

Midweek Study

Notes



God's Resources for Rough Times

James 1:5-8

3 Resources for Rough Times:

1. Wisdom (see Proverbs 4:5-13)
2. Prayer
3. Faith

James 1:5 - ***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.***

- In Greek the clause that begins verse 5 (if any . . .) assumes these believers lacked wisdom. Yet God will give it to those who ask. The present tense of ask points to repeated action, that is, "keep on asking." The wisdom needed to meet the trials of life comes by a consistent pattern of prayer.

- "Wisdom" is not knowledge in the head; but is something God puts in the mind whereby a person knows God's will and does God's will. It is knowing what is right and does what is right.

- "without reproach" means He doesn't criticize us for asking.

Warren Wiersbe writes:

Why do we need wisdom when we are going through trials? Why not ask for strength, or grace, or even deliverance?

For this reason: we need wisdom so we will not waste the opportunities God is giving us to mature. Wisdom helps us understand how to use these circumstances for our good and God's glory.

An associate of mine, a gifted secretary, was going through great trials. She had had a stroke, her husband had gone blind, and then he had to be taken to the hospital where (we were sure) he would die. I saw her in church one Sunday and assured her that I was praying for her.

"What are you asking God to do?" she asked, and her question startled me.

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"I'm asking God to help you and strengthen you," I replied.

"I appreciate that," she said, "but pray about one more thing. Pray that I'll have the wisdom not to waste all of this!" She knew the meaning of James 1:5.ⁱ

"God, grant me the serenity to accept the things that cannot be changed.

Grant me the courage to change the things that ought to be changed.

Grant me the wisdom to distinguish the one from the other."

James 1:6-7 - 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

- "wavering" is a nautical term which describes the bobbling up and down of a cork upon the water. Up and down. Back and forth. No stability, no purpose and no faith. When we ask God like that, He says He will not give us the answer. This is where many people are today as they seek God.

James 1:8 - he is a double-minded man, unstable in all his ways.

- The word "double-minded" literally says "two-souled" and appears for the first time in Greek literature in the book of James – James could have invented the word himself. Here would be the hypocrite who is one day for God and another day for the world. They are insincere. God is not going to answer that person's prayer.

- James uses the term again in 4:8 – "Purify your hearts, you double-minded" there is an impurity of the inner person. Where there should be one thought, goal, attitude, or devotion, we find two competing thoughts. A DOUBLE-MINDED PERSON IS ONE WHO WANTS HIS OR HER WILL AND AT THE SAME TIME GOD'S WILL.

Live It Out:

1. God will not waste the hurts, hang-ups and habits in our lives when we fulfill Romans 8:28. He will cause them to be for our good and His ultimate glory (see Genesis 50:20).

2. Continually ask God for wisdom to see things from His perspective:

1) Why this is happening?

2) What purpose does He intend to fulfill through this?

3. Trust that God's way is always the best way. He is ultimately in control of the happenstances of your life.

ⁱWarren Wiersbe, The Bible Exposition Commentary – NT, Vol. 2 (Colorado Springs, CO: Victor, 2001), 340.