

Week Six

Focus Scripture: James 1:19-21

Opening Activities:

1. Play a game of “red light/green light” using James 1:19. Cut out a giant ear, giant mouth, and a giant exclamation point. The giant ear stands “quick to listen” and every time you hold the ear up, the kids can run. The giant mouth stands for “slow to speak” and every time you hold the mouth up, the kids should walk slowly. The exclamation point stands for “slow to become angry”. Every time you hold the exclamation point up, the kids should stop where they are. Remind them to STOP the anger!

When you finish the game, say: **This game is a huge reminder to us that we need to be QUICK to listen, SLOW to speak, and SLOW to become angry! Can you say that with me?** Have the kids practice saying James 1:19 until everyone has it memorized!

2. Play a listening game with your group. Divide into teams and spread each member of the team out throughout your space. Have the first person from each team meet with you at a certain spot and give him a sentence (orally) that he has to convey to the rest of his team. Only repeat the sentence once – this is a listening game, after all! The first person must then run to the next person of the team, whisper the sentence in his ear, and then take that person's place. That person then runs to the next person on the team, whispers the sentence in his ear and takes that person's place. This continues until the last person returns to you. The last person then tells you the sentence. The team that is closest to the original sentence and gets back first gets a point. The person who returned to you and told you the sentence is now the first person on the team. Continue this until all the kids have had a chance to be the first person. (Note: be sure the kids are spread out far enough – perhaps one in each corner of a room and one in the middle. Also, be sure that each kid only repeats the sentence one time.)

Possible sentences to use include the following:

- The old, ugly cat clawed the big, black dog on his nose.
- People don't usually eat pickles for breakfast, but sometimes they eat eggs.
- There was a white seagull that soared through the sky and grabbed a piece of bread from the small child.
- How many sentences are we going to have?
- Who ate all the tomatoes that were set out on the purple tablecloth?
- The weather was about to turn nasty – just in time for the crazy class picnic.
- Do you know how many oranges it takes to feed a finicky four year old?

Use the following questions to aid in your discussion:

- Did any team get the sentence right every single time? Did any team NEVER get the sentence

right? What made it hard to get the sentence right?

- This was a listening game – you had to listen very carefully to have any chance at getting the sentence right. Did anything make it difficult for you to listen? Explain.
- How do you think this game relates to James 1:19-21?

Say: **In this game, you had to be very QUICK to listen. You had to listen carefully the first time, and then you had to remember what was said! In the same way, we need to listen very carefully to what people say to us. We should not be always thinking about what we want to say next – instead we should be listening to what other people say to us. Listening is a very important skill, and a very important part of being a good friend to others and a devoted follower of Jesus!**

3. Beforehand, collect several old white (or cream colored) button up shirts. Divide into groups and give each group one shirt and several markers. Let the kids decorate the shirt with things that remind them of anger. (Make sure you are monitoring well enough so nothing inappropriate is added to the shirt). When each group finishes their shirt, it should be covered with angry stuff – making it very UGLY! Say: **Wow! These shirts look filthy! They are full of all sorts of crud – all sorts of things that remind us of anger! What are we supposed to do with the anger and other filthy things in our lives? Well, let's see what James has to say about that! Read James 1:21. We are supposed to put them aside – take off the anger and filth! We are going to play a game now to show that!**

Have your kids line up in their groups. This is going to be a relay race. Place each team's shirt at the opposite end of the room. The kids need to run to the shirt one at a time, put the shirt on, run to the team and then back to where the shirt was, shout “I'm getting rid of the ANGER!”, take the shirt off and then run back. (This is why we are using button up shirts – they will be easier to put on and off. Do not worry about buttoning them!) The first team to have all its members finish wins the game.

When you finish the game, say: **This is how we need to be in our own lives, too. We need to get rid of all the bad stuff and instead fill ourselves with the Word of God! This is what James is talking about in James 1:21.**

The Lesson:

Beforehand, prepare a spear using old wrapping paper rolls (or paper towel rolls if you don't have anything bigger). Glue cardboard or old cereal boxes on the end of the spear to make the tip of the spear. Also set up several “targets” by using paper plates. On the back of the paper plates, write one of the following action points:

1. Sometimes when people get angry, they yell and scream. On the count of three, yell as loud as you can!
2. Sometimes people throw temper tantrums when they are angry. They pound their fists and kick the floor. On the count of three, throw a huge temper tantrum!
3. Sometimes when people get angry they cross their arms and pout. On the count of three, cross your arms and pout.

