

James 1:5-8 – Do You Want Wisdom?

Moo, Vincent, TSK, Lexicon, Ellsworth, Henry, Family, Geneva, PNT, Robertson, Trapp, Poole, Clarke, Calvin, Henry, Expositor, Barnes, Rienecker, Brothers and Sisters in Jesus Christ: The theme of James is: **True faith in Jesus will be seen in doing good works.** In our first sermon you heard that **the churches of the diaspora would have to endure trials-serious trials, but if they faithfully endured those trials and kept doing good works,** they would **have joy,** they would **get patience,** and their **souls would be satisfied.**

But **to keep doing good works under trials, they needed wisdom.** That is the message today.

Our headings are:

Want wisdom? Ask God for Wisdom

Want wisdom? Ask God for Wisdom in Faith

Want wisdom? Ask God for Wisdom

5 If any of you **lacks wisdom,** let him **ask of God,** who **gives to all liberally** and without reproach, and it **will be given to him.**

1. Apostle James told Christians to pray for wisdom.

This was not a request to pray for wisdom for all occasions, **rather Apostle James asked them to pray for wisdom so they would understand why they under trials, and how they were to feel and act during their trials.** This is the context!

He knew **when Christians are close-up to trials, they aren't able to see the benefits of trials with their natural eyes.** Their trials might seem bigger – like being close up to a mountain. **He knew Christians need wisdom to understand why they suffer** - like going up in an airplane and seeing how small the mountain actually is.

In other words, wisdom would give Christians perspective and teach them. What would it teach them?

This suffering would **only be for a time.** This suffering would **only be for their refinement.** This suffering would **bring heavenly rewards.** This suffering would **bring honor and glory to Christ.**

And because of these benefits, Christians would **not act carelessly or foolishly while they were suffering.**

This wisdom was what Solomon desired, so when he faced the difficulty of judging Israel, he was able to survive.

1 Kings 3:9 "Therefore give to Your servant an understanding heart to judge Your people, that I may discern between good and evil. For who is able to judge this great people of Yours?" **10** The speech pleased the Lord, that Solomon had asked this thing. **11** Then God said to him: "Because you have asked this thing, and have not asked long life for yourself, nor have asked riches for yourself, nor have asked the life of your enemies, but have asked for yourself understanding to discern justice, **12** "behold, I have done according to your words; see, I have given you a wise and understanding heart, so that there has not been anyone like you before you, nor shall any like you arise after you.

2. Apostle James wanted Christians to ask for wisdom because he knew Christians lacked wisdom.

"Lacking" was a banking term. So "wisdom," which was lacking, was a desirable treasure to keep.

3. Apostle James said, "Let him (who needs wisdom) keep asking God."

This is present active imperative verb. God wanted to see that Christians truly desired wisdom.

4. Apostle James reminded the church that the God of all wisdom (his name is Wisdom) gives wisdom to all who ask.

God doesn't ignore anyone who asks for wisdom.

God does not insult those who ask for wisdom, as an arrogant man might do when someone comes and ask for a favor.

God does not quarrel with a man who desires wisdom. He is pleased with that man who asks for wisdom.

Matthew 7:11 "If you then, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, **how much more will your Father who is in heaven give good things to those who ask** Him!

God gives wisdom liberally; he is not as a penny-pincher.

God gives man wisdom, which he critically needs, freely...without payment.

5. And note the phrase "it will be given him."

There is no ambiguity! That is not like Pastor Mitchell's promises. That is God's promise.

6. Lessons:

a. If your father is smart, it doesn't make you smart. You have to listen to him as he teaches you, and you have to learn from him. All Christians need wisdom to deal with the challenges of life. Go to him. Ask for wisdom.

b. Learn, on the other hand, how the world responds when it has troubles: It thinks it knows everything!

Man's wisdom today says **men are women and must be able to compete in women's sports.**

Man's wisdom today requires the **killing of an innocent child to make life convenient for a mother.**
Man's wisdom today tells us **spiritual sickness is not as important of physical sickness.**
Man's wisdom today says **if you are tempted to commit adultery, divorcing your wife and breaking-up a marriage is okay.**
Man's wisdom says **if the government will fine you for worship, stop worshipping.**
But God's wisdom is different.

c. Don't learn wisdom from the world. Don't follow their wisdom when you have difficulty with your children or your spouse. Go to God's Word and Spirit for your wisdom. The world's wisdom is abject foolishness. And isn't it true that you need wisdom to maneuver these trying times... when government is restricting church...when social media is killing Christian dissent...when government schools are promoting the taking away of children from parents...when faithful sermons are deemed as hate speech and taken-off the internet, when pastors are going to be jailed for leading people out of perverted lifestyles?

d. Wouldn't it be a shame if your Father has an unlimited supply of wisdom and you live a frustrated life because you didn't ask him for what you have a right to?

e. Keep asking for wisdom. Don't stop! Beg like a child. (You are begging for something good.)

