



**Speaker:** Pastor Matt

**Series:** James Faith/Works

**Sermon Title:** God's Gift Giving Nature

**Scripture:** [James 1:16-18](#)

## OUTLINE

1. **Principle/Truth:** Guard your heart from deceit by remembering God's good gift-giving nature (16-17).
2. **Problem of the Heart:** We distort/slander God's character when we attribute evil to Him. This is failing to trust that He is consistently and perfectly good, even when suffering comes (16; *also* 13-15).
3. **Gospel Lens/What the Cross Says about This:** Jesus is the embodiment of God's goodness . . . the One who tasted death so we are given spiritual birth by the Word of Truth (1; 17-18).
4. **Response/Implications of Grace Based on Our Union with Christ:** Draw life from the Word of God (not circumstances), which shows us God's unchanging nature and our prized possession as a kind of firstfruits (18).

## DISCUSSION GUIDE

**Icebreaker:** Share a time when you received a gift where the wrapping threw you off (deceived you) from anticipating a wonderful gift.

**Read** James 1:1-18 slowly to see today's passage in its immediate context.

## Principle/Truth

1. According to James 1:17, how does James describe God? What do the phrases “Father of lights” and “no variation or shadow due to change” reveal about His character?
  1. Read Malachi 3:6; Hebrews 13:8 and discuss how James' description of God is consistent with other biblical writers.
  2. Why is God’s immutability (unchangeable nature and character) good news for weary or doubting Christians?
2. What does it mean that every “good and perfect gift” is from God? How does this statement contrast with how we may sometimes interpret trials or suffering (remember the context from James 1:13–15)?
3. James 1:18 says that God “brought us forth by the word of truth.” What does this sentence tell us about the nature and source of our salvation?

### **Problem of the Heart**

1. Why do we sometimes struggle to believe that God is always good and never changing—especially in difficult seasons? (Really seek to be honest and vulnerable: “Where have you recently felt tempted to question God’s goodness?”)
2. What are some subtle (or not-so-subtle) ways we blame God or feel entitled to better treatment from Him? How does this affect our faith or witness?
3. What idols or desires might be fueling our resistance to trust in God’s goodness and sovereign will? (Discuss how the heart often seeks control, comfort, or fairness on our terms.)

### **Gospel Lens/What the Cross Says about This**

1. Read Romans 8:32 and discuss the character of God to give His own son. How is Jesus the ultimate “good and perfect gift” given by the Father? How does the gospel assure us of God’s unchanging goodness toward us?
2. Apply the resurrection to this discussion. In what way does the resurrection of Jesus demonstrate God’s commitment to bring forth new life in His people? How is our identity

as 'firstfruits' linked to the resurrection? (Consider 1 Cor 15:20-23.)

### **Response/Implications of Grace Based on Our Union with Christ**

1. How might trusting in God's unchanging goodness rewire how you approach trials this week? What would faith-filled trust look like in practice?
2. Discuss the temptation to live off of "yesterday's bread" (so to speak) for spiritual nourishment vs. the need and desire to be in the Word daily for consistent nourishment of our souls with the Word of Truth.

**Closing:** End by thanking God for His unchanging nature and asking for grace to trust His goodness more fully—even in hard things. Pray specifically for your hearts to rest in the new identity we've received through Christ as the firstfruits of a new creation.