



Bethany Bible Study & Discussion

James (Part-2) (Chapter 1)

WORD OF GOD and PURE RELIGION

Perfect gift (17): Who is the source of perfect gift? Who is the father of lights?

Our origin and purpose (18-20): Who begat us? How and why? What do we mean by “firstfruits”? What instructions are given for ‘hearing’ and ‘speaking’, and how does ‘wrath’ fit in this context?

Word of God (21-25): What must we lay aside? What must we receive? How must we respond to the Word of God? What are some images used for the Word of God in the Bible?

Application: Is the Word of God changing us? If not, we must evaluate our bible reading habits.

From last week (James, Part I)

Trials & Temptations

Ascending Blessing of Trials (3,4,12)
... trials can put us on a higher ground

Trials (from
God) test
our faith

ENDURE

With
Joy + wisdom

Blessed with

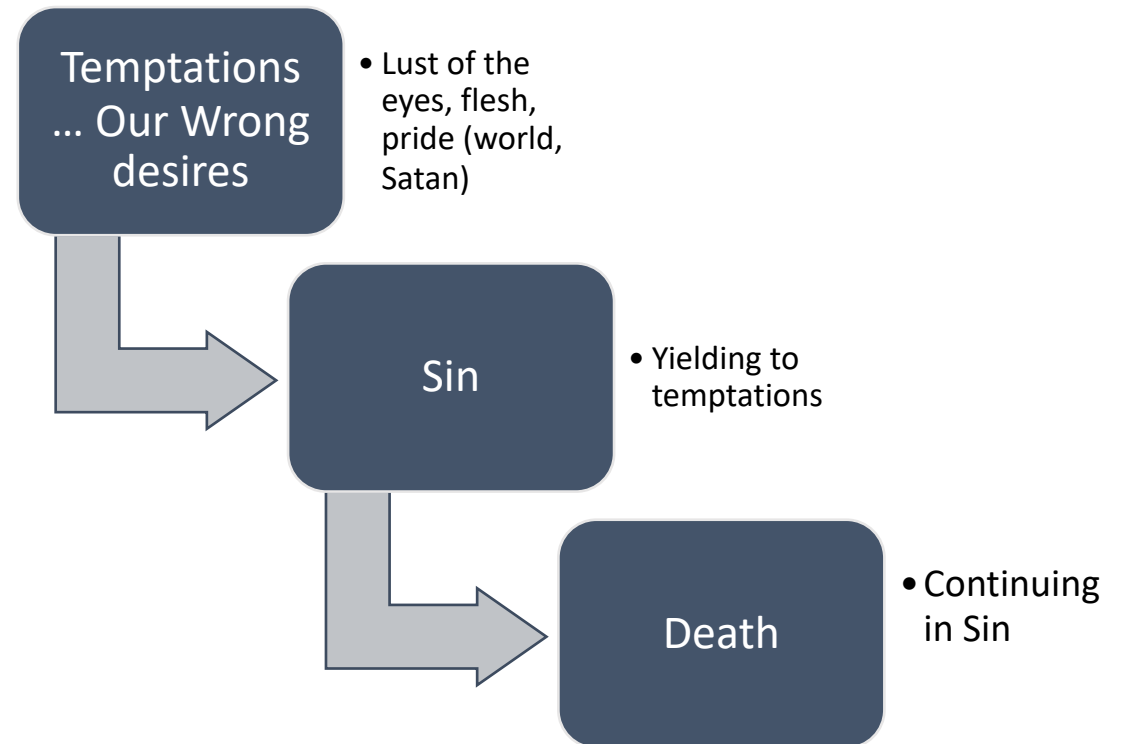
Maturity

Crown of Life*

(James 1:12, Revelation 2:10)

Downward spiral of temptations

¹⁴ But every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed. ¹⁵ Then when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin: and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death.



James 1 (17-27)

Perfect Gift (17)

Our origin & purpose (18-20)

Word of God (21-25)

Two types of religion (26-27)

Source of Precious Gifts

Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and comes down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation or shadow of turning (17)

- **Source:** God, the Father of Lights
- **The Father of Lights** –
 - Source of natural light in Creation (**Genesis 1:14-18, Psalms 136:7-9**)
 - Source of eternal light
- No variableness, no shadow of turning ... steady, everlasting light, no shadow caused by turning
- **God is light, and in him is no darkness at all (I John 1:5)**

Origin & Purpose (18-20)

Who begat us?

How?

Why?

Hearing. Speaking.
Wrath

Our origin & purpose

Of his own will begat he us
with the word of truth, that we
should be a kind of firstfruits of
his creatures (18)

Who begat us?

God; by His will that we should be born again

How?

Word of Truth ... the scriptures. He is the Word (John 1).
Word of God played a role in our rebirth.

