

Trick or Treat

James 1:17

INTRODUCTION:

- A. **James 1:17**- “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.” (NKJV) “Every good and perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of the heavenly lights, who does not change like shifting shadows.” (NIV)
- B. During the Christmas holidays we hear . . . “Merry Christmas”
Nearing the beginning of a New Year . . . “Happy New Year”
On Halloween . . . “**Trick or Treat**”
- C. Halloween
1. Halloween is a holiday celebrated on the night of October 31.
Halloween dates back to ancient times about 2000 years ago. The Celts of Ireland celebrated the new year on November 1.
 - a. Traditional activities include trick-or-treating, bonfires, costume parties, visiting "haunted houses" and carving jack-o-lanterns. Irish and Scottish immigrants carried versions of the tradition to North America in the nineteenth century.
 - b. Other western countries embraced the holiday in the late twentieth century including Ireland, the United States, Canada, Puerto Rico and the United Kingdom as well as of Australia and New Zealand.
 2. Some are out for the **TRICKS** while others are out for the **TREATS**.
 - a. Some travel about that night looking for meanness to get into.
 - b. Others enjoy the candy and other goodies they receives for free.
 - c. Parents carefully screen the goodies to insure their children’s safety.
 - d. Some congregations hold a “Trunk of Treat” activity in their parking lots.
- D. Therefore, we are all aware of the expression . . . “Trick or Treat.”
1. If they did not receive a treat, they played a trick.
 2. Our lesson text from James 1:17 tells us that the same type of thing is transpiring in the spiritual world . . . The devil tricks! . . . God treats! What can be learned from this?

THE DEVIL’S AMBITION IS TO TRICK PEOPLE **2 Corinthians 2:117** – “For we are not ignorant of his schemes (devices).”

- A. The devil wants to trick people by **BOOSTING THEIR PRIDE** . . . The very sin that led Eve to eat of the forbidden fruit.
1. Among the qualifications of elders is this: **1 Timothy 3:6-7** – “He must not be a recent convert, or he may become conceited and fall under the same judgment as the devil. He must also have a good reputation with outsiders, so that he will not fall into disgrace and into the devil's trap.”

2. **1 John 2:15-17** – “Do not love the world or anything in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For everything in the world — the cravings of sinful man, the lust of his eyes and the boasting of what he has and does — comes not from the Father but from the world.”
 3. Pride puts . . .
 - a. Self in front of God.
 - b. Self in place of God.
 - c. One’s own will and way in place of God’s will and way.
- B. The devil wants to trick people by **DECEIT**.**
1. **2 Corinthians 11:3** – “But I am afraid that just as Eve was deceived by the serpent’s cunning, your minds may somehow be led astray from your sincere and pure devotion to Christ.”
 2. **2 Corinthians 4:3-4** – “And even if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled to those who are perishing.
The god of this age has blinded the minds of unbelievers, so that they cannot see the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God.”
 3. Deception is a major tool of the devil.
 - a. Some of the oldest religions in the world exist because of deception.
 - b. Islam exists because of deception.
 - c. The doctrines of men, also known as the doctrine of devils, deceive.
- C. The devil wants to trick people by **ENTICEMENT**.**
1. **1 Thessalonians 3:5** – “For this reason, when I could stand it no longer, I sent to find out about your faith. I was afraid that in some way the tempter might have tempted you and our efforts might have been useless.”
 2. To entice one is to draw one closer . . . to lead one where you want the one to go.
- D. The devil wants to trick people by **LIES**. A lie is a theft of the truth away from you or your theft of the truth away from another when you lie to them.**
1. Jesus said this to the Pharisees in **John 8:44** – “You belong to your father, the devil, and you want to carry out your father’s desire. He was a murderer from the beginning, not holding to the truth, for there is no truth in him. When he lies, he speaks his native language, for he is a liar and the father of lies.”
 2. **2 Thessalonians 2:9-10** – “The coming of the lawless one will be in accordance with the work of Satan displayed in all kinds of counterfeit miracles, signs and wonders,
and in every sort of evil that deceives those who are perishing. They perish because they refused to love the truth and so be saved.”
- E. The devil wants to trick people by **PROCRASTINATION**.**
1. **Acts 17:32** – “When they heard about the resurrection of the dead, some of them sneered, but others said, “We want to hear you again on this subject.”
 2. **Acts 24:25** – “As Paul discoursed on righteousness, self-control and the judgment to come, Felix was afraid and said, “That’s enough for now! You may leave. When I find it convenient, I will send for you.”
- F. To a great measure the devil has accomplished his purpose.**

