

God's Wisdom in Trials & Temptations

James 1:5-8

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God's design for your faith to be proven genuine, for producing endurance, and for your growth and sanctification, involves your wise response to trials and temptations

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Unless we respond to trials and temptations with God-oriented wisdom, we will not experience the blessings and the growth that God intends for us as a result of them.

James 1:1-4

¹James, a bond-servant of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ, To the twelve tribes who are dispersed abroad: Greetings.

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

James 1:5-8

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.

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Proven faith that endures will respond to trials and temptations with God-oriented wisdom.

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How do we respond to trials and temptations with God-oriented wisdom?

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- By recognizing that we lack wisdom in and of ourselves

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How do we respond to trials and temptations with God-oriented wisdom?

- By recognizing that we lack wisdom in and of ourselves
 - It is assumed that believers facing trials and temptations do lack wisdom

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.

We lack the wisdom we need, and therefore need to look outside of ourselves...

We must govern our responses to trials and temptations by the revealed will of God, and not our natural instincts.

How do we respond to trials and temptations with God-oriented wisdom?

- By recognizing that we lack wisdom in and of ourselves
 - It is assumed that believers facing trials and temptations do lack wisdom
 - In lacking wisdom, we lack the disposition to unconditionally trust the Lord
 - In lacking wisdom, we lack the resolve to unconditionally obey the Lord

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.

“Wisdom”

Not the speculative or theoretical wisdom of a philosophical system.

Not a worldly or pragmatic wisdom.

Not having specific answers to every question.

Not a revelation that goes beyond or replaces God’s word.

“Wisdom” (sophias): wisdom, insight, skill

Refers to the concept of skill, which is knowledge applied rightly.

Knowing how to do the right thing, at the right time, in the right way.

Biblical Wisdom

The skill of living in reference to God.

Knowing what God has revealed about how to glorify Him and being resolved to live that way.

The beginning/ foundation of wisdom is the fear of the Lord.

“Lord, I trust you. What you say goes, no matter what I think or feel.”

Biblical Wisdom

Biblical wisdom is the God-given understanding of how to avoid the path of foolish rebellion and stick to the path of trust and obedience, accompanied by the resolve to do so.

In James 1, Wisdom is understanding the purpose and nature of trials, knowing how to respond to them in a way that glorifies the Lord, and being resolved to do so.

To ask God for wisdom is to ask Him how to live in reference to Him and bring Him glory. It's asking how to respond to trials and temptations in a way that pleases Him.

For Reflection:

The promised blessing of our growth and sanctification in trials and temptations depends on our humble recognition that we are not wise ourselves, but desperately need the Lord's wisdom...

How do we respond to trials and temptations with God-oriented wisdom?

- By recognizing that we lack wisdom in and of ourselves
- By continually seeking wisdom from the Lord and not elsewhere

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.

How do we respond to trials and temptations with God-oriented wisdom?

- By recognizing that we lack wisdom in and of ourselves
- By continually seeking wisdom from the Lord and not elsewhere
 - A lifestyle of living in reference to God and asking Him for wisdom

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.

Continue living in reference to God, and let the pattern of your life reflect an ongoing dependence upon the Lord whereby you are always asking Him for wisdom, so that you can be responding to trails and temptations in a way that pleases Him.

How do we respond to trials and temptations with God-oriented wisdom?

- By recognizing that we lack wisdom in and of ourselves
- By continually seeking wisdom from the Lord and not elsewhere
 - A lifestyle of living in reference to God and asking Him for wisdom
 - All other “wisdom” is subject to God and His Word

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.

For Reflection:

The promised blessing of our growth and sanctification in trials and temptations depends on our commitment to continually seek wisdom from the Lord and to subject all other “wisdom” to Him.

How do we respond to trials and temptations with God-oriented wisdom?

- By recognizing that we lack wisdom in and of ourselves
- By continually seeking wisdom from the Lord and not elsewhere
 - A lifestyle of living in reference to God and asking Him for wisdom
 - All other “wisdom” is subject to God and His Word
 - Trusting in His character and His grace

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

God gives "Generously" ...

1. God gives simply
 - No conditions, undue complications, and no strings attached
2. God gives bountifully
 - A generous portion, not lacking anything that's needed

“Without reproach”...

1. God doesn't scold, revile, berate, or upbraid us for our deficiency
 - He is not frustrated by, nor does He get weary of us asking
2. God is not treating us as we deserve
 - He does not withhold wisdom based on our past rebellion

He gives wisdom, not because we deserve it, but because of His merciful character and His grace toward us.

There is nothing in God's character that keeps Him from giving to His children what they need.

How do we respond to trials and temptations with God-oriented wisdom?

- By recognizing that we lack wisdom in and of ourselves
- By continually seeking wisdom from the Lord and not elsewhere
- By humbly submitting to the Lord and His will

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.

Ask “in faith”...

To be asking in confidence, trust, and fidelity...

Asking with the conviction that God will never answer incorrectly.

A commitment to the truth that what God has said in His Word about who He is, who we are, and how we are to live and relate to one another couldn't be wrong, no matter how difficult it may be.

“Without any doubting”...

Standing in the position of judge...

Evaluating what God has said to determine if it's acceptable to you

This doubting is not a genuine question in submission to God... It is subjecting what God has said to what I think or feel, rather than subjecting what I think or feel to what God has said.

How do we respond to trials and temptations with God-oriented wisdom?

- By recognizing that we lack wisdom in and of ourselves
- By continually seeking wisdom from the Lord and not elsewhere
- By humbly submitting to the Lord and His will
 - Trust what God has revealed in His Word

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- By continually seeking wisdom from the Lord and not elsewhere
- By humbly submitting to the Lord and His will
 - Trust what God has revealed in His Word
 - Obey what God has revealed in His Word

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.

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