

The Perfect Giver - James 1:16-17

Notes, Family Worship, Bible Reading

Notes from the Sermon

Have you ever seen home movies of children opening gifts on Christmas morning where it is obvious, they just received THE perfect gift? They are overcome with joy, briefly losing their minds, running, jumping and screaming for joy having received their hearts desire! And their reaction also brings joy to their parents, the givers, having given their child the perfect gift! Together as a church body, as we enter into this season of giving toward building a permanent gathering place, we need to look to God as the Perfect Giver and let His giving example shape our hearts and minds.

In his letter to Jewish Christians (who had scattered throughout known world following the death and resurrection of Jesus and the subsequent persecution of his followers), James, the half-brother of Jesus provided a guide for how to live out the Christian life. In the first part of Chapter 1, he points out the difference between God testing our faith through trials and being tempted by Satan to enter into evil. In verse 16 he warns us "Do not be deceived my beloved brothers." Then in verse 17, "Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above coming down from the Father of lights with whom there is no variation or shadow due to change."

Both then and now, Satan wants to deceive Christians about so many things but especially about the nature of God. He would have us believe that God tempts us to sin. But God's nature is gracious, righteous and full of compassion! (Psalm 116:5) God is patient! (2 Peter 3:9). The list goes on and on. And James implores us to not be deceived.

Verse 17 then leaves no doubt that perfect gifts come only from the Perfect Giver. And the list of perfect gifts God has for his children is practically endless! Gifts for our provision! Gifts for our protection! Gifts for our enjoyment! And these gifts have been given by the Perfect Giver throughout the ages! The scriptures and even world history are filled with stories of God's gifts!

When we see God as the Perfect Giver, we can see several truths.
God, The Perfect Giver:

1. **Loves unconditionally:** The love of God is perfect, everlasting and unconditional. There is nothing a person can do to make God love them more than He already does... and nothing they can do to make God love them any less! His love leads to His perfect giving.
2. **Gives lavishly:** God gave us His Son! His only Son sacrificed for you and for me! What an incredible, extravagant gift! The gift you are given reveals your worth to the giver. For God to give us Jesus means we are of infinite worth in His eyes.
3. **Has immutable character:** James 1 verse 17 calls God the "Father of lights with whom there is no variation or shadow due to change". This reference acknowledges God as the Creator of all things, including the sun, moon and stars. But unlike the sun, whose movement across the sky creates changing shadows, there is no such movement by God. His steadfast love and perfect holy character are forever unchangeable!

Finally, one of God's greatest gifts to us is His word. The Bible is a bottomless well of truth that reveals all we can and need to know about God, His love for us, His character and His endless gifts. This is the "perfect gift" that you can "unwrap" every morning! And when you do... go ahead and express your joy... just like the kids on Christmas morning!

Bible Reading for the Week

Daily Bible Readings

Sun	Mon	Tues	Weds	Thurs	Fri	Sat
Isaiah 46	Isaiah 47	Isaiah 48	Isaiah 49	Isaiah 50	Isaiah 51	Isaiah 52

Reading from this past week: James 1

Reading in preparation for this coming Sunday: 1 Chronicles 29:10-22

Family Worship

Song - *Lovingkindness*

<https://youtu.be/xV-fNmt6ZAo>

Gospel Project

Unit: Into the Wilderness

Story: The People worshiped a golden calf

Big Picture Question: What is worship?

Answer: Worship is celebrating the greatness of God.

Scripture: Exodus 32-34

New City Catechism

Question #3: How many persons are there in God?

Answer: There are three persons in one God: the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.

Verse: 2 Corinthians 13:14

Scripture

James 1:16-17

- What are some of the gifts God has given you?
- How grateful are you for the gifts you have received?
- How do you show your gratitude?
- How often do you take advantage of the gifts you have received from the Perfect Giver?

Prayer

*Pray that as disciples of Jesus we would come to know Jesus as the great giver and that we would realize we can never out give God.

*Pray that as we launch our Rise Up & Build Campaign that God would provide all of our needs as we plan to build.