

The Goodness of God

[Jas 1:12-18 ESV] 12 Blessed is the man who remains steadfast under trial, for when he has stood the test he will receive the crown of life, which God has promised to those who love him. 13 Let no one say when he is tempted, "I am being tempted by God," for God cannot be tempted with evil, and he himself tempts no one. 14 But each person is tempted when he is lured and enticed by his own desire. 15 Then desire when it has conceived gives birth to sin, and sin when it is fully grown brings forth death. 16 Do not be deceived, my beloved brothers. 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. 18 Of his own will he brought us forth by the word of truth, that we should be a kind of firstfruits of his creatures.

I. Introduction

- A. We are blessed by God!
- B. We have God's favor, and directive.
- C. God is Good, and has good for us
- D. The responsibility of man is to reflect glory and praise to God, and the evidence is all around us, but especially seen in relationship.
- E. I challenge you today to step out of a solely academic reading of the word, and allow yourself to be blessed by the God who delivers this message to us:
 1. He loves you
 2. He has good for you
 3. His word brings life and light
 4. He desires relationship with you
 5. He is trustworthy above all things!

II. Text

- A. Summary verse 12:
 1. Remain steadfast
 2. Receive God's promise
- B. Summary verses 13-16
 1. Our own nature is at war with our Spirit
 2. This is why we lack peace, not because God has left something undone, but because of our desire for sin.
 3. Do not be deceived
- C. Summary verse 17
 1. Rather than trials of temptation, God provides goodness and righteousness
 2. He has not changed, and will not
- D. Summary verse 18
 1. He willed deliberately,
 2. to bring us forth,
 3. by the WORD OF TRUTH (Jesus)
 4. That we should be
 5. A kind of first fruits, having importance and purpose
 6. Of HIS creatures

III. Point

A. **God is so Good**

1. His goodness can never be separated from His essence
2. His goodness impacts every work He does, and we are the recipients of that work
3. We are a kind of firstfruits:
 - a) And example is seen in his choice of us
 - b) We are a sacrifice, a living sacrifice
 - c) We are of great importance, His highest creation

- d) We are promised to be blessed at His return, firstfruits, of a sort, from among His creatures.
- e) We may not be the first resurrection from the dead, but we are promised resurrection, a kind of firstfruits, gathered together with God.

B. You are not an Accident

1. **Better stated: You are an ON PURPOSE**
 - a) **God brought you into existence**
 - b) **He did so BY HIS WILLFUL choice**
 - c) **And HE has a PURPOSE for you.**
2. God doesn't make mistakes and He has a purpose behind all that He does
3. This passage was set up by the statement of God only giving good gifts, then He makes it personal
4. **You are:**
 - a) **Loved**
 - b) **Created**
 - c) **Set apart for good work**
 - d) **A blessing**
 - e) **Gifted to serve**
 - f) **Can make a difference!**
5. **God didn't create you for no purpose, you are necessary to the mission.**

C. You are Necessary

1. **The gifts God has given you are necessary for the mission to be properly equipped.**
2. **There is no replacement for you, submit yourself to God for ministry service.**
3. **That means you adapt to God's agenda for your life, surrendering to His call:**
 - a) Surrender is a word that is sometimes misunderstood in the church
 - b) Surrender isn't a sign of weakness, but a recognition of strength!
 - c) I surrendered to ministry, because it was not my plan and I had to follow God's plan, therefore I willfully surrendered my plan
 - d) This showed that I didn't have anything to offer, but God didn't need what I had, He gave me what I needed to accomplish His will.
4. **The ministry of the church needs the gifts God has placed in you to be:**
 - a) **Developed through discipleship**
 - b) **Exercised through ministry**
 - c) **Experienced in fellowship**
 - d) **Encouraged in service and worship**
5. **WE NEED YOU!**
 - a) **Not because you are "All that"**
 - b) **But because GOD GIFTED YOU!**
6. You have great value

D. You are Valued

1. **You have great value, and you are valued!**
 - a) **You are a certain kind of importance**
 - b) **Valued by the kingdom!**
2. The work of the gospel in our community, from our church is a beautiful example of value
3. Ministry is valuable, and we are ministers of value.
4. Shopping:
 - a) value for the price/cost
 - b) Finding something worth a lot, and getting a good deal on it.
 - c) The point is that it is worth a lot!

- d) **Something that is cheap compared to other things, may not have value if its not worth having**
- e) **But something that is valuable, is valuable, no matter the cost!**

IV. Close

V.