1. **1 John 5:19** – “We know that we are children of God, and that the whole world is under the control of the evil one.”
2. **2 Corinthians 4:4** – “The god of this age has blinded the minds of unbelievers, so that they cannot see the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God.”

THE LORD’S DESIRE IS TO TREAT PEOPLE

A. The Lord wants to treat people to **SALVATION**.

1. He wanted to treat the Assyrians in Nineveh with salvation. **Jonah 2:9** – “Salvation comes from the Lord”
2. **Acts 4:12** – “Salvation is found in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given to men by which we must be saved.”
3. **John 14:6** – “Jesus answered, “I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.”
4. Yes, God wants to treat people to salvation.
 - a. When there was no Savior . . . God sent One!
 - b. When there was no Way . . . God made One!
 - c. God has opened the door to those who will open their hearts to Him.

B. The Lord wants to treat people to an **ABUNDANT LIFE**.

1. **John 10:10** – “. . . I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full.”
2. **1 Peter 1:8-9** – “Though you have not seen him, you love him; and even though you do not see him now, you believe in him and are filled with an inexpressible and glorious joy,
for you are receiving the goal of your faith, the salvation of your souls.”

C. The Lord wants to treat people to **ETERNAL LIFE**.

1. **Romans 6:23** – “For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.”
2. **John 3:16-18** – “For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.
For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through him.

Whoever believes in him is not condemned, but whoever does not believe stands condemned already because he has not believed in the name of God's one and only Son.”

D. The Lord wants to treat people to **ETERNAL HOME**.

1. **John 14:1-3** – “Do not let your hearts be troubled. Trust in God;^a trust also in me.
In my Father's house are many rooms; if it were not so, I would have told you. I am going there to prepare a place for you.
And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come back and take you to be with me that you also may be where I am.”
2. The devil cannot give you in eternity what God can give you.

**YOU ARE PRIVILEGED TO CHOOSE . . . YOU CAN BE TRICKED . . . OR,
YOU CAN BE TREATED!**

- A. This is one of the ways humanity is made in the image of God . . . He can make choices . . . He can choose.
- B. Concerning the choice you may make . . .
1. You are given a deadline to make your choice. **Romans 1:28** – “Furthermore, since they did not think it worthwhile to retain the knowledge of God, he gave them over to a depraved mind, to do what ought not to be done.”
 2. You are held accountable for the choice you make. **Matthew 12:36** – “But I tell you that men will have to give account on the day of judgment for every careless word they have spoken.”
 3. No one else can make that choice for you. **Romans 14:12** – “So then, each of us will give an account of himself to God.”
 - a. It will be an individual account.
 - b. You can change that account only by the life you live.

CONCLUSION:

- A. The devil wants to trick you by:
1. Boosting your pride
 2. Deceit
 3. Enticement
 4. Lies
 5. Procrastination
 6. Anything that will allow him to accomplish his will for you.
- B. God wants to treat you by:
1. Giving you salvation.
 2. Giving you a full and abundant life.
 3. Giving you eternal life.
 4. Giving you an eternal home in which to enjoy that eternal life.
- C. You are privileged to choose . . . What will it be?
1. Will it to be **TRICKED? PEOPLE** **2 Corinthians 2:117** – “For we are not ignorant of his schemes (devices).”
 2. Will it to be **TREATED?**
- D. **God’s Plan for Man’s Salvation**