

Washington church of Christ

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The Washington Messenger

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July 6, 2014

Order of Services

Sunday July 6, 2014

| | |
|---------------------------|----------------|
| Song Leader | Tom Dolan |
| Prayer | Bill Duryea |
| Preaching | Bob James |
| Lord's Supper | |
| Prayer for the Bread | Stan Thompson |
| Prayer for the Cup | Ralph Ruggiero |
| Prayer for the Collection | David Osinski |
| Assisting at the Table | Bob De Grado |
| Morning Closing Prayer | Derald Sanchez |
| Evening Opening Prayer | Brian Jeffries |
| Announcements | Scott Thomas |

Schedule of Weekly Services

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|---------------------------------|----------|
| Sunday Morning Bible Classes | 9:30 am |
| Sunday Morning Worship | 10:30 am |
| Sunday Evening Worship | 6:00 pm |
| Wednesday Evening Bible Classes | 7:30 pm |
| Thursday Morning Bible Study | 11:00 am |

God's Gifts...

In the Garden of Eden when Eve was questioned by God as to what she had done relative to eating of the tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil, she responded truthfully when she said, "... The serpent deceived me, and I ate." (Genesis 3:13 NKJV) Sin is deceptive and Satan is continually looking for people to deceive. The Apostle Peter warns us ...

Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil walks about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour. (1 Peter 5:8 NKJV)

Do not be deceived, my beloved brethren. Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and comes down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation or shadow of turning. Of His own will He brought us forth by the word of truth, that we might be a kind of firstfruits of His creatures.

(James 1:16-18 NKJV)

To the contrary, God never deceives.

He always deals with truth. His Son Jesus declared, "I am the way, the truth, and the life" (John 14:6 NKJV), and that if we would know Him we would know the truth, "and the truth shall make you free" (John 8:32 NKJV).

James 1:16 is an interesting verse in that it joins two important paragraphs. The first ...

Let no one say when he is tempted, "I am tempted by God"; for God cannot be tempted by evil, nor does He Himself tempt anyone. But each one is tempted when he is drawn away by his own desires and enticed. Then, when desire has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and sin, when it is full-grown, brings forth death. (James 1:13-15 NKJV)

And the second ...

Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and comes down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation or shadow of turning. Of His own will He brought us forth by the word of truth, that we might be a kind of firstfruits of His creatures. (James 1:17-18 NKJV)

So then, the wise counsel of James is that we should not be deceived regarding the source of evil ... that is Satan. He is the one who would tempt us to do evil and who would delight in leading us to sin and death.

Correspondingly, God is the source of all good. And not only the source of good, but He is the One who is committed to making all things work together for good for His children ...

And we know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to His purpose. (Romans 8:28 NKJV)

In James' contrasts of that which comes from Satan and that which comes from God he uses the words good, gift, perfect, above, lights, and firstfruits. If I were to make two categories, one being "life" and the other "death", I think these would be "life" words rather than "death" words.

God loves us and desires what is best for us. It is the character of God to give. Because He is good, He delights in giving good gifts to those who trust Him. The Bible contains story after story of how God has blessed those who obey Him.

The word translated as "perfect" is *téleios*, the same word used in James 1:4 when he speaks about letting patience "have its perfect work, that you may be perfect..." God is perfect, and everything He does is perfect. Therefore, His gifts are not only good, but they are also perfect. James says that they come from above because that is man's concept of where God is. Literally speaking, they come from God.

James speaks of God's gifts when he says that God has brought us to a spiritual birth by using the "the word of truth." As stated before, here we recognize Jesus as the personification of truth (John 14:6) and as the One who is the truth which "shall make you free" (John 8:32).

Further, James teaches that being brought forth by the Word of Truth enables us to "be a kind of firstfruits of His creatures." (James 1:18)

God required the children of Israel to give of their tithes and firstfruits as a part of the Levitical law (Leviticus 27:30-33). This was a vital part of God's covenant relationship with His people.

In his commentary on this verse, brother Guy Woods wrote: "The firstfruits were a token and pledge of the fuller harvest to follow; and, as the sheaf of the wave offering presented to the Lord foreshowed the bountiful harvest to follow, so the early disciples to whom James wrote were among the first of a vaster company which would follow them".

God is truly a generous giver, and He has lavished us with many gifts including the new birth through Jesus Christ, the revelation of the mystery of the word of truth which had been hidden for generations, and the marvelous position in Christ which allows us to be a kind of firstfruit within the kingdom of God.

Just now I am reminded of a hymn we sometimes sing...

*Praise God from whom all blessings flow;
Praise Him, all creatures here below;
Praise Him above, ye heavenly hosts;
Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost!*

Our Prayer List...

For Spiritual Responsiveness – All of our wayward members

For Physical Healing – Georgia DeLorenzo ... Everett Guyton

For Wisdom and Good Judgment – The Leaders of our congregation ... the leaders of our nation

For God's Care and Good Providence – Our young people away at college ... Our young people here at Washington ... our members who are traveling ... the men and women in military service ... our congregation.

The Evangelist and Teachers We Help Support – Jon Focht – Tim Bunting – Scott Smelser – Dan Wydro

EVENTS AND NOTES

UPCOMING EVENTS THAT WE ARE AWARE OF ARE ...

- ▲ THE NEXT MEN'S BUSINESS MEETING IS SCHEDULED FOR NEXT SUNDAY, JULY 13TH.
- ▲ THE DATES FOR THE FAIR ARE SATURDAY, JULY 26TH THROUGH SATURDAY, AUGUST 2ND. OUR BOOTH WILL BE OPEN FROM 12 NOON UNTIL 10:00PM EACH DAY. THERE ARE STILL TIMES AVAILABLE FOR ANYONE WILLING AND ABLE TO HELP MAN THE BOOTH. PLEASE SEE THE SIGN-UP SHEET POSTED ON THE BULLETIN BOARD.
- ▲ WE HAVE A NEW **ONLINE** BIBLE CORRESPONDENCE COURSE THAT IS **NOW** AVAILABLE FROM OUR WEBSITE. **CHECK IT OUT!**
- ▲ CHECK OUT SCOTT SMELSER'S WEBSITE "3MINUTEBIBLESTUDY.COM".