4. What are some things you can do to help you not sin when you are angry? Can this group come up with five?
5. When you are angry and you lose control, you hurt other people. It is important to go back to those people and say you are sorry. On the count of 3, say, "I'm sorry".

You will be using the spear and targets with action points later in this lesson.

Begin the lesson by showing the opening for the old "Incredible Hulk" television series. You can find a video here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LqZuhrDM5vE>.

Say: **We laugh at that old scene, but do you ever feel like an Incredible Hulk yourself? Do you ever feel like your anger controls you and fills you with rage, making you a monster? Listen to these verses from James again. Read James 1:19-21. How can these verses help us control our anger?**

One person in the Bible who had a really hard time controlling his anger was King Saul. Saul was the first king of Israel, and Saul became very jealous of a young man named David. Saul was so jealous of David that he tried to kill him on several occasions. He let his anger take over and he became a monster!

Take out the spear. Hold it up and say: **One day, David was playing the harp for King Saul when Saul became filled with anger and hatred. Saul decided he wanted to KILL David! He actually threw his spear at David right then and there!** Choose a child and have him throw the spear at one of the targets. If he hits the target, let him go get the target and then everyone has to do the action point on the back of the target.

Well, David survived that first attack from King Saul, but King Saul still burned with anger and jealousy against David. He tried to send David into a situation where David would die by the hands of his enemies, but God was with David and David was victorious against his enemies! As you can imagine, this made Saul very mad, and he kept looking for ways to kill David! Choose another child and have him throw the spear at another target. Then read the action point and have everyone do it.

Now David was best friends with Saul's son, Jonathan, and Jonathan was able to talk some sense into Saul for awhile. Saul decided not to do anything to hurt David. But then there was another battle and David was very successful once again. This made King Saul jealous and his anger took over. Again, David was playing the harp for Saul, and again Saul threw a spear at him to kill him. But David slipped away and escaped. Choose another child to throw the spear at another target. Then read the action point and have everyone do it.

David met Jonathan and told Jonathan how his dad wanted him dead. Jonathan didn't want to believe it. In fact, Jonathan came up with a plan to help tell if King Saul really wanted David dead or not. There was going to be a big feast, and Jonathan told David to skip the feast. He would then see how Saul reacted to David being gone, and that would tell him if David's life

really was in danger. Choose another child to throw the spear at another target. Then read the action point and have everyone do it.

When the feast came, the King sat at the table and noticed that David was not there. The second day this happened, King Saul asked Jonathan about it. When Jonathan responded, King Saul grew FURIOUS! He became mad at Jonathan and threw his spear at his own son in order to strike him down. Then Jonathan knew that David really was in danger. King Saul's anger was completely controlling him! Choose another child to throw the spear at another target. Then read the action point and have everyone do it.

Jonathan met David and told him he had to run away because his life was in danger. David ran away and never saw Jonathan again. King Saul's anger took over his life so much that he spent a long time chasing after David. King Saul's anger truly controlled him.

Do you ever let your anger control you? Remember, being angry in and of itself is not bad – it's how we express our anger that can lead to sin. The Bible warns us not to sin in our anger and it tells us not to let the sun go down on our anger. How could that have helped King Saul?

Divide into groups. Give each child a copy of the page from the end of this lesson. Have the groups come up with a list of ten things they can do when they get angry to help them not lose control. Encourage each kid to write that list on the page and then to take that page home as a reminder. Have the groups pray together, asking God to help them learn to control their anger.

Additional Activities:

1. Illustrate James 1:19 using food. Make a mouth out of apples, marshmallows or sunflower seeds and strawberries (see <http://www.forkandbeans.com/2014/10/14/apple-sunbutter-teeth-bites/>), make an elephant ear snack to represent the ear (see <http://livingatthewhiteheadszooblogspot.com/2012/02/horton-hears-who-elephant-ears-recipe.html>), and use green food coloring, pancakes and purple grapes to make an angry face for the last part of the verse (see <http://www.recipe.com/blogs/cooking/kids-breakfast-hulk-pancakes/?socsr=recpin090212hulkpancakes>). Make the food and say the verse!
2. Make a tie dye sunset shirt to help your children remember to not “let the sun go down while you are still angry”. Use yellow, orange, and red acrylic paint to tie dye your shirts so that they have the colors of the sunset. For instructions on how to tie dye shirts with acrylic paint, see <http://ricochetandaway.blogspot.com/2012/06/diy-no-dye-tie-dye.html>.
3. Make a paper plate sunshine craft to remind your kids not to let the sun go down while they are still angry. Find instructions for one such craft here: <http://gluedtomycraftsblog.com/2015/04/8036.html>.
4. Let your kids make their own spears to remind them of the story of King Saul and David. Give them paper towel tubes or toilet paper tubes, construction paper, foil and glue and let them create.

