

Wisdom about Receiving from God (James 1:16-21)

1. Do not be tricked (1:16)
 - a. This verse serves as a transition from the former proposition concerning what is not in God's nature. God does not tempt with evil.
 - b. It functions also to reveal what is in God's nature.
2. All that we know to be good and perfect comes from God, this is what he gives (1:17-18)
 - a. God in heaven is the source for all good and perfect things. He does not tempt us with evil nor direct us to do evil. Rather, God gives us that which is good and perfect and impels us to embrace good and perfect things.
 - b. God is the "Father of lights." This is an image of creation. God, the creator, is the Father of the lights, the planetary bodies, the moon, the stars, and the sun, etc. That is, that which brings forth light and direction come from God.
 - c. Though God is the God of the lights, in him there is not a shadow. That is, God casts no shadow from changing his position. God does not change in his promises nor his intentions.
 - d. Thus, we can say through his own purposes we were brought to the Father as his children. The Father always precedes the children. We are the children of God because of what the Father has done for us through his word. We are therefore set aside as God's first fruits among his creation, the preferred because we take on his nature.
3. We must listen more than we speak because of our position (1:19-21).
 - a. We are God's first born through his word. We became God's first born by listening and receiving what God gave us. We will only be able to maintain godliness in the listening position.
 - b. If we maintain our posture as listeners to God, then we will be able to hear God from wherever God speaks. God speaks primarily from his word, the Scripture. But God also speaks through people. Consequently, when interacting with one another, we must be careful to listen to one another.
 - c. If we are in the listening position, then we will also be slow about being speaking and anger. We will be slow about speaking because we need to comprehend before we respond. We will be slow about anger because we are quick to forgive.
 - d. We are challenged, therefore to put away our own desires and with meekness to allow the word God has placed within us to fully blossom. What God speaks matters more than anything we want.