

Fort Hill Christian Youth Camp 2025

Class Curriculum - The Christian Life

Age - Senior Campers

Tuesday - Faith in Action

Summary

1. Subject: Faith in action, living a life of integrity
2. Scripture: James 1-2, Matthew 23:23-28
3. Grade/Level: Senior Campers
4. Objective: Connect our faith with our actions. Teach the campers about the importance of consistency and follow-through in our faith
5. Time Allotment: 1 Hour

Prayer: Don't forget to begin and end your class with a prayer! If possible, have a camper lead one or both of these prayers.

Lesson

Overview: This week's classes will focus on ethics, or in other words, "Christian Living". This will be applied differently to every age group. Each class will begin by reading through select passages of scripture, with a guided commentary of each, as well as reading comprehension questions, then a discussion guide for the topic of the day.

Today's lesson will focus on integrity. As Christians, we must be people of integrity. While scripture doesn't use the word "integrity" often, it focuses on topics like faith in action and often rebukes the opposite trait: hypocrisy. Ultimately, this points to the necessity of implementing Christian living into each day of our lives.

Read through James 1:15-18, 19-27, 2:14-26

James 1:15-18

Similar to yesterday's class, this passage makes the point that all good things come from God: He is the source of goodness and truth. It also states that unchecked desire leads to sin, which leads to death. This process is similar to many things that Jesus says: our inward thoughts lead to our actions. If we do not control our hearts, it will be difficult to keep control of our actions.

James 1:19-27

Verses 19-21 explain that the first step of producing righteousness in our lives is to learn from the Word of God and abstain from sinful living. After this, James begins discussing the central theme of his book: faith must be put into action, using the specific wording "be doers of the word, and not hearers only". James highlights the absurdity of learning about righteous living without applying it to your life by comparing that person to someone who immediately forgets their own reflection. This chapter ends with the summary statement that pure religion is seen 1.) through action, and 2.) by abstaining from the world.

James 2:14-26

The end of chapter 2 follows the same line of thought, introducing the well-known phrase, "faith without works is dead". It is easy for anyone to say they have faith; it is much more difficult to live a life of faith. God calls us to this not because it is difficult but because it is the most authentic way we can show Him our love and devotion. James goes on to use notable people from the Old Testament who were of great faith (both Abraham and Rahab are mentioned specifically for their faith in Hebrews, and Abraham again in Romans) and how their faith was clearly seen in their actions.

Reading Comprehension:

- Other than abstaining from sin, what are ways that we can be "doers" of our faith? (James specifically focuses on actions that positively affect others, like benevolence and visiting)
- From the Bible, who comes to your mind as a "doer" of faith, like Abraham and Rahab?
- Who do you know personally that puts their faith into action? How do they do this?
- In your own words, how would you describe "undefiled religion"? How do you think we can achieve this in our congregations?

Matthew 23:23-28

Matthew 23 - Context

This chapter is a notorious speech made by Jesus Christ to the Pharisees. Pharisees were members of the religious elite in the days of the New Testament. Some Pharisees were righteous and actively participated in the old covenant; however, many Pharisees would loudly teach others while simultaneously living a sinful lifestyle themselves. At times, this meant the sins of arrogance, boasting, and pride. At other times, it included monetary fraud, preventing others from participating in religion, and eventually killing Christians. As a group, they receive the harshest words that Jesus speaks to anyone, and this chapter is known as “The Seven Woes to the Pharisees”.

Matthew 23:23-28

In addition to the woes listed in the first part of this chapter, verses 23-28 describe the basic issue with the Pharisees: hypocrisy. They focused on logistics and details instead of the foundational principles of justice, mercy, and faithfulness. They were full of greed and other unchecked desires yet presented themselves as nearly perfect to those around them. Jesus describes them as bowls that are only clean on the outside, or tombs that are washed white on the outside yet contain decay on the inside.

Reading Comprehension:

- In the time of Jesus, what was a Pharisee? What would be a modern-day comparison of a Pharisee?
- Jesus’s main rebuke to the Pharisees is hypocrisy. How might a Christian be hypocritical today? What can you do to avoid this?
- Many people today will avoid the church because they believe Christians are hypocrites. How can you explain the difference between an imperfect person trying to live a godly life versus a true religious hypocrite?

DISCUSSION

Remaining Time

Guided Discussion:

Ask, “**How would you define integrity?**”. The Merriam-Webster dictionary defines integrity as “a firm adherence to a code of especially moral or artistic values”. An old saying describes integrity as “doing the right thing, even when no one is looking”.

Integrity is crucial in our spiritual lives, and once we are committed to Christian living, it is the foundation. Faith with integrity is applied to every day of our lives, in all aspects.

Sadly, many people today do not view religion this way. It is common for people to treat their faith like a small part of their lives, like a hobby or a part-time job. These people may engage with their faith on holidays or weekends but live totally different lives every other day.

When considering how to put your faith into action, discuss the following:

- **What situations are difficult for you to put your faith into action?** Use an appropriate amount of transparency to discuss parts of Christian living that are difficult. As the counselor/teacher, go first and share yours. Some examples may include
- **What are some times when your integrity has been put to the test?** Temptation may be one common answer. Another may be fear or apprehension when facing a difficult decision to do the right thing.
- **How can you use your actions to lead by example? How can you use them to lead people to Christ more directly?**

1 Peter 3:15-17 talks about two important things: the importance of having a ready defense for your faith and living a life of action that supports your faith-claims. **What is the connection between putting your faith in action and having a “ready defense” for your faith?**

To close this class, read **Colossians 3:23** together. As we get into difficult circumstances, ethical dilemmas, or moments where we don’t know the right thing to do, we can look to this verse and be reminded that we should do all things to the glory of God. From the smallest day-to-day moments to the biggest decisions of our lives, every action must be done in relation to our faith in God.