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CONNECT MUSIC TO YOUR BIBLE STUDIES

Looking for an easier way to connect music to your Bible studies? *Collegiate* now has its very own iTunes. Just go to the iTunes Music store to view the Summer 2009 *Collegiate* playlist.

JULY 2009 TEACHING PLANS

LETTER WRITING MAY BE AN ANCIENT ART THESE DAYS, but to Paul and James, it was the only way to connect with long-distance friends. Together, these two books assert the importance of knowing what you believe and living what you know. Too often we're caught up in the busyness of life and forget that, as Christians, we're called to live out our faith in practical ways on a daily basis. So, have you been slacking off? Make it a priority this summer to meet God wherever your life has taken you — to your parent's house, to an internship in another state, or even on mission across the globe.

THE SKINNY Galatians, written by the apostle Paul specifically to Jewish Christians, refutes the claim that anything other than faith is necessary for salvation. In his letter Paul asserted his authority as an apostle, declared the true gospel, and encouraged his readers about the Holy Spirit's work in helping Christians apply the gospel to their daily lives. James, likely Jesus' half-brother, continued Paul's thesis by writing to scattered Jewish Christians living in various nations beyond Judea. He urged his readers to seek a genuine faith that illustrates Christ's example on a daily basis.

WHAT'S INSIDE ...

The goal of the *Collegiate* online features is to bring you a structured teaching plan with additional helps and relevant questions to equip you to lead a strong discussion-based lesson. Here's a breakdown of what's inside: *Getting Started* helps introduce the topic and get your students engaged in the lesson. *Need to Knows* highlights the main characters, historical context, and key verses of each lesson. *Explore the Bible* leads your students through the Scripture passages of the lesson, helping them understand the text, its historical and cultural context, and what it means to them today. *Apply to Life* gives you ideas for furthering the application of the Scripture, so students can take active steps to process what they're learning and how it impacts their lives. Be sure you also utilize the commentary provided (threadsmedia.com/collegiate) to help with your preparation and personal study of the lessons.

As always, we're here for you. Please send us your questions, thoughts, and suggestions. Let us know what we could do better and how these teaching plans could be even more relevant to your students and your ministry.

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→ THIS WEEK YOU'LL NEED

- A COPY OF THIS LEADER GUIDE
- THIS WEEK'S LESSON IS ON PAGE 36 OF THE SUMMER ISSUE OF *COLLEGIATE*.
- THE SONG "SONG OF MY SURRENDER" BY ANADARA, FROM THE ALBUM *INTO THE UNKNOWN*, TO PLAY FOR THE CLASS AS THEY ARRIVE.

NEED TO KNOWS

LESSON OVERVIEW

This lesson passage is about the guidance provided by the Holy Spirit. The emphasis is on doing what the Holy Spirit wants — developing the fruit of the Spirit and avoiding the works of the flesh.

FOCAL PASSAGES

GALATIANS 5:16-26

KEY VERSES

GALATIANS 5:22-23



FOLLOW THE LEADER ... AKA THE HOLY SPIRIT

GETTING STARTED

Have the song "Song of My Surrender" by Anadara playing in the background as students arrive.

Divide into groups of 10 (or remain in one large group). Play one to two rounds of the card game "Mafia."

Easiest form of "Mafia":

- Give each student one card from a deck of cards. (Make sure there is only one ace per group).
- Instruct students not to show their cards.
- The student with the Ace will be the "killer."
- You will serve as the narrator. Instruct students to go to "sleep" (close their eyes). The killer will silently point to someone to "kill" and then close his/her eyes.
- You instruct everyone to "wake up" (open their eyes).
- Announce the "dead" person, and instruct everyone to guess who the killer is.
- When the class thinks they've identified the killer, they take a vote to remove the person from the game. If they get it right, the game ends. If not, everyone goes to sleep, and the mafia "kills" again.

(There are more complicated versions, but they take more time.)

After the game is over, lead a discussion.

- Who was the most convincing person in your group?
- How did you decide who to vote off?

