

From Pastor's Desk...

The Immutable God: Giver and Gifts

God is unchanging in his being, perfections, purpose and promises, yet God does act and feels differently in response to different situations. This attitude of God is called God's immutability. God created everything and causes the universe to change, but He is the same yesterday today and forever. James reminds his readers that all good and perfect gifts come ultimately from God with whom there is no variation or shadow due to change (James 1:17) because his character never changes in the slightest degree.

Michael Cook in his article, 'God's gifts are good and perfect' does a clear exegesis on the above verse. The word gift is found twice in this verse. The word *dosis* places more emphasis on the act of giving or the giving of the gift. The character of the giver is important here. God gives us with good intention from a generous heart. The second usage is *dorema* which focusses on the thing that was given or the actual gift itself. The word 'perfect' indicates that which is brought to its end, finished lacking nothing necessary to completeness. By the demonstration of God's love in sending Jesus to die on the cross, we receive eternal life, forgiveness from our sins, regeneration, salvation etc.

In the context of James' writing, Wisdom is given generously by God (1:5). It gives us the ability to take wise decisions in difficult circumstances. It is the tool by which trials are overcome. The wisdom that comes from heaven is very practical: pure, peace-loving, considerate, submissive, full of mercy and good fruit, impartial and sincere (3:17). True wisdom turns our hardships into times of learning perseverance.

God gives healing to the sick while prayers are offered in faith (4:15). It refers to the faith of the people praying. However, all prayers are subject to God's will. The church should stay alert to pray for the people in need. We call upon Jesus name for the healing from sickness.

God will give the crown of life to those who love Him (1:12). Faithfulness is expected even to the point of death (Rev. 2:10). In the present context of persecution upon Christians, the promise is very motivational for all. Let us stay blessed in the new year 2020 giving glory to God who gives everything generously.

God bless you.

In His glorious service,

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God, the source of good and perfect gifts

Sis. Saly Varughese

This is the very season for gift exchange. The gift is right if it meets the particular need of the recipient. Have you found the perfect gift for every one on your list? I guess your answer might be "I hope so". Have you ever received a perfect gift? If you are a real Christian your answer will be "Yes".

John 3:16 says, God so loved the world that he gave His only son and whoever believe in Him shall have everlasting life. Of course, this perfect gift is **His Son Lord Jesus** for our salvation. In Isaiah 9:6 he has been addressed as The Wonderful councilor, mighty God, everlasting Father and Prince of Peace. The Lord Jesus Christ the perfect gift that begins giving peace to you the moment you receive him as Savior and then continue to give throughout your present life here on earth and for all eternity. God gave us the perfect gift of **Unlimited love** (1 John 3:1), **Unending love** as it says in Jere 31:3 and **Unconditional love** as we read in 1 John 4:19.

He has also given as the **Gift of Faith** Ephe 2:8. Apart from God's work in our heart we would have never been able to believe Jesus as our savior. God also given as the perfect gift of Eternal life with everlasting relationship with Him and Eternal Home.

Our God is good and sovereign. He never sends anything evil into our lives. God sends trials for His own sovereign loving purpose Amos 3:6. When satan attacked the Godly man Job, clearly, he did it with God's permission, Job wisely answered his wife; shall we indeed accept well from God and not accept adversity? Job 2:10. Apostle Paul says that the thorn in the flesh is a cause for rejoicing because it kept him humble dependence on God. Sometimes the good gifts that God sends may include extremely difficult trials.

God the father of light and light stands for good in contrast to Satan's evil domain of dark. There is no variation or shifting shadow. James is drawing a comparison with the sun. Like the sun, God does not vary in his essential nature which is light, always steady. On earth we do not always experience the steady light of sun; it varies on cloudy days, at night and with the changing seasons. James means that when we experience what seem to be cloudy days or dark night or windy seasons do not think that God has changed in His essential goodness towards us.

His nature and His purpose towards his children are steady and unchanged; therefore, we can trust him at all times and in all difficult circumstances. God has been, God is and God always will be the giver of all good and perfect gifts. Have a blessed and happy new year.