

What We All Need

Text : **James 1: 2-8 ; I Kings 3: 5-14**

S#1.

If God offered to give you anything on earth you wanted, excluding Heaven, what would you request ? Solomon asked for wisdom and got everything.

A. With our previous lesson we observed that :

S#2.

1. The book of James was written by the Lord's half-brother.
 - a. James was an elder in the Jerusalem church, and apparently its leader.
 - b. Even so, he identified himself only as a bondservant of God and of the Christ.
2. He addressed his writing to Jewish Christians who had been scatter by persecution.
 - a. Acts 8 would lead us to believe that these were those driven out of Jerusalem.
 - b. The Jews continued to persecute them even in far places. (Cf- **Acts 26:11 .. Saul**)
3. Evidently some of the brethren were starting to become discouraged.
 - a. The persecution was prolonged and severe.
 - b. Long-term pain can wear one down.

S#3.

B. James teaches that how we respond to trials speaks to the reality of our faith.

1. Trials are common to all mankind, but God helps Christians overcome them.

I Cor. 10: 13 – No temptation has overtaken you but such as is common to man; **S#4.**
and God is faithful, who will not allow you to be tempted beyond
what you are able, but with the temptation will provide the way of
escape also, so that you will be able to endure it.

2. We need trials to strengthen and mature us.
3. Trials are an opportunity so we should value them as joy.

- a. **James 1: 2-3** – Consider it all joy, my brethren, when you encounter various **S#5.**
trials, 3 knowing that the testing of your faith produces endurance.
- b. *Place a value of good on a bad thing; b/c the bad produces a good result.*

S#6.

C. Trials often create challenging tests of our faith. (Vs. 3– testing of your faith)

1. You may feel like something unfair is being done to you.
 - a. “Why is God mad at me ? I am trying to please Him.”
 - b. “Look at all the wicked people who have such great lives.”
2. Some doubt “I’m not sure prayer works. I’ve prayed and prayed, nothing happens.”

S#7.

D. Have you ever been at a point in your life when you were just at your wits' end ?

1. You have a problems that just defies solution. It could have been :
 - a. Financial
 - b. Interpersonal
 - c. Even spiritual
2. We've all been confronted with trials that were beyond our ability to handle.
 - a. Many of the problems that vex us most have been brought on by ourselves.
 - b. Theodore Roosevelt once said : "If you could kick the person in the pants responsible for most of your trouble, you wouldn't sit for a month."
3. No matter whose fault it is or even if it's no one's fault, we all "encounter" trials.
 - a. Interesting word .. **Trial** .. (*peirasmos*) adversity, affliction, trouble: sent by God and serving to test or prove one's character, faith, holiness. (*Strong's Enhanced*)
 - b. When *pir-ras-mos* was transliterated became "Pirate" which describes raiders.
4. What does one do when he's at his wit's end ?
 - a. Should he talk it over with his spouse or with a friend ?
 - b. Should he talk it over with the elders or the preacher ?
 - c. Should he just be patient and wait for it to pass ?

Everyone has trials, some of them severely challenging, but God says every Christian needs them. This lesson will observe how God tells us how to deal with trials that are beyond our ability to see how they could possibly be joy.

I. Sometimes we don't have the wisdom to value a trial as pure "joy."

S#8

- A. **James 1: 5** – 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.

S#9

B. Actually, that word "IF" (*ei*) can have different meaning,

1. 1 Marker of condition 2 because, since, marker of reason (dictionary of biblical lang.)
2. Basically it assumes the positive .. *because you lack* .. all people need more wisdom.

C. If "any of you" lacks wisdom. The "you" refers to the recipients.

1. "Any text taken out of context is but a pretext."
2. This verse is in reference to the recipients of the book, not to all mankind.
 - a. Vs. 1 .. To the 12 tribes who are dispersed = Christians (**Gal. 6:16** .. **Israel of God**)
 - b. Thus, "who gives to all" refers to all Christians.

3. The bible is not a collection of random saying.
 - a. We must keep this verse in its proper context.
 - b. God can give wisdom for many things, but trials are under discussion here.

D. If any of you “Lacks” wisdom

1. Lack : (*leipo*) 1 to leave, leave behind, forsake, to be left behind.
1B to be destitute of, to lack. 2 to be wanting, to fail.
2. You are in the middle of something that you just don’t know how to value as joy.
3. You think you don’t have the ability to do what God commands ... **ask for help**.

D. Lacks “wisdom”

1. One can be very smart and educated, but lack wisdom. (*Some call it common sense.*)
2. Age and experience can cultivate wisdom, but it doesn’t come automatically.
 - a. Some don’t learn from their experiences.
 - b. “*He doesn’t have 20 years of experience; he has one year of experience 20 times.*”
 - c. Have you ever been with someone who gets lost repeatedly going to the same place
3. Good information does not always guarantee good decisions.

S#10.

II. What does one do when he needs wisdom ? He asks the source of all wisdom.

A. What is wisdom ? There are many definitions :

S#11.

1. It is the ability to use intelligence, knowledge and even understanding to think and act in such a way that common sense prevails and choices are beneficial and productive.
2. The ability to apply God’s truth to the real situations of life.
3. The ability to use knowledge correctly.

B. In this verse James uses wisdom as the ability to see the joy in a trial.

1. It isn’t normal to view trials as a good thing.
2. God is telling us to do something that is against our human nature.
3. “I crashed my motorcycle and broke my leg. Now I can’t go to work or even draw workman’s comp so I can’t pay my mortgage, car payment, utilities, etc.” **JOY?**

C. James commands us to ask God for the wisdom to understand it.

S#12.