- Were you ever persuaded to go along with everyone else even though you had a different opinion?
- Did you ever have a gut feeling about who the killer was?

Today's lesson is about the Holy Spirit's leadership in your life. With loud, convincing voices shouting commands all the time, it's important to recognize His authority in your life and submit to Him.

DIG DEEPER

Turn to page 36 of *Collegiate* magazine for more stats and ideas related to this lesson.

EXPLORE THE BIBLE

Ask a volunteer to read the introduction to “Follow the Leader” on page 36 in the Summer 2009 issue of *Collegiate*.

1). WALK BY THE SPIRIT (GALATIANS 5:16-18)

READ GALATIANS 5:16-18.

¹⁶I say then, walk by the Spirit and you will not carry out the desire of the flesh. ¹⁷For the flesh desires what is against the Spirit, and the Spirit desires what is against the flesh; these are opposed to each other, so that you don't do what you want. ¹⁸But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under the law.

Have someone read “Walk by the Spirit” on page 36 of *Collegiate* magazine.

Remind students that Paul had been explaining to the Galatians that they are free in Christ. This freedom is not so they can do their own thing, but so they can live for God.

- **What do you think Paul means when he says to “walk by the Spirit”?** As believers, the Holy Spirit lives inside us. The verb “to walk” translated from the Greek indicates continuous action. This walking by the Spirit is a lifestyle.
- **What does Paul mean by the phrase, “the desire of the flesh”?** It includes so much more than just our physical body, but also includes our emotions, thoughts, and will.
- **How does the Holy Spirit help you avoid sin traps?**
- **Sometimes it feels like there's a battle inside us between our old and new natures. How has the new nature already won? How do we let the old nature die?**
- **How can you “starve” your old desires and impulses?**

2). BEAUTIFUL TRANSFORMATION (GALATIANS 5:19-21)

READ GALATIANS 5:19-21.

¹⁹Now the works of the flesh are obvious: sexual immorality, moral impurity, promiscuity, ²⁰idolatry, sorcery, hatreds, strife, jealousy, outbursts of anger, selfish ambitions, dissensions, factions, ²¹envy, drunkenness, carousing, and anything similar, about which I tell you in advance—as I told you before—that those who practice such things will not inherit the kingdom of God.

Ask someone to read “Beautiful Transformation” on page 36 of *Collegiate* magazine.

In verse 21, the word “practice” is a continual, unrepentant, habitual exercising of these sins. Those who practice such things will not enter into the kingdom of God.

- **Why can sin not inherit the kingdom of God?**
- **Why is it important to remember what we were before coming to Christ?**
- **How do you notice these traits in people outside of Christ?**
- **How has Christ set you free from some of the sins Paul mentions?**

3). DISPLAY ALL THE SPIRIT'S FRUIT (GALATIANS 5:22-26)

READ GALATIANS 5:22-26.

²²But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faith, ²³gentleness, self-control. Against such things there is no law.

²⁴Now those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires. ²⁵If we live by the Spirit, we must also follow the Spirit. ²⁶We must not become conceited, provoking one another, envying one another.

Have a volunteer read “Display All the Spirit's Fruit” at the bottom of page 36 of *Collegiate* magazine.

Followers of Christ are marked by the fruit of the Spirit. Love refers to *agape* love, the perfect love of God. Joy refers to more than just happiness in circumstances, but a sense of well-being knowing everything is OK between us and God, and peace is an inner confidence because of this relationship found in Christ.

- **Can non-believers produce genuine fruit of the Spirit? Why or why not?**
- **What ways have you seen the fruit of the Spirit in your life since coming to Christ?**
- **Describe someone who is full of the fruit of the Spirit.**

Verse 24 refers to the crucifixion of Jesus. Jesus took all our sins and the flesh was executed with Him on the cross.

