

## The Giver of Good Gifts

James 1:16-18

“Don’t be deceived, my dear brothers. Every good and perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of the heavenly lights, who does not change like shifting shadows. He chose to give us birth through the word of truth that we might be a kind of firstfruits of all he created.”

God the Giver:

The Bible gives us insight into the very character of God. God is the source of all good; he gives every good and perfect gift. The two phrases here are synonymous and are probably used for emphasis. Nowhere in all of Scripture is God pictured as a “getter”. Instead, God is the great giver, and this characteristic is found in the Triune God. God is not enriched by the gifts of people, nor is he threatened with poverty by the stinginess of people. The very nature of God’s love is shown in that he is a giver. The most precious gift given to man is the gift of his son Jesus Christ.

Jesus the Giver:

Jesus had the habit of being a giver at all times. Everything Jesus did was done without a price tag being attached to it. He gave up his life so the spiritual needs of a bankrupt humanity could be met.

Holy Spirit the Giver:

The Bible clearly portrays the Holy Spirit as one who gives spiritual gifts to the believers (1 Cor. 12:7-11).

As the children of God, we need to emulate this divine nature in our lives. Life should be seen as an opportunity to give, and as true sons and daughters of God, we must let his disposition lead us to become givers. Since God is by his very nature a giver, it follows that he loves in a special way those who develop the grace of giving (2 Cor. 8:7). Indeed, we need to acknowledge that every good gift that we possess is from the Lord himself. Whatever the arenas in our lives where we excel may be, whether we are a good musician, a talented person, an intelligent person or simply a hard worker, those are gifts from God. We possess them not by our own merit, but by the grace of God.

### The Immutable one:

James introduces to his readers the nature of the Father of heavenly lights. In him there is no variation, he does not change like shifting shadows. We as human beings are always inconsistent, but God is consistent. We are variable and we have our own ups and downs. We live in an ever changing world that at times does not seem to have any kind of stability. People, governments, rulers, culture, societies, trends, and fashions are constantly evolving and changing. Amidst the constant change, it is refreshing to know that the God we serve is an unchanging one. Creation itself is constantly changing, but there is no change for the Creator. "I the Lord do not change" (Mal 3:6). "Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today and forever" (Hebrews 13:8). In a changing world we can trust our unchanging Lord. "Heaven and earth shall pass away but my words will never pass away" (Matt 24:35). God and his world can provide the stability that we need in an unstable world. The truth of God's world will always stand the test of time, it will never change, nor can it be abolished.

### The New Birth:

God, the giver of good gifts, the immutable one, has chosen to give us birth through the word of truth. Besides James, the writer of this epistle, Jesus and some of his apostles have mentioned the process of rebirth. One cannot become part of the family of God by his own merit or achievements, but by being born into the kingdom of God (John 3:3). Birth into God's family is not passed on genetically, nor of human desire, nor by man's own determination. Man cannot will himself into a relationship with God. If God were not to take the initiative, man would never find a way into the family of God. The physical, natural, first birth of man is through the will of the husband (man), while the second, spiritual birth is through the will of God (John 1:12-13). A person who is born again is not born of flesh, but of God. We did not generate our own spiritual birth. When we respond to God's word and put our faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, God performs the miracle. The Bible uses different terminology to describe this new birth—born of God, born of the word, born of the water and the spirit, etc. God's goal is that those who are born of the word should be a kind of firstfruits of all he created.

