



CAPITOL COMMISSION™

WISDOM TO ENDURE, PART 1, JAMES 1:5-8

COLORADO

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James talks about a faith that endures through trials to maturity. Our goal is to become more like Christ, obedient to God and His Word. This is the purpose to which we have been saved. As we submit to the trials with patient endurance and don't surrender to circumstances, we grow. The end result of enduring is becoming Christ like in how we think and live. Our responsibility through trials is to count it all joy and to persevere, allowing our heavenly Father, the Refiner, to accomplish His purifying work. And a true faith will endure to maturity. Sometimes, though, the adversity seems more than we can bear. What do we do when adversity seems to stop us dead in our tracks? Where do we turn for counsel and advice when life is so difficult?

I. WISDOM TO ENDURE- JAMES 1:5-8

“Consider it all joy, my brethren, when you encounter various trials knowing that the testing of your faith produces endurance. And let endurance have its perfect result, that you may be perfect and complete, lacking in nothing. But if any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask of God, who gives to all generously and without reproach, and it will be given to him. But he must ask in faith without any doubting, for the one who doubts is like the surf of the sea, driven and tossed by the wind. For that man ought not to expect that he will receive anything from the Lord, being a double-minded man, unstable in all his ways.” James 1:2-8

Surrendering to the testing God brings our way will lead us to the perfect work He intends to accomplish in our lives. But that's easier to say and more difficult to truly live. So where do we turn for guidance as we navigate through life and the trials that come our way?

A. IF YOU LACK WISDOM– JAMES 1:5A

“But if any of you lacks wisdom ...” James 1:5a

God asks us to endure through trials and we must remember that He never gives us a command without the provision to obey as well. So James continues his exhortation to believers, for in a trial we need wisdom to know how to persevere through to maturity.

“wisdom” Greek word **“sophia,”** means the knowledge of how to regulate one's relationship with God, understanding needed to live life to the glory of God, functioning in obedience to the will and word of God, fear of God and obedience to God.

This word for wisdom only relates to wisdom with and through God. It does not apply to any sort of *“worldly wisdom”* at all and doesn't even

acknowledge that there is any *“worldly wisdom.”* James is saying that the only true wisdom is from God. Paul writes in Romans 11:33-36, *“Oh the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are His judgments and unfathomable His ways! For who has known the mind of the Lord, or who became His Counselor? Or who has first given to Him that it might be paid back to Him again? For from Him and through Him and to Him are all things. To Him be the glory forever. Amen.”* We cannot begin to grasp the depth of the riches of God's wisdom. God is the One Who allows trials and it is foolish to seek wisdom anywhere else. We lack wisdom and we must seek God's counsel to know how to live in obedience to His will and word.

In Daniel 2:20-23, Daniel acknowledged that all wisdom and power come from God. God is the source of all wisdom and clearly the wisdom of the wisest man is shown to be inadequate. In Job 12:13-16, Job declares that wisdom and might, counsel and understanding are with God and they belong to Him. Proverbs 3:5-7 says, *“Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and do not lean on your own understanding. In all your ways acknowledge Him, and He will make your paths straight. Do not be wise in your own eyes; fear the Lord and turn away from evil.”* The only true wisdom is wisdom from God.

James is picking up the phrase at the end of verse 4 *“lacking in nothing”* and is saying in verse 5 that if there is a lack, then wisdom that can only come from God. It is imperative to possess this wisdom which enables us to endure to maturity through trials. Godly wisdom does not automatically come because we are believers. Proverbs 4:5-7 says *“Acquire wisdom! Acquire understanding! Do not forget nor turn away from the words of my mouth. Do not forsake her, and she will guard you; love her, and she will watch over you. The beginning of wisdom is: Acquire wisdom; and with your acquiring, get understanding.”* We are to pursue wisdom by asking God.

B. LET HIM ASK OF GOD– JAMES 1:5B

“But if any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask of God...” James 1:5b

Although wisdom and knowledge belong to God, He gives that to us and James just says to ask. We may not know what to do, we may be clueless, but we know where to turn...God! All I need to do is ask Him for wisdom and He gives to all men generously.

It's important to notice that James says to ask of God. Often we will turn to everyone but God, forgetting that wisdom does not rest with man. In Job 28:12-22 we see the conclusion Job came to after much counsel from his friends. He basically says in these verses that wisdom cannot be found in anyone or in anything in the world but only in God.