- **What does it mean to “follow the Spirit” in verse 25?**
- **How is walking by the Spirit a continual, daily process?**
- **Looking at verse 26, what are more ways Paul is showing us how we can live by the Spirit?**
- **What might have been reasons he added these to the end of this section?**

→ THIS WEEK YOU'LL NEED

- A COPY OF THIS LEADER GUIDE
- THIS WEEK'S LESSON IS ON PAGE 38 OF THE SUMMER ISSUE OF *COLLEGIATE*.
- THE SONG "FRIEND OF THE POOR" BY ANDY PARK AND LEELAND MOORING, FROM THE ALBUM *COMPASSIONART*, TO PLAY FOR THE CLASS AS THEY ARRIVE.

NEED TO KNOWS

LESSON OVERVIEW

This lesson is about various commands for Christians related to behaving in a responsible manner. The emphasis is on meeting biblical expectations of being responsible Christians.

FOCAL PASSAGES

GALATIANS 6:1-18

KEY VERSE

GALATIANS 6:2



TO THE RESCUE ... BEING A CARING PERSON

GETTING STARTED

Have the song "Friend of the Poor" by Andy Park and Leeland Mooring playing in the background as students arrive.

Option 1: Play the YouTube clip of Derek Redmond and father finishing the 1992 Barcelona Olympics (www.youtube.com/watch?v=XalFOJPvsUK).

Option 2: Play the *Lord of the Rings: The Return of the King* clip when Sam carries Frodo to Mordor (www.youtube.com/watch?v=3pTUzTdPVgo).

Discuss a time someone had to "carry" you through a difficult class, a sports team, a money crisis, a bad relationship, a tough day, and so forth.

DIG DEEPER

Turn to page 38 of *Collegiate* magazine for more insights related to this lesson.

EXPLORE THE BIBLE

Ask a volunteer to read the introduction to “To the Rescue” on page 38 in the Summer 2009 issue of *Collegiate*.

1). SUPPORT SYSTEM (GALATIANS 6:1-5)

READ GALATIANS 6:1-5.

¹Brothers, if someone is caught in any wrongdoing, you who are spiritual should restore such a person with a gentle spirit, watching out for yourselves so you won't be tempted also. ²Carry one another's burdens; in this way you will fulfill the law of Christ. ³For if anyone considers himself to be something when he is nothing, he is deceiving himself. ⁴But each person should examine his own work, and then he will have a reason for boasting in himself alone, and not in respect to someone else. ⁵For each person will have to carry his own load.

Have someone read “Support System” on page 38 of *Collegiate* magazine.

The word *burden* here actually refers to sin. We are to walk in each other's lives so closely that we help our friends overcome sin.

- Describe a time someone helped you carry a spiritual burden.
- How are you linked together with other believers in Christ?
- Why does the enemy want you to think you're alone in your sin — that nobody understands? How is this a lie?
- How can you help someone overcome a struggle without getting pulled in yourself?

2). FAMILY TIME (GALATIANS 6:6-10)

READ GALATIANS 6:6-10.

⁶The one who is taught the message must share his goods with the teacher. ⁷Don't be deceived: God is not mocked. For whatever a man sows he will also reap, ⁸because the one who sows to his flesh will reap corruption from the flesh, but the one who sows to the Spirit will reap eternal life from the Spirit. ⁹So we must not get tired of doing good, for we will reap at the proper time if we don't give up. ¹⁰Therefore, as we have opportunity, we must work for the good of all, especially for those who belong to the household of faith.

Ask someone to read “Family Time” on page 38 of *Collegiate* magazine.

- Why is it important to serve fellow believers?
- Who are you currently encouraging to stay spiritually healthy?
- Who encourages you?
- What gifts do you bring to the body of Christ? If you're not sure, ask others to help recognize gifts in you.
- Why is it dangerous to serve the world and neglect the body of Christ?
- Likewise, how is it dangerous to only serve in the body of Christ and never in the world?
- Why is it vital for believers to be connected to the church?
- How did Paul care for the outside world and believers?
- How has the church ministered to you in your lifetime?

3). BOAST IN CHRIST (GALATIANS 6:11-15)

READ GALATIANS 6:11-15.

