



Leader

8/23 - James 1:12-18

LOVE

A new commandment I give to you, that you love *one another*... (John 13:34)

- *Internal*: How was your week? Any new life updates? How was your walk with the Lord this week?
- *External*: Practically, is there any individual or family that needs encouragement from us as a group?

TRUTH

Let the word of God dwell in you richly, teaching and admonishing *one another*... (Col. 3:16)

1. When you reflect on the message from Sunday, what most resonated with you?

[\[Open Discussion\]](#)

2. Let's read our primary text. This text is quite mysterious in its word choice (i.e. crown of life, giving birth to sin, Father of lights, no shadows due to change, firstfruits of his creatures, etc.). How does this text shape your view of God?

[\[Open Discussion\]](#)

3. Why does James say "blessed" rather than promising the trial will be pleasant?

"Blessed" (gk. makarios) describes a settled state of favor before God, not a feeling of happiness in the moment. James isn't saying trials feel good; he's saying the person who endures them is in a genuinely fortunate position because of what enduring produces, proven character now and the crown of life later (cf. 1:2-4).

4. In verse 13, what wrong claim does James anticipate someone making, and why does he rule it out?

He anticipates someone saying, "I am being tempted by God," blaming God for their own sin. James rules this out on the basis of God's nature: God "cannot be tempted with evil, and he himself tempts no one." Since evil holds no attraction for God at all, it's impossible for evil to originate with him. God's holiness and human responsibility remain.

5. According to verse 14, where does temptation actually come from?

Temptation comes from within: "each person is tempted when he is lured and enticed by his own desire." James locates the source of temptation not in God, not even ultimately in outside circumstances, but in the individual's own desire, an internal pull that outside circumstances may trigger but do not create.

6. Trace the progression James describes in verse 15 (desire → sin → death). Why does he describe it using birth imagery? Have you seen this "play out" in someone you know?

Desire, when it "conceives," gives birth to sin; sin, when "fully grown," brings forth death. The birth/growth imagery shows sin as a process, not an isolated event. An unchecked desire develops into an action (sin), and unchecked sin matures into its full consequence (death, i.e., spiritual ruin and separation from God). It's a warning that sin should be resisted at the desire stage, before it "conceives."

7. At its essence, is desire a negative thing?

No. God created desire and it is a wonderful, God-given gift. But, like most other sins, misplaced and misguided desires give birth to sinful action and ultimately lead to death, as James mentions.

8. Practically, how can Christian's like you and I shift our misguided desires into God-honoring desires?

First, we ask God for help, by the power of the Holy Spirit. This is not simply a "Christian platitude," we need a power that is stronger and greater than us...we need the power of God to aid in this righteous pursuit. Secondly, we practice the spiritual disciplines exemplified and prescribed in the Bible; prayer, fasting, meditation on the word, silence and solitude. Spiritual nourishment is essential.

9. What does verse 18 say God has done for believers, and how does the term "firstfruits" describe their identity?

"Of his own will he brought us forth by the word of truth." Our new birth (regeneration) was God's free, gracious initiative, accomplished through the gospel ("the word of truth"), not our own effort. Calling believers "a kind of firstfruits of his creatures" pictures them as the first portion of a harvest, both a sign of and a pledge toward the fuller renewal of all creation still to come. It's the ultimate proof that God gives good gifts, not evil ones...He gave us new life itself.

10. Any other thoughts you would like to share before we wrap up this text?

[Open Discussion]

GREAT COMMISSION

Go therefore and make disciples of all nations... (Matt. 28:19-20)

- *Internal*: Did you make time to disciple your family this week? Pray with them?
- *External*: Is your life marked by joy/contentment? Are you prepared to share the gospel if the Holy Spirit prompted? Is the name of Jesus on your lips in your day-to-day activity?

CONFESSION/PRAYER/REPENTANCE

But exhort *one another* every day, as long as it is called "today,"... (Heb. 3:12-14)

- Confession is agreeing with God about our sin according to the Scriptures. Is there anything you want to confess before the group (generally)? [*apathy, idolatry, selfishness, jealousy, anger, envy*]
- Let's pray, asking God to help us apply His word to our lives.

Sources:

- ESV Study Bible Commentary
- GotQuestions.org
- Multiple AI Resources