A Lesson on Anger from James 1:19-21 (and a sample lesson from *Journeying Through James: A 35 Week Study for Families and Churches*) by Cheri Gamble, copyright 2015 by Cheri Gamble and Ministry Mom.
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When they finish their spears, have a “spear tossing contest” to see who can throw their spear the farthest.

Be quick to listen, slow to speak, and slow to become angry!



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Dear Parents,

Today we talked with your children about anger. We looked at James 1:19-21 and spent quite a bit of time focusing on James 1:19 which says that everyone should be quick to listen, slow to speak, and slow to become angry. We discussed how anger, in and of itself, is not wrong, but when we let our anger control us and we do bad things in our anger, we sin. We looked at King Saul in the Old Testament, and talked about how he became controlled by his anger and jealousy, and it was not a good thing. Finally, we discussed ways that we can control our anger and not sin.

Please help your children grow even more this week by encouraging them to complete the Bible Reading Plans attached to this letter. When they complete each day's reading, initial it and then send the whole thing back with them next week and they will receive a special prize.

Thank you for allowing us the opportunity to work with your children this year!

Independent Readers Bible Reading Plan

___ **Day One: James 1:19-21.** *Think about it:* According to these verses, what should you be quick to do? How would following these verses change the way you interact with others? *Pray about it:* Ask God to help you listen more and talk less.

___ **Day Two: 1 Samuel 18:6-16.** *Think about it:* How did Saul NOT follow the words of James 1:19-21? How did his actions affect his life and those around him? *Pray about it:* Ask God to help you control your anger and to not take it out on others.

___ **Day Three: Matthew 2.** *Think about it:* Who was angry in this passage? How did he act out his anger? How does this relate to James 1:19-21? *Pray about it:* Ask God to help you deal with your anger in a way that pleases Him.

___ **Day Four: Ephesians 4:26, Proverbs 20:3, Proverbs 15:1-2.** *Think about it:* What can these verses teach you about anger? How can you control your anger? *Pray about it:* Ask God to give you a kind and gentle spirit.

___ **Day Five: James 1:19-21.** Make a caricature of yourself. Be sure to overemphasize the ears and underemphasize the mouth in keeping with James 1:19!

A fun song for this week: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6LXVe8SvdqA>

Read to Me Bible Reading Plan

___ **Day One: James 1:19-21.** Act out James 1:19 with your child. When you say "quick to listen" he should run really fast. When you say "slow to speak", he should walk slowly, and when you say

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“slow to become angry” he should stop. Do this several times to see if he can memorize the verse. A fun song for today: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WU6ZeH_4Uus.

___ **Day Two: 1 Samuel 18:10-11.** Who was angry in these verses? What did he do? Saul acted out in anger, didn't he. He threw a spear at David and tried to kill him! Anger can make us do horrible things! We need to ask God to help us not do bad things when we are angry! *Make a spear out of paper towel tubes, cereal boxes, or whatever else you have on hand. Have your child draw ways that he can control his anger on the handle of the spear. The next time he gets angry, take the spear out and remind him things he can do to control his anger.*

___ **Day Three: Matthew 2:1-12.** This is the story of the wise men visiting baby Jesus. Before they saw Jesus, however, they met King Herod. Herod was not happy about baby Jesus. In fact, Herod was very, very jealous. Herod was an angry man and he took his anger out on all those around him! Here is a video for today:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WaFv7hCSQjw>

___ **Day Four: Ephesians 4:26.** This verse tells us that it's okay to be angry. Everyone gets angry! However, when we are angry, we should not sin. What are some ways we sin when we are angry? This verse also tells us to get over our angry quickly – don't go to bed angry! *Make a sun craft with your child. Paint a yellow or orange circle on a piece of paper. Then paint your child's hands and have him press his hands around the outside of the circle to make the sun's rays. Write “Do not let the sun go down while you are still angry” on the paper. For additional fun, add a small photograph of your child to the circle (the middle of the sun) after the paint dries.*

___ **Day Five: James 1:19-21.** Make a mouth snack with your child. Find a fun one here: <http://www.forkandbeans.com/2014/10/14/apple-sunbutter-teeth-bites/>