Why? To be firstfruits

First fruits (18)

- **First cut** in harvest ==> promise of more crop/fruits
- **Early Jewish Christians** (saved by the ministry of apostles and gospel message). **Conversion of one** (firstfruit) leads to conversion of all (harvest) (**Acts 16:31**)
- **Jesus** was the first fruit (I Corinthians 15:20-22)
- First fruit **offered** at the temple in OT (we must also offer our first and best to the Lord ... be it time, talents, or treasure)

Jesus, the first fruit (18)

²⁰ But now Christ is risen from the dead, *and* has become the **firstfruits** of those who have fallen asleep. ²¹ For since by man *came* death, by Man also *came* the resurrection of the dead. ²² For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ all shall be made alive. (I Corinthians 15:20-22)

He has chosen us to be fruitful: Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you and ordained you, that you should go forth and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain (**John 15:16**)



Wherefore,

(since we were created & chosen with a purpose)

exercise prudence in **hearing, speaking, wrath**

Verses 19-20



Hearing

let every man be swift to hear, (19)

Hearing

- ... be swift, be eager to hear
- ... hearing must lead to understanding
- ... meditate & commit to memory
- ... source of growing faith

(**Romans 10:17** ... faith comes by hearing and hearing by the word of God)

Hebrews 5:11 of whom we have much to say, and hard to explain, since you have become dull of hearing.

Acts 1:37 ... and when they heard this (Peter's sermon), they were pricked in their heart ... what shall we do? Peter said, repent and be baptized!

Speaking

slow to speak (19)

Speaking

- ... be slow to speak
- ... Practice listening
- ... Listen/think/filter before speaking

- He who guards his mouth preserves his life, *But* he who opens wide his lips shall have destruction (**Proverbs 13:3**)
- In the multitude of words sin is not lacking, *But* he who restrains his lips *is* wise. (**Proverbs 10:19**)
- Set a guard O Lord, over my mouth; Keep watch over the door of my lips. (**Psalms 141:3**)
 - James has more to say about speech in subsequent chapters

Slow to wrath

²⁰ for the wrath of man does not produce the righteousness of God.

How are we responding to the trials in our life?

- Our response to the word of God indicates the condition of our heart and future outcome
- If we respond with anger/wrath ... the righteousness of God cannot work and change us. Our hearts must be receptive to correction.
- We must respond with humility and confession.
 - Nathan said to David, You are the man (II Samuel 12:7) David's confession (Psalms 51)
 - He who covers his sins will not prosper, But whoever confesses and forsakes *them* will have mercy. **Proverbs 28:13**
- *He who is slow to anger is better than the mighty, And he who rules his spirit than he who takes a city.* **Proverbs 16:32**

Are you?

- Swift to Hear
- Slow to Speak
- Slow to Wrath

If not, what are you doing about it?

Word of God (21-25)

Lay aside?

Receive?

Word of God?



Wherefore,

Get rid of ...
Embrace ...

Hearers & Doers ...

²¹ Therefore lay aside all filthiness and overflow of wickedness, and receive with meekness the implanted word, which is able to save your souls. ²² But be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves

- Lay aside sin
- Receive the Word (Acts 17:11) (I Thessalonians 2:13, received it as the Word of God)
 - With Meekness (not with an intention to question God or debate)
 - With desire to learn and change (Psalms 25:9 humble he teaches the way)
- Word of God can transform us:
 - Not only to be born-again (I Peter 1:23)
 - But also our continual sanctification (Ephesians 5:23) (overcoming the strongholds of temptations and sin)

Hearing + Doing

²² But be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves. ²³ For if anyone is a hearer of the word and not a doer, he is like a man observing his natural face in a mirror; ²⁴ for he observes himself, goes away, and immediately forgets what kind of man he was. ²⁵ But he who looks into the perfect law of liberty and continues *in it*, and is not a forgetful hearer but a doer of the work, this one will be blessed in what he does.

Forgetful listeners or negligent listeners or casual listener ... hear but do not do. Such hearing is useless (22-24)

Doers will be blessed.

perfect law of liberty = word of God

True believers obey as they see the Word of God as a source of change and freedom. God's commandments are not burdensome (1 John 5:2)

The Word of God

Jesus Christ (**John 1:1, 14** In the beginning was the Word ... and the Word became flesh and dwelt among us; **Revelation 19:13** He *was* clothed with a robe dipped in blood, and His name is called The Word of God)

God's spoken word (**Psalms 33:6**, by the Word of the Lord, heavens were made ...; **Exodus 6:2** God spoke to Moses)

God's spokespersons (**Deuteronomy 18:18-20**, I will put my words in His mouth) **God's special revelations** (John in the isle of Patmos, **Revelation 1:10**)

The Bible

Power of God's Word

Lamp

(Psalms 119:105)

Hammer

(Jeremiah 23:29)

Fire

(Jeremiah 23:29)

Sword

(Ephesians 6:17,
Hebrews 4:12)

Mirror

(James 1:23)

Bread (Mathew
4:4), **Milk** (I Peter
2:2), **Rain & Snow**
(Isaiah 55:10-11)



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