¹¹Look at what large letters I have written to you in my own handwriting. ¹²Those who want to make a good showing in the flesh are the ones who would compel you to be circumcised—but only to avoid being persecuted for the cross of Christ. ¹³For even the circumcised don't keep the law themselves; however, they want you to be circumcised in order to boast about your flesh. ¹⁴But as for me, I will never boast about anything except the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom the world has been crucified to me, and I to the world. ¹⁵For both circumcision and uncircumcision mean nothing; what matters instead is a new creation.

Ask a volunteer to read “Boast in Christ” on page 38 of *Collegiate* magazine.

Verses 12-16 are a summary of all that Paul was writing to the Galatians. The false teachers were compelling them to base their salvation and spiritual growth on human effort and not on grace.

- What's the danger in trying to please men and not God?
- What do motives (behind good works) matter to God?
- What did Paul insinuate about the false teacher's motives?
- How might believers boast in Christ daily?
- What personal ways can you boast in Christ right now?

Explain that verse 15 is almost a verbatim of 5:6, “neither circumcision nor uncircumcision means anything.” Nothing done in the flesh means anything in your relationship with God unless it is the outward expression of what Jesus has already completed within you — a new creation or new birth.

→ THIS WEEK YOU'LL NEED

- A COPY OF THIS LEADER GUIDE
- THIS WEEK'S LESSON IS ON PAGE 42 OF THE SUMMER ISSUE OF *COLLEGIATE*.
- THE SONG "NOT LIVING IN THE IN-BETWEEN" BY BEBO NORMAN, FROM THE ALBUM *BEBO NORMAN*, TO PLAY FOR THE CLASS AS THEY ARRIVE.

NEED TO KNOWS

LESSON OVERVIEW

This lesson is about Christians displaying wisdom from God. The emphasis is on how wisdom from God can help Christians as they face trials and temptations and think about wealth.

FOCAL PASSAGES

JAMES 1:1-18

KEY VERSE

JAMES 1:5



WISE UP

GETTING STARTED

Have the song "Not Living in the In-Between" by Bebo Norman playing in the background as students arrive.

"Are You Smarter Than a 5th Grader?"

Divide into groups of four or five. Let's play a game to see if college students really are smarter than 5th graders.

1. True or False: A bottlenose dolphin is a fish.
Answer: False
2. What's the plural form of the word *moose* (A. moose's, B. meese, C. mooses, D. moose)?
Answer: D
3. How long must you live in the U.S. to run for the presidency (A. 14, B. 10, C. 20 years)?
Answer: A
4. From 1-100, how many multiples of 9 are odd numbers (A. 9, B. 6, C. 13)?
Answer: A
5. Entomologists primarily study what (A. insects, B. sources of energy, C. volcanoes)?
Answer: A
6. The Mediterranean Island of Corsica is part of what European country (A. Italy, B. Spain, C. France)?
Answer: C
7. What's the official currency of Puerto Rico (A. U.S. dollar, B. Peso, C. Puerto Rico dollar)?
Answer: A

From <http://www.scholastic.com/5thgrader/>

If you aced these questions the first time, congrats. Most people probably missed at least one — maybe more. Don't worry. Just because you might have failed a 5th grade test doesn't mean you should drop out of school. The world measures wisdom somewhat differently from God. We've created tests like the ACT, SAT, GRE, and IQ Tests to determine how "smart" we are. Thankfully, these tests have nothing to do with ranking our spiritual intelligence. James gives us a blueprint for recognizing spiritual wisdom.

DIG DEEPER

Turn to page 42 of *Collegiate* magazine for more insights related to this lesson.

EXPLORE THE BIBLE

Ask a volunteer to read the introduction to “Wise Up” on page 42 in the Summer 2009 issue of *Collegiate*.

1). WISDOM IN DOUBT (JAMES 1:2-8)

READ JAMES 1:2-8.

²Consider it a great joy, my brothers, whenever you experience various trials, ³knowing that the testing of your faith produces endurance. ⁴But endurance must do its complete work, so that you may be mature and complete, lacking nothing. ⁵Now if any of you lacks wisdom, he should ask God, who gives to all generously and without criticizing, and it will be given to him. ⁶But let him ask in faith without doubting. For the doubter is like the surging sea, driven and tossed by the wind. ⁷That person should not expect to receive anything from the Lord. ⁸An indecisive man is unstable in all his ways.

