



SERIES: FEBRUARY – James: Faith In Real Life

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Scripture: James 1:18

TITLE: Who's the Father?

Of his own will he brought us forth by the word of truth, that we should be a kind of firstfruits of his creatures. James 1:18 ESV

I grew up the 90's. That is, the 1990's, not be confused with the 1890's. I'm not that old. Anyway, in the 90's, almost every network TV channel had a daytime talk show. Everyone wanted to have the success of Opera. I absolutely hated talk shows. Some just seemed extremely, desperate. Anything that seemed outrageously, scandalous they sought to make a show out of it. Drama, suspense and misery became a focal point for many of these shows. And right in the middle of it was the paternity test. They would spend 95% of the show's airtime trying to create suspense around the drama of a paternity test. These were people's lives, and we were supposed to be entertained by this stuff. I hated these shows.

James 1:18, though not nearly as dramatic, is the revealing of a paternity test. It's the revelation of how the love and power of God makes us the children of God. And James says, "Of his own will..." What a powerful statement! Of God's own will, he brought us forth. Children can be strong-willed. They're born that way. But I don't care how strong-willed my children are, they don't have the power to will themselves into human existence. They need a mommy and daddy to make that happen. God made it happen, says James. God willed for you and I to know him.

Ephesians 2:1-5 says,

"And you were dead in the trespasses and sins in which you once walked, following the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that is now at work in the sons of disobedience—among whom we all once lived in the passions of our flesh, carrying out the desires of the body and the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, like the rest of mankind. But God, being rich in mercy, because of the great love with which he loved us, even when we were dead in our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ—by grace you have been saved."

And to make sure you got his point, Paul writes in Colossians 2:13 "And you, who were dead in your trespasses and the uncircumcision of your flesh, God made alive together with him, having forgiven us all our trespasses."

Only Almighty God has the power to raise the dead to life. I thank God that He delights in doing this. James says God accomplishes this through the Word of truth, His Gospel message. And what's the end goal? God wants more sons and daughters on this earth. He said James and the

early church, those guys are the “firstfruits.” They are the first of God’s sons and daughters to have the Holy Spirit live in them. The Holy Spirit is the ultimate good and perfect gift from above that James references in verse 17. And it is God’s will that His family tree keeps on growing and growing and growing and filling the earth. By the way, God does not have any grandchildren, only sons and daughters.

How do you know if God is your father? Well, young children want to be with their parents and to be like their parents. Do you desire to know God more? Good! Do you desire to live like Christ? Good! Now, let’s be honest for a second. Though we have the desire to know God more, we often fail at consistently pursuing God. We often fall short in our obedience and focus. And we know that we ought to live like Christ, but we’re just not able to. This is where the Gospel brings me great comfort. I am a child of God not because of my performance, but because of what Jesus did. And this has always been God’s will. Give thanks to the Father and keep pursuing Him. Amen.