BIBLE STUDIES

LEGISLATORS, GOVERNOR & SPOUSES: TUESDAY AT 7:15AM, CAPITOL BASEMENT, ROOM 0109

STAFF, LOBBYISTS, JOURNALISTS & SERGEANTS: TUESDAYS AT NOON, CAPITOL BASEMENT, ROOM 0109

Colorado

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“ask” Greek word “**aiteo**” meaning to ask, to beg, it is a begging from the inferior to one superior, such as from man to God.

James say “*let him ask of God*”. This is an imperative, a command for us to beg from God Who is superior. The Greek word, “*erotao*” is the word to ask from someone who is equal in footing such as when Jesus Christ asked of the Father in John 14:13. The choice of words James uses here, “*aiteo*,” makes it clear the asker, who is us, is inferior to the One the question is asked of, which is God. So James commands us to ask God and not man for wisdom. This is the difference from personal advice and a command from God.

The trials we face should drive us to our knees so we can beg for His wisdom for how to proceed through the trial. Proverbs 2:2 says, “*Make your ear attentive to wisdom. Incline your heart to understanding.*” We need the wisdom of God and not man. 1 Corinthians 1:18-31 talks about the wisdom of this world is foolishness to God and Colossians 2:3 shows us that in Christ are hidden all the treasures of wisdom. We must go to God and ask for wisdom and direction to handle the trials that come our way.

John 14: 13 states, “*whatever you ask in My name, that will I do, so that the Father may be glorified in the Son.*” God wants to impart His wisdom to us, the problem is not in the giving from God, but from the asking from us. God doesn’t pass out His wisdom to those who have unwilling hearts and minds. He wants us to desire to possess wisdom that only God can give.

C. WHO GIVES TO ALL MEN GENEROUSLY– JAMES 1:5C

“*But if any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask of God, who gives to all generously...*” James 1:5c

James states that when we go to God for wisdom, He will give wisdom generously.

“**generously**” Greek word “**haplos**” carries the idea of singleness of heart, doing something unconditionally without bargaining, liberally, bountifully, nothing held back.

All we have to do is ask God for wisdom and He will unleash His wisdom on us unconditionally with no bargaining. He just freely and bountifully gives us wisdom. God asks us to persevere through trials to maturity and

He never gives us a command without the provision to obey Him as well. And the wisdom He gives will not be contrary to His Word.

D. WHO GIVES TO ALL WITHOUT REPROACH–

JAMES 1:5D

“*But if any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask of God, who gives to all generously and without reproach, and it will be given to him.*” James 1:5

When we are in difficult circumstances and we just don’t know what to do, James gives us sure guidance as to where we must turn. We must turn to God and ask for wisdom. God promises that He will give wisdom to all who ask; liberally, unconditionally and without reproach. What does that mean?

“**reproach**” Greek word “**oneidizo**” means to upbraid, to severely reprimand, cast insults, revile, cast in teeth, to suffer.

As we seek wisdom from the Lord in times of testing and trial, God will not remind us of how undeserving we really are of the wisdom that only He can give. He doesn’t say, “Didn’t you learn this the last time you went through this?” He doesn’t even say, “When will you ever learn?” God gives His wisdom generously as we seek Him, desiring only for our best as He brings about a maturity that only trials can bring as we endure. He knows we are weak and frail. He knows we are in great need. All He requires is that we come to Him and ask, and that we ask in faith.

How many of us won’t ask? Have you ever thought that you can’t ask because you don’t feel worthy? If so, you are missing it. It is God’s gracious gift that He will give us wisdom and we can’t shun that by superficial, spiritual humility. It is foolishness **not** to come to God and request what He offers so liberally! It is foolish not to seek the very thing we need to endure through adversity. James shows us that in a trial, we need to look beyond the present sufferings to the eternal and count it all joy. And as we remain and endure through adversity of all kinds, we must remember that God is maturing and purifying our character to be whole and complete. But in a trial, we need wisdom to know how to endure and that comes only from God. We must fall to our knees and ask, trusting that God will give wisdom to us generously and unconditionally to persevere to maturity. And know that God will respond by giving wisdom liberally as to how to endure!