Have someone read “Wisdom in Doubt” on page 42 of *Collegiate* magazine.

- Why does James mention doubt when discussing spiritual wisdom?
- Have you ever doubted your faith?
- James describes trials that strengthen our faith. How does spiritual wisdom help you endure trials?
- Why does James tell us to face trials with joy?
- How does this contradict what the world teaches about suffering?

The term *wisdom* in verse 5 indicates the practical skill needed to live life for God’s glory. The Jewish audience was not thinking of this term in philosophical, abstract, theoretical insights, but the everyday ability to endure trials and temptations.

2). WEALTH AND WISDOM (JAMES 1:9-11)

READ JAMES 1:9-11.

⁹The brother of humble circumstances should boast in his exaltation; ¹⁰but the one who is rich should boast in his humiliation, because he will pass away like a flower of the field. ¹¹For the sun rises with its scorching heat and dries up the grass; its flower falls off, and its beautiful appearance is destroyed. In the same way, the rich man will wither away while pursuing his activities.

Ask someone to read “Wealth and Wisdom” on page 42 of *Collegiate* magazine.

- Why does James talk about wealth and wisdom in the same section?
- How are college students tempted to pursue material wealth?
- Usually wealth and education go together. That’s why the world’s poorest countries are also the least literate. How does godly wisdom differ from the world’s wisdom?
- How can material wealth and worldly intelligence actually make it harder to attain spiritual wisdom?
- What do you think “the rich man is to glory in his humiliation” means (vs. 10)?

3). WISDOM TO RESIST (JAMES 1:13-15)

READ JAMES 1:13-15.

¹³No one undergoing a trial should say, “I am being tempted by God.” For God is not tempted by evil, and He Himself doesn’t tempt anyone. ¹⁴But each person is tempted when he is drawn away and enticed by his own evil desires. ¹⁵Then after desire has conceived, it gives birth to sin, and when sin is fully grown, it gives birth to death.

Have a volunteer read “Wisdom to Resist” on page 43 of *Collegiate* magazine.

- How does it encourage you to know that God is not the author of temptation?
- According to verse 14, where does temptation begin?
- How does godly wisdom empower you to recognize and resist temptation?

4). GOD IS CONSTANT (JAMES 1:12,16-18)

READ JAMES 1:12,16-18.

¹²Blessed is a man who endures trials, because when he passes the test he will receive the crown of life that He has promised to those who love Him.

.....
¹⁶Don’t be deceived, my dearly loved brothers.

¹⁷Every generous act and every perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of lights; with Him there is no variation or shadow cast by turning.

¹⁸By His own choice, He gave us a new birth by the message of truth so that we would be the firstfruits of His creatures.

Facilitator’s Note: This section is not in *Collegiate* magazine and is a bonus for today’s lesson.

- What trials are you facing right now?
- From verse 12, what’s the promise you are given if you endure your trials?
- What good things do you see coming out of your trial?
- What spiritual qualities are being developed in you because of your struggle?
- Read verse 17. How does it encourage you to know that God does not change? He is constant. How is the world’s wisdom constantly shifting?

→ THIS WEEK YOU'LL NEED

- A COPY OF THIS LEADER GUIDE
- THIS WEEK'S LESSON IS ON PAGE 44 OF THE SUMMER ISSUE OF *COLLEGIATE*.
- THE SONG "A MIRROR IS HARDER TO HOLD" BY JON FOREMAN, FROM THE ALBUM *LIMBS & BRANCHES*, TO PLAY FOR THE CLASS AS THEY ARRIVE.

NEED TO KNOWS

LESSON OVERVIEW

Today's lesson is about living by God's Word. The emphasis is on learning and doing what the Bible teaches.

FOCAL PASSAGES

JAMES 1:19-27

KEY VERSE

JAMES 1:22



MIRROR, MIRROR

GETTING STARTED

Have the song "A Mirror Is Harder to Hold" by Jon Foreman playing in the background as students arrive.