Want Wisdom? Ask God for Wisdom in Faith

6 But let him **ask in faith**, with **no doubting**, for **he who doubts is like a wave** of the sea driven and tossed by the wind. 7 For let **not that man suppose that he will receive anything from the Lord**; 8 he is a double-minded man, unstable in all his ways.

1. Apostle James then urged his readers to ask in faith for wisdom.

He wanted Christians to have confidence God would not abandon them in their troubles but would answer their prayers for wisdom.

Hebrews 11:6 But without faith it is impossible to please Him, for he who comes to God must believe that He is, and that He is a **rewarder of those who diligently seek Him.**

2. Apostle James then urged his readers not to doubt God would give them the wisdom they needed.

Doubting is the enemy of faith.

3. Apostle James then explained why those who doubt God would answer their prayers were in danger.

a. The doubter is like a wave that is never settled but tossed around by the winds (trials).

His doubts would **drive his confidence farther away from God.** He would **make rash and wrong decisions** or he would **hesitate to do what is right.** He would **not believe God will answer his request.**

Maybe he **thinks God isn't aware of his problem...**or **God doesn't care about his problem.**

You see an example of doubt with Jesus' disciples.

Luke 8:24 And they came to Him and awoke Him, saying, "Master, Master, we are perishing!" Then He arose and rebuked the wind and the raging of the water. And they ceased, and there was a calm.

In Roman Catholic history, people were encouraged to pray with doubt – to pray as if they were unworthy to receive anything from God. But as God's children, Christians are commanded and expected to pray for good things they need.

b. The doubter is double-minded – unstable – two-faced.

The doubter (because he has no wisdom) will speak in a wavering way...and so bring dishonor to God. He may complain against God and people would think his God is not real.

The doubter (because he has no wisdom) will act in an irrational way. One day he will be in worship, and another not. One day he will speak up against persecution, other times not.

So Apostle James wanted them to ask with confidence, knowing in whom they believed!

Romans 4:20 **He did not waver at the promise of God** through unbelief, but was strengthened in faith, giving glory to God,

The doubter is confused in how to understand and act in the world, but God has true wisdom.

4. The one who does not ask in faith for wisdom will not receive it and will not be properly able to face his trials.

He **would be vain** if he thought he would receive God's gift without having faith.

5. Lessons:

a. Here is the 1st big set up for the letter: Christians must **understand the relationship between real faith and how that faith is shown in obedience.** To understand **how faith and obedience work together, you have to have wisdom.** Only **God gives wisdom.** You therefore must **pray for wisdom.**

b. It is the tendency of modern man to assume he knows everything. This is a curse many young people experience today. But, **young people, you need wisdom to be discerning.** Your tendency in wanting to **appear wise and knowledgeable,** or to **gain the praise of others,** will often make you want to embrace what they teach – and make you ignore what God teaches. **You couldn't make a worse mistake.** You need God's wisdom! Pray for it. Pray every day for it.

c. Those who don't believe in God, the true God, should not pray and ask for things. That is contempt. You have no right to God. You have no faith in Jesus.

d. Don't waiver in your faith. Keep an even keel by going regularly to the Word of God and be reminded who your God is and what he did for you in Jesus Christ.

e. Imagine what your wavering faith does for those around you...your wife...your children, your neighbor around you! Would they be encouraged if they see you struggle in their faith and panic? So how does your faith stay strong? The answer is to **feed your faith** so that it is strong. Your faith becomes strong when you hear and believe God's Word. **Then use God's wisdom he gave you through your prayer of faith.**

Conclusion:

In order to endure trials the churches were facing, and to remain faithful, obeying God's law even during those trials, **God required that his people have wisdom.** In order **to get wisdom, they had to go to the source of wisdom,** God himself. And **Christians only have access to God through faith in Jesus Christ.** **God promised to give wisdom liberally** those who come through Jesus with their request.

Brothers and Sisters in Jesus Christ:

1. Trials are going to come. As certainly as today is Sunday, trials will come. You might get sick. You might lose a job. A loved one might die. You might have to break-off a bad relationship. You might not be able to afford to go to school. You might be harassed at your job for being a Christian. **Be prepared to face your trials.**

2. But you don't know everything so you don't always know how to face those trials. No one does! In fact, without the Word of God, wisdom would be non-existent. You would probably believe in evolution and abortions. You would not have any hope in life. You would panic like many of our civil leaders who have only been obsessed with physical life and have ignored spiritual life. **You need wisdom for your daily challenges.**

3. Knowing your need for wisdom but don't have it, petition God daily for it. You have access to him through faith in Christ. When you get God's wisdom, you will know what to say. You will know when to be silent. You will know when to fight and when to stand down. **Your light will shine for Jesus during trials in your life.**

Finally, the **best piece of wisdom the Bible gives is to submit yourself to Jesus and beg for his mercy or you will spend eternity in hell.** May you do that today.