



## James 1:16-18: Do Not Be Deceived, My Dear Brothers Now

James 1:16-18: Do Not Be Deceived, My Dear Brothers Now. *“Do not be deceived, my beloved brethren. Every good thing given and every perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation or shifting shadow. In the exercise of His will He brought us forth by the word of truth, so that we would be a kind of first fruits among His creatures.”*

James was writing to Christians, and verse 16 was a clear warning. “Do not be deceived, my beloved brethren.” Christians CAN be deceived! Well, deceived in what way? Christians can be drawn away from the commitment they made to God the Father through Jesus Christ.

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Many groups believe “Once saved, always saved”; but there are countless passages that warn that Christians CAN fall. Hebrews 10:26-27 states, <sup>26</sup> *For if we go on sinning willfully after receiving the knowledge of the truth, there no longer remains a sacrifice for sins,* <sup>27</sup> *but a terrifying expectation of judgment and the fury of a fire which will consume the adversaries.*”

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[Hebrews 6:4-6](#) contains an even stronger warning, “For in the case of those who have once been enlightened and have tasted of the heavenly gift and have been made partakers of the Holy Spirit, and have tasted the good word of God and the powers of the age to come, and then have fallen away, it is impossible to renew them again to repentance, since they again crucify to themselves the Son of God and put Him to open shame.”

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One way to guard against deceiving one’s self is to consider the nature of God. *Verse 17* describes God. Every good and perfect gift comes from Him. Love, beauty, kindness, gentleness are all qualities of God. He is described as the Father of lights. He does not change. He is no “variation or shifting shadow”.

The Apostle John wrote in [1 John 1:5](#), “This is the message we have heard from Him and announce to you, that God is Light, and in Him there is no darkness at all.” Dark is not the opposite of light. Dark is the ABSENCE of light. Therefore, Hell is described as “outer darkness” because God’s presence is not there and there is no light!

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But God IS Light. There are no shadows, there is no “hidden agenda”, there is no double talk. God has laid out His message in the New Testament. And any person can read and begin to understand what God expects and why.

Sin leads to spiritual death, and a person cannot personally do anything to save himself or herself. But a way WAS instituted by God through the sacrifice of Jesus Christ. The Good News (the Gospel message) proclaims that Jesus Christ, as both the Son of God and Son of Man, became the perfect sacrifice for all that are guilty of sin.

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Therefore, a person that becomes a Christian, according to the instructions in the New Testament, has his/her sins forgiven, and has the hope and opportunity of being fully joined to God for eternity. That person is adopted into God’s family. As a child of God, that new Christian has been afforded the incredible honor of addressing God as “Father”.



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Consider that fact. The Living God, the Creator of everything in this universe now views each Christian as His child and joint heirs with Jesus Christ. David wrote in *Psalms 8:3-4*, "When I consider Your heavens, the work of Your fingers, the moon and the stars, which You have ordained; what is man that You take thought of him, and the son of man that You care for him?"

Why would God love us enough for His Son, Jesus Christ, to die a slow, very painful death as the sacrifice for the sins of all people?

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That has no answer in this life, but James wrote, "<sup>18</sup> In the exercise of His will He brought us forth by the word of truth, so that we would be a kind of first fruits among His creatures." Christians have a special place in God's eyes. Christians have spiritual blessings in this life, and a hope for the future. But with those blessings come responsibilities. Christians are expected to grow in knowledge of God's Word - The Word of truth. Christians are expected to take their love and growing knowledge and change their style of living. There must be a difference within that Christian that reflects his/her love for the Father and His Son Jesus Christ.



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Christians are to be God's representatives, His "first fruits" in this lost world. When a person becomes a Christian, he/she is no longer perishing. Now, that Christian has the role of rescuer! When a person is drowning in a lake, a deep river, or the ocean, that person will perish unless someone throws them a rope, jumps in and helps them to shore, or bring a boat alongside.

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Every Christian knows people that are drowning in sin. With a heart of love and gentleness, that Christian can reach on to others and show them that there is a better way to live. There is a saying that is very true.

"People will care for you say when they can see that you care." The early church changed the world through the Godly lives of everyday men and women that quietly spread the Light of God to one person after another.

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