

Wednesday Night Fellowship Discussion Guide

James 1:12-18

6/30/21

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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.**

Passage Summary

In this part of his book James continues his discussion of trials by taking the focus off of the outward view of trials and focusing instead on what is occurring on the inside. First does this by considering both God’s nature and man’s nature. God’s nature is such that he is not tempted internally by evil nor does he tempt anyone else with a view toward that person giving in to evil. Man’s nature is such that our own desires draw us invariably toward that which is evil. Even good desires are subverted by man’s nature so that the result is sin which then results in death. Whereas God’s nature is determined to bless others, Man’s nature is determined to bless himself or herself. What is needed is a fundamental shift of nature and this is exactly what God is determined to do through His Word of Truth.

Discussion Questions

(These questions are intended to generate discussion and promote application. Don’t feel pressured to make it through all of them. The questions are made for the discussion leader, not the discussion leader for the questions.)

Delighted, Drug Away, and Deceived

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.

- What are some desires others have that hold no appeal to you?
- What are some desires that do hold appeal to you?
- How does desire end up dragging a person toward an end they do not really desire? Can you think of some examples?
- Does every desire that a person might experience always give birth to sin? Can you think of desire that results in righteousness for an unbeliever? Can you think of a desire for a good thing that results in sin for a believer?
- How do our desires deceive us?
- How does sin result in death? What KIND of death? Is it possible for a believer who has been saved to experience death?
- If this is man’s nature, how should we respond to our nature desires?

Changed

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.

- Why does James emphasize God's role in this verse?
- What exactly is the word of truth? Can it be more than one thing?
- How does the metaphor of "first-fruits" help us understand what God is intending to do in and through believers?
- Who does or does not fall into the category of "creatures"?
- If this is God's response to the human nature, what should our response be to God?