

# WEEK 1

## SMALL GROUP GUIDE

for middle schoolers

PEOPLE  
**FREE**  
**PEOPLE**

Have you ever had to follow a rule that made absolutely no sense to you? Maybe it was a rule about what you could or couldn't wear, where you could or couldn't go, or who you could or couldn't spend time with. When some people think about God, that is what they think about – a list of rules miles long that don't seem important or relevant to their lives. But said there are only two rules that matter most: love God and love others as you love yourself. In this 4-week series in the book of James, we'll discover that **the right rules can set you free** – and that **free people don't dance with danger, make decisions that benefit others, and give up their freedoms for others.**

### THIS WEEK

#### THE BIG IDEA

The right rules can set you free.

#### THE BIBLE

James 1:22-25; Matthew 22:35-40;  
Psalm 119:97-100

- What's one rule you hate to follow and why? Are there any rules you're grateful for?
- Are you more likely to break the rules or follow the rules? Give an example!
- In your own words, how would you explain what Jesus taught about God's law?
- Read Psalm 119:97-100. Do you relate to the person who wrote this psalm? Why or why not?
- Think of one rule at home that you hate to follow. How can following that rule help you love your family better?
- What's one way you're going to be a "doer of the Word" this week by loving God or others better?

#### ACTIVITY

Ask, "**Forget every rule of physics – if we could build a roller coaster with no rules, what would we build?**" Use paper or a white board to draw it together. What does it do? How does it work? Draw and describe your creation with as many details as possible.