

## Week 1 - Authentic

### Ice Breaker

- **"Knock-Offs vs. Name Brands":** Share a memory of a "knock-off" item you remember your family buying. Was it soda, clothes, or something else? How did you feel about it then compared to now?
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### Discussion Questions

1. **Reflect on Authenticity**
    - When you think of the word "authentic," what comes to mind? Do you have an example of someone who lives authentically in their faith? What sets them apart?
  2. **Quick to Listen, Slow to Speak**
    - In James 1:19-20, we're told to be "quick to listen, slow to speak, and slow to get angry." Why do you think James emphasizes listening first? Can you recall a time when listening changed the outcome of a conversation or situation for you?
  3. **Purity of Heart**
    - James 1:21 encourages us to rid ourselves of "all the filth and evil" in our lives. How does the world influence our hearts and minds today? What practical ways have you found to focus on God's Word to "clean up" your heart?
  4. **Controlling Our Words**
    - James says that if we don't control our tongue, our faith is "worthless" (James 1:26). How do you interpret this strong statement? Why are words so powerful, and what are some ways we can be intentional about speaking kindly and truthfully?
  5. **Compassion in Action**
    - James 1:27 defines "pure and genuine religion" as caring for those in need. Who in your life or community could use compassion and support right now? What's a small step you could take this week to live out this type of "pure religion"?
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### Application

Reflect on James' encouragement to be "doers of the word," actively living out what God reveals in the mirror of His Word (James 1:22-25). Discuss as a group how you could make an impact locally, regionally and globally.

Let's close with prayer and a reminder from James 1:25: "But if you look carefully into the perfect law that sets you free, and if you do what it says... then God will bless you for doing it." Pray that God will give us strength to respond authentically to His truth this week.