

LESSON 1

TALK IS CHEAP

JAMES INTRODUCTION



1 When shopping, when do you prefer a clone, or generic substitute, over a name brand? On what items do you prefer to stick with the name brand?

2 What is the difference between an original work of art and a print? In general, why do people prefer the genuine article?



Read the introduction to James, the chart “Faith That Works” on page 11, James 1:1, and the following notes:

☐ 1:1 ☐ 5:20

3 What do you know about the author of this letter?

4 What audience was James addressing? What do you know about their situation?

5 How does this setting compare to your situation?

6 On the chart, which of the similarities with the Sermon on the Mount surprises you the most?

7 List five of the topics covered in James in order of interest to you.

- a.

- b.

- c.

- d.

- e.

8 Why will genuine Christian faith always show itself in the life of a person?



The letter of James is a powerful argument for putting faith into practice. It dramatically demonstrates the relevancy of the Christian faith to all of life. Whether Christians are at home, with neighbors, at work, or at church, there should be a consistency evident in their faith. As important as it is to know true theology and the content of God's Word, knowledge alone is insufficient. Even talking about it is not enough. We must also apply what we know to everyday life. Genuine faith always shows through in the life of a believer. Be prepared for a challenging and stimulating adventure as you study the letter of James and discover the implications that faith has for your life.

9 How can a person know that his or her faith is the genuine article, the real thing?



10 James was concerned because many Christians of his day were satisfied that intellectual agreement with Christianity was enough. To what extent is this a problem today?

11 What is the problem with mere intellectual agreement?

12 What are some of the cheap substitutes for genuine faith?

13 What are some of the dangers of emphasizing a changed life as proof of genuine faith?

14 What can the church do to help Christians put their faith into practice?

15 What would happen if you were in a country where you could not speak openly about your faith—how might others know you were a Christian?

16 In what areas of your life do you find it easy to talk about but difficult to live out your faith?



17 Be honest and take a good look at the actions that flow from your life. Apart from your words, what evidences of faith are there in your life? If actions speak louder than words, what are your actions saying?

A Study the “Faith That Works” chart. What is the relationship between the book of James and the Sermon on the Mount? What do you think accounts for James’s offering a larger number of similarities than any other book in the New Testament?

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B James describes genuine faith. What was the imitation faith of that day? What imitations do we see in and around the church today?

C How do you know that you are a child of God? What role do good deeds play in giving you assurance?

D Compare James to Proverbs and Ecclesiastes. Why are these three books called wisdom literature? What are the relative strengths of each?