Print several cartoon caricatures and bring them to class. Discuss each picture, and the traits the artist chose to emphasize.

- Martin Luther King Jr.: www.andsuchandsuch.com/king.html
 - Richard Nixon: www.andsuchandsuch.com/nixon.html
 - Albert Einstein: www.andsuchandsuch.com/einstein.html
 - Frank Sinatra: www.andsuchandsuch.com/sinatra.html
 - Celine Dion: www.magixl.com/caric./globeb/dion_celine.html
- What would someone choose to emphasize in a caricature of you?
 - How do these drawings reveal more than a simple reflection of the person?
 - What does the artist want to emphasize in the drawing besides physical features?

DIG DEEPER

Turn to page 44 of *Collegiate* magazine for more insights related to this lesson.

EXPLORE THE BIBLE

Ask a volunteer to read the introduction to “Mirror, Mirror” on page 44 in the Summer 2009 issue of *Collegiate*.

1). THE POWER OF GOD’S WORD (JAMES 1:22-25)

READ JAMES 1:22-25.

²²But be doers of the word and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves. ²³Because if anyone is a hearer of the word and not a doer, he is like a man looking at his own face in a mirror; ²⁴for he looks at himself, goes away, and right away forgets what kind of man he was. ²⁵But the one who looks intently into the perfect law of freedom and perseveres in it, and is not a forgetful hearer but a doer who acts—this person will be blessed in what he does.

Have someone read “The Power of God’s Word” on page 44 of *Collegiate* magazine.

- How does God’s Word show you who you really are?
- Why should you look in this spiritual mirror every day?
- How is God’s Word essential in shaping you to look like Christ?
- Why is it OK, even healthy, to wrestle with God’s Word, even if you disagree or don’t understand something?

Interestingly (and kind of disgustingly) the word “filthiness” in verse 21 often means “a wax build-up in the ear.” James was using this phrase for the believers to put off those things that impede us from hearing well the Word of God.

- Why is it not enough to merely study the Bible?
- Have you ever known someone who knew a lot about the Bible but didn’t live it?
- How can knowing and using God’s Word help you encourage your friends?

2). TAMING THE HULK (JAMES 1:19-21)

READ JAMES 1:19-21.

¹⁹My dearly loved brothers, understand this: everyone must be quick to hear, slow to speak, and slow to anger, ²⁰for man’s anger does not accomplish God’s righteousness. ²¹Therefore, ridding yourselves of all moral filth and evil excess, humbly receive the implanted word, which is able to save you.

The phrase, “the word implanted,” refers to God’s message within us, which could be God’s image in us.

Ask someone to read “Taming the Hulk” on page 44 of *Collegiate* magazine.

From the Greek, the word *anger* refers to a deep, internal resentment and rejection.

- Why does James warn against anger?
- Do you know someone with a lot of pet peeves? Why is it hard to get close to people like this?
- How does trivial anger distract you from accomplishing things for God?
- How can you tell that we live in an angry culture?
- What are things worth getting angry about in the world?
- How do the fruits of the Spirit completely oppose anger?
- Why does the world sometimes see Christians as angry, anti-, rampaging crusaders?
- How can believers change that image, while still taking a biblical stand for truth?

3). REAL FAITH (JAMES 1:26-27)

READ JAMES 1:26-27.

²⁶If anyone thinks he is religious, without controlling his tongue but deceiving his heart, his religion is useless. ²⁷Pure and undefiled religion before our God and Father is this: to look after orphans and widows in their distress and to keep oneself unstained by the world.

Have a volunteer read “Real Faith” on page 45 of *Collegiate* magazine.

Explain that James gives three pictures of good religion: (1) bridle the tongue, (2) visit orphans and widows, (3) keep oneself unstained by the world.

- How does the Holy Spirit help us accomplish all of these things?
- How is our continued walk with God essential for reaching these things?

According to Matthew 12:36, purity is often revealed through our speech. Visiting orphans and widows is the true test of unselfish love and remaining away from the world’s influences will keep us from having “wax in our ears” so we can hear God.

