

James 1:5-8

Entreat: Wisdom Granted to the Faithful

Introduction: The Context for Divine Wisdom

1. James 1:2-4 – Christians called to have joy in the midst of painful trials
2. Navigating these trials calls for godly wisdom
3. Wisdom is the means of responding with joy to suffering trials on the basis of faith in the Lord Jesus
4. God's wisdom connects Christian joy to God-ordained trials

Chief Thought: Christians, by faith, prayerfully seek God-given wisdom in the midst of trial and testing. And wisdom is only granted by God to those who are not full of unbelief.

What is Biblical Wisdom?

1. It is not knowledge or intelligence; not a set of facts
2. It is not rules and regulations; more than moral codes
3. It is not cultural customs, for they change with time
4. It is not human philosophy detached from biblical truth
5. IT IS the skill of living according to the divinely appointed moral order
6. IT IS gaining understanding to live a godly life
7. IT IS applying the scriptures to everyday situations
8. For this context, IT IS practicing joy by applying scriptural knowledge to painful trials
9. Godly wisdom begins with reverence for God (**Prv 1:7**)

The Christian's Limitations & God's Good Grace (v 5)

1. Christians are charged to gain wisdom (**Prv 3:13-18**)
 - a. A Christian's Problem: We lack wisdom (**Prv 3:7**)
 - b. Man is limited, finite, weak, without the full picture, without the knowledge of intricate details
2. God is the Source of a Christian's wisdom
 - a. He is infinite and sees all the links in every detail
 - b. He possesses all the wisdom and skills for us to make the right moral choice according to His will
3. God is not Selfish, but is Gracious and Generous
 - a. He is willing to lavishly give (**Matt 7:9-11**)
 - b. EX: Solomon, the prodigal son, the debtor in Matt 18, God gave Jesus who is the very Wisdom of God
 - c. See **1 Corinthians 1:24-31**

4. God gives without reproach
 - a. God has a fatherly tenderness and compassion
 - b. God does not find fault with our requests
 - c. God is not bothered by our requests
 - d. God does not rebuke us or lecture us when we ask
 - e. God is able and prepared to lavish us with wisdom
5. God gives to ALL who ask with faith
 - a. Past foolishness does not forfeit us for wisdom
 - b. Past uncertainty does not keep us from wisdom
 - c. New Christians are not prevented from wisdom
 - d. *Any Christian who confesses their lack of wisdom and senses their own dependence on God for it, God opens His ear and grants divine wisdom from above*

The Faithful Prayer for Wisdom (v 6a)

1. You must ask the Lord by Faith
2. There is a way to pray that is faithless (**Mt 6:5; Js 4:2-3**)
3. Ask the All Wise God! (**1 Cor 3:18-19a; Mt 7:7-8**)
4. Ask by Faith: Believe God with Conviction
 - a. Believe God is able and willing to give
 - b. Believe God is the Chief Figure in all of your life
 - c. Believe God is constant, reliable, and faithful

The Faithless Prayer for Wisdom (vv 6b-8)

1. Doubts God – unable to settle on God's ability, fidelity
 - a. Unsure of God's love
 - b. Withhold honor to God, God withholds His wisdom
 - c. Think God is against them – Is God for me?
 - d. God is not the chief figure in life, they are
 - e. This is not weakness in faith, like the disciples or the father in **Mark 9** (see **vv 23-24**) = this is skepticism
2. Driven about and Tossed around
 - a. All opinions are equal and valid including the Lord
 - b. Storms come – only stay committed if it is favorable
3. Double-minded (literally, *double-souled*)
 - a. Dissatisfied in God – claims aspirations for Him and also for His own desires – divided & presumptuous
4. Unstable
 - a. False doctrine perverts the meaning of faith
 - b. These pray for what pleases their greed and not God
 - c. Tries to manipulate God leading to an unstable life

How can we ask God for wisdom with faith and know He is wise and can be trusted? The Gospel of Jesus Christ