
[SERMON NOTES]

Does Faking It Really Make It? (*Matthew 7:24-29*)

- Sometimes we can _____ the Christian life.
- _____ is only as legitimate as it's _____.
- The Book of James talks about wise vs. foolish living...
 - **Foolish Person:** Living life in God's world _____ way
 - **Wise Person:** Living life in God's world _____ way

Testing - Is This Thing On?!?! (*James 1:1-18*)

- In *trials* of faith: Do I _____ God's ways for _____.
- Avoid making yourself spiritually _____.
- Feed your new _____, not your old _____.

[QUICK REVIEW]

Looking at your notes from this week's teaching, was there anything you heard for the first time or something that caught your attention, challenged, or confused you?

[MY STORY]

This week we kicked off a new teaching series through the Book of James. James is sometimes referred to as the *wisdom literature* of the New Testament. Who is the wisest person you know and why? What is the wisest thing you've ever heard?

In your opinion, what's the difference between wisdom and knowledge?

Read these passages and jot down a few notes about how the Bible describes wisdom:

Proverbs 1:7, 3:1, Matthew 11:2-19, Romans 11:33-35

[DIGGING DEEPER]

The first section of James might be one of the more difficult sections of the New Testament because of the call to find joy in the midst of trials. While no one *likes* trials in life, the beauty of following Jesus is that every trial can serve as a way to bring us closer to Him. How do you think trials serve to grow our faith? What's one trial you have faced in your faith that has proven to bring you joy?

James tells us that our trials of many kinds serve to help our faith become more "mature" or "complete" and that our prize is the "crown of life." Read these other passages in how they describe the purpose of trials: **Matthew 5:48, Philippians 4:19, 1 Corinthians 9:25, 2 Timothy 4:8**

What do you think are some of the greater trials we may face in our faith as Christians today?

What trials may other Christians - who do not live in our country - face that we may not?

Author CS Lewis once wrote, "if you want to see someone's true character, find them in an unpleasant moment." This may apply to trials of faith or temptations in life. What would you see as the difference between *trials of faith* and *temptations in life*?

Take a moment to read **Romans 5:1-5**. In this weekend's message, we were given the encouragement to fight off temptations and endure trials by *starving* our "old soil" and feeding our "new roots." Spend a few minutes in prayer, asking the Spirit to reveal areas of life, disciplines, thoughts or relationships you may need to feed more or starve.

Things I Need to Feed

Things I Need to Starve

[TAKING IT HOME]

Take one of the things from each list above, share with your group or write it down on a notecard, and begin working towards them in the next week.