and we want this stuff to stick. I’d like some of you to share, just a minute or so, some of the things you find yourself struggling with the most and anything you’ve just learned as we’ve read and talked.  
  
So, if you’d like to share, come to the middle of the circle, identify your issue, maybe hold up the image if you want, and tell us from the heart what you think God is saying to you about that. Chances are there are others in the room who are struggling in the same way.  
  
(Share time with students. It may take them a minute to warm up. If necessary, be open and share a struggle of yours. This openness might inspire them to share, too.)

CLOSING PRAYER (5 minutes)

We are going to pray for each other. Pair off with someone. Ask them how you can pray for them and spend a few moments praying for each other.