

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.

## Every Good and Perfect Gift

**S/Camp Aims:** (i) Preach Christ (ii) Teaching (iii) Strengthen Faith

**3 Themes in James:** (i) Testing (ii) Wisdom (iii) Poverty & Wealth

**James** is an apostle—a witness of Jesus’ resurrection (1Cor. 15:7), an earthly brother of Jesus of Nazareth (Matt. 13:55; Mark 3:31; John 7:5), and one who knows the apostle Paul (Acts 12:17; Galatians 1:19; 2:9) and proclaims the same apostolic gospel (Galatians 1:6), of God’s saving grace.

**The style** of James’ writing is almost proverbial. It is pastoral and practical, assuming **Christological Doctrine**, more so than expounding it. So take care when contrasting or comparing James with Paul (see APPENDIX).

### Searching for Doctrine:

The Battle of Faith—Personal and Cosmic (1:12-16)

**The tragic birth:** Sin, Desire, Death - and Devil

The Incarnation—the Perfect Gift from Above (1:17)

The Grace of **New Birth** (1:18) (John 3:3)

The *Father of Lights* (1:17) (Gen. 1:3; 14-18; John 8:12)

The *Word of Truth* (1:18; 3:14; 5:19)

The *Fulfilment of God's Purpose* (1:18)

The *First Fruits* (1:18) (Deut. 18:4; Gal. 5:22; 1Cor. 15:2)

The theme of testing in **James 1:12-18** is introduced in **James 1:2**.

I like the RSV translation there:

*“Count it all joy, my brethren, when you meet various trials, for you know that the testing of your faith produces steadfastness”.*

This is similar to Romans 5:1-5, where *faith* is linked to *endurance*.

### 1. To be Truly Human is to be Truly Tested (James 1:12-18)

Temptation—False Word from the Evil One (Gen. 3. Gen. 4)

Testing—True Word (Matt. 4:4), difficulty (Heb. 2:18; Luke 2:40)

### 2. The Father gave us birth by the Word of Truth (James 1:18)

The Implanted Word (James 1:21-23); Hearers/Doers (Matt. 7:24)

Also: The Incarnate Word; the Written Word; the Preached Word