

# The Book Of James: Keeping It Real

## James 1:5-8

### **James 1:5**

*(KJV) If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him.*

*(NIV) If any of you lacks wisdom, you should ask God, who gives generously to all without finding fault, and it will be given to you.*

Again addressing the dispersed Christian Jews, James here makes it clear that while persecution and suffering are having their perfect work (James 1:4) in the hearts and lives of the afflicted, wisdom may be needed to act and respond in a godly manner to circumstances beyond their control. Sound familiar? And could we in any way glean our modus operandi—in the midst of trouble—from this Biblical example? I think so!

### **Job 5:6-7**

Although affliction cometh not forth of the dust, neither doth trouble spring out of the ground; Yet man is born unto trouble, as the sparks fly upward.

We can draw an obvious parallel between the Jewish diaspora James is writing to, and the chaos-ridden, pandemic age in which we live—any way you choose to endure it or frame it—trouble is trouble!

God is not aloof to, or distant from, our trouble. He sent Jesus to come and live in the muck and mire with us, knowing that intimate communion with His children would require nothing less than soiling His sandals with sinners like us.

### **Hebrews 4:14-16**

*Seeing then that we have a great high priest, that is passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our profession. For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin. Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need.*

In response to His coming to earth to sojourn with us, we now have every right to fellowship with *Him*, in all His holiness in heaven! And through Jesus, we ask for wisdom in times of trouble—knowing that He is happy to provide loving help and rescue in the midst of our trials and temptations:

### **1Corinthians 10:13**

*There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it.*

\*QUESTION FOR MEDITATION: What kinds of crises during a difficult season of your life might require God's wisdom? Would you be quick to ask God for wisdom? Why or why not?

## **James 1:6**

**(KJV)** *But let him ask in faith, nothing wavering. For he that wavereth is like a wave of the sea driven with the wind and tossed.*

**(NIV)** *But when you ask, you must believe and not doubt, because the one who doubts is like a wave of the sea, blown and tossed by the wind.*

Doubt is the evil fruit of deception, and deception is of the devil (Genesis 3:1-6). God safeguards our hearts against doubt with faith (Hebrews 11:1). Without faith it is impossible to please God (Hebrews 11:6). But note well, beloved, it is not the *quantity* of our faith:

## **Matthew 17:14-20**

*When they came to the crowd, a man approached Jesus and knelt before him. "Lord, have mercy on my son," he said. "He has seizures and is suffering greatly. He often falls into the fire or into the water. I brought him to your disciples, but they could not heal him." "You unbelieving and perverse generation," Jesus replied, "how long shall I stay with you? How long shall I put up with you? Bring the boy here to me." Jesus rebuked the demon, and it came out of the boy, and he was healed at that moment. Then the disciples came to Jesus in private and asked, "Why couldn't we drive it out?" He replied, "Because you have so little faith. Truly I tell you, if you have faith as small as a mustard seed, you can say to this mountain, 'Move from here to there,' and it will move. Nothing will be impossible for you."*

But the *quality* of our faith. Do we really *believe* God will come through?

## **2Corinthians 1:17-20**

*Was I fickle when I intended to do this? Or do I make my plans in a worldly manner so that in the same breath I say both "Yes, yes" and "No, no"? But as surely as God is faithful, our message to you is not "Yes" and "No." For the Son of God, Jesus Christ, who was preached among you by us—by me and Silas and Timothy—was not "Yes" and "No," but in him it has always been "Yes." For no matter how many promises God has made, they are "Yes" in Christ. And so through him the "Amen" is spoken by us to the glory of God.*

So, dear Christian, root yourself in God's unchanging Word—believe it—and watch your faith grow!

## **James 1:7**

**(KJV)** *For let not that man think that he shall receive any thing of the Lord.*

**(NIV)** *That person should not expect to receive anything from the Lord.*

Okay, and now a warning by way of another passage:

## **Matthew 17:14-20**

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*Jesus in private and asked, "Why couldn't we drive it out?" He replied, "Because you have so little faith. Truly I tell you, if you have faith as small as a mustard seed, you can say to this mountain, 'Move from here to there,' and it will move. Nothing will be impossible for you."*

Beloved, when we ask for God's wisdom amidst myriad trials and temptations, we cannot employ an admixture of faith and fable, or truth and tyranny—and expect to receive help from the Lord.

Jesus plus *anything* equals *nothing*.

### **James 1:8**

**(KJV)** *A double minded man is unstable in all his ways.*

**(NIV)** *Such a person is double-minded and unstable in all they do.*

Our psalmist states time and again throughout Psalm 119 that his faith and trust is in God and His Word *alone*. We should find encouragement in this fact, and guard our hearts against the idolatry of double-mindedness—that is, doubting God, or directing our faith to any other thing or person to obtain the wisdom God alone can provide and desires to bestow upon His faithful.

\*STUDY POINT: Find three Biblical passages that illustrate a double-minded person. What character traits typify this person? What consequences do you observe in their lives?

~ Reverend Darren McClelland