1. “ask” is here stated as a command. **3rd person active imperative**
2. The word (*aito*) mean : 1 to ask, beg, call for, crave, desire, require

D. What does one ask for ? Should one ask to be delivered from the trial ? S#13.

1. He does not tell us to ask that the trial be removed, but for wisdom to deal with it.
2. It's not wrong to ask, God most often refuses when one asked that trials be removed.
 - a. Paul : **II Cor. 12: 7-9** ..., **to keep me from exalting myself, there was given me a thorn in the flesh, ... 8 Concerning this I implored the Lord three times that it might leave me. 9 And He has said to me, "My grace is sufficient for you, for power is perfected in weakness."** S#14.
 - b. Jesus : **Matt. 26: 39** – **He went a little beyond them, and fell on His face and prayed, saying, "My Father, if it is possible, let this cup pass from Me; yet not as I will, but as You will."** S#15.
3. His denial is not His being harsh, trials act as a tutor, even for the very Son of God.
 - a. **Heb. 5: 8** – **Although He was a Son, He learned obedience from the things which He suffered.**
 - b. We also need to learn from the trials we endure with an attitude of joy.

III. God promises wisdom if we will ask in faith.

S#16.

S#17.

A. God will not command us to ask and then not give what He commanded to beg.

1. **James 1: 5** – **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**
2. None are refused; God gives all Christians wisdom to value their trials as joy.
3. Asking, begging for, craving, strongly desiring wisdom is the first step in receiving.

B. God gives to all Christians “generously.” (KJV = liberally)

S#18.

1. **James 1: 5** – **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.**
2. God does not give just enough to get by.
 - a. After feeding 5000, 12 baskets were leftover.
 - b. **Phil. 4: 19** – **And my God will supply all your needs according to His riches in glory in Christ Jesus.** S#19.
 - c. **Eph. 3: 20** – **Now to Him who is able to do far more abundantly beyond all that we ask or think, according to the power that works within us,**
3. He who spoke the universe into existence does not deal in minimums.

C. God gives to all “without reproach.”

S#20.

1. **James 1: 5** – **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**

2. God will never scold anyone for a sincere request.
 - a. Not .. *“You ought to know that.”*
 - b. Or .. *“How many times have you asked that already.”*
3. Some say there is no such thing as a stupid question, but that’s not entirely true.

III. - Ken used to ask many questions in class, but he was just trying to slow the teacher down so he could keep up with his notes.

D. What is foolish is for us not to ask.

1. There’s an ancient Arabian Proverb : **S#21.**

He who knows not and knows not he knows not, he is a fool—shun him;
 He who knows not and knows he knows not, he is simple—teach him;
 He who knows and knows not he knows, he is asleep—wake him;
 He who knows and knows he knows, he is wise—follow him!
2. All people need wisdom and God is the source of all wisdom, it is foolish not to ask.

III - The story is told that Henry Ford passed a man whose Model-T broken down along side the road. Mr. Ford offered to help saying that he knew a thing or two about Fords. The irritated motorist became irate in his refusal.

E. Not only can God give wisdom, He will give it cheerfully.

S#22.

1. He will never hesitate to give us the wisdom we need if we humbly ask in faith.
2. He will not instruct us to be what He is not.

II Cor. 9: 7 – Each one must do just as he has purposed in his heart, not grudgingly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver.
3. Moses represented God as a grudging giver and lost his place in the Promised Land.

Num. 20: 10 – And Moses and Aaron gathered the assembly together before the rock; and he said to them, “Hear now, you rebels! Must we bring water for you out of this rock?”

S#23.

CONCLUSION :

- A. We all face trials and sometimes we lack the wisdom to handle them as joy. **S#24.**
- B. God is the only source of the wisdom we need to face such trials. **S#25.**

Abe Lincoln once said, “I have been driven many times upon my knees by the overwhelming conviction that I had nowhere else to go. My own wisdom and that of all about me seemed insufficient for that day.”

S#26.
- C. God is ready, willing and able to help you if you will humble yourself before Him. **S#27.**
- D. Likewise, Jesus is ready, willing and able to save you if you will surrender to Him. **S#28. ... Communion slide**

Lesson Text :**I Kings 3: 5-14**

5 In Gibeon the Lord appeared to Solomon in a dream at night; and God said, " Ask what you wish me to give you."

6 Then Solomon said, "You have shown great lovingkindness to Your servant David my father, according as he walked before You in truth and righteousness and uprightness of heart toward You; and You have reserved for him this great lovingkindness, that You have given him a son to sit on his throne, as it is this day. **7** Now, O Lord my God, You have made Your servant king in place of my father David, yet I am but a little child; I do not know how to go out or come in. **8** Your servant is in the midst of Your people which You have chosen, a great people who are too many to be numbered or counted. **9** So give Your servant an understanding heart to judge Your people to discern between good and evil. For who is able to judge this great people of Yours?"

10 It was pleasing in the sight of the Lord that Solomon had asked this thing. **11** God said to him, "Because you have asked this thing and have not asked for yourself long life, nor have asked riches for yourself, nor have you asked for the life of your enemies, but have asked for yourself discernment to understand justice, **12** behold, I have done according to your words. Behold, I have given you a wise and discerning heart, so that there has been no one like you before you, nor shall one like you arise after you. **13** I have also given you what you have not asked, both riches and honor, so that there will not be any among the kings like you all your days. **14** If you walk in My ways, keeping My statutes and commandments, as your father David walked, then I will prolong your days."

James 1: 2-8

2 Consider it all joy, my brethren, when you encounter various trials, **3** knowing that the testing of your faith produces endurance. **4** And let endurance have its perfect result, so that you may be perfect and complete, lacking in nothing.

5 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. **6** 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. **7** For that man ought not to expect that he will receive anything from the Lord, **8** being a double-minded man, unstable in all his ways.