
Spiritual Formation Part 16

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James 1:5-8

Seeking Wisdom to Deal with Life!

Are you relying on yourself or God? How wholeheartedly really are you seeking after God? Perhaps what you need is some more smarts to see God at work? God implores us to literally beg for wisdom because we are empty in of ourselves. If we do not seek wisdom, but remain in our own thinking, we will be un-tethered like a small boat without an anchor in a storm, tossed and tumbled in the waves of stress and life. We will be literally unstable mentally, relationally, and spiritually without our Lord's direction!

We, as Christians, need wisdom to take us through all of the avenues of life, especially through the hard times of stress and suffering. If we do not seek wisdom, we will never learn from our mistakes and experiences. We will never grow and, in fact, we just may keep repeating the same mistakes over and over. How sad it would be to go through a tough time and not get anything out of it! It would just be a waste, an empty experience void of meaning or benefit to us, or others around us. Without wisdom, we will neither learn His precepts nor have His wisdom and help. We will not be infused with faith; therefore, the ways of our self and the world will toss us about until we drown in anxiety and despair. Our life will have been a vapor that had little meaning or benefit—a life wasted instead of a life triumphant. What is the key? It is learning that our hope is in the Lord, not in our expectations (Psalm 25:4-5; Mark 9:17-27; John 16:33; 2 Cor. 12:7-10; 11:23-27; Heb. 12: 6-10)!

We are to accept God's plan for our life and then ask for wisdom to deal with it, not seeking what we think or want, or what others who are less mature have to say; rather, we are to seek God and His Word to give us the knowledge to grow and to get through. God assures us that when we seek Him, He will respond. When we ask for wisdom, He will give it to us! The key is to ask by faith. This is the confidence in God's power that without doubt, He is there and He will help. For, if we doubt, we will not have confidence, and we will be tossed, by our struggles, to the point that they drown us.

- *Wisdom* is not just knowledge and information; rather, it is practical, spiritual insight from God's values and then application of righteousness and truth. It means to be wise, as in understanding, to ask God for comprehension, what His perspective is, to cooperate with Him, not just asking why, but rather how we can learn and grow. It is also a response of being godly, how we can please God in character and maturity (Prov. 1:2-4; 2:10-15; 4:5-9; 9:10-12; 1 Kings 3; Heb. 5:14).

- *Ask God*, means to beg God passionately, realizing we are helpless and in great need. He is the source of wisdom and the One we are to go to for all aspects of life! He will grant our request as long as it is sincere and in His will (1 Kings 3:5-9; Prov. 2:6; Luke 11:9; James 4:2; 1 John 3:21-24; 5:14-15)!
- *Be given*. Life is about pleasing God, not pleasing one's self! It is about abandoning our desires and focusing on Him! His plan is far better than our desires!
- *Faith* is our object and loyalty. Christ is what we hope for; Christ is what is to be seen! Faith is the promise of God that gives us the hope and confidence, so we can receive, act on, obey, and trust God's promises because God is sovereign and trustworthy. Faith will help us perceive the world by what its potential is, not just by the suffering we experience and see. This helps us be implanted with hope (Matt. 6:33; John 14:9; Rom. 12:2; Phil. 4:8; Hebrews 11:1).
- *Doubt* comes when we are not exercising our faith. We will be consumed with doubt and distrust—the opposite of God's call and plan for us. We will lose our trust and hope that God is in control! When we do this, we will lose or miss out on seeing God come through with His promises!

We may not understand our problems or ever get a reason, as Job did not; however, we can still trust in Him who loves us and is “caring” us through! Do you accept His caring? It is sad how so few Christians, when faced with problems, will really seek and rely on God. They tend to only see their situation, cowering in bitterness and anger, even aiming that anger toward God. They do not see that He is, indeed, in control (2 Cor. 4:7-12). Thus, many Christians withdraw into isolation, bitterness, and denial, and avoid His true love and plan for them. We have to learn to learn; we have to grow, so we can grow. If not, we stagnate and our circumstances will sink us. We have been given victory. That is what the Christian experience is all about, our victory over sin and despair by what Christ has done on our behalf. If we do not declare the victory, we will only see defeat. Even though we already have the victory, we will be defeated!

Doubts should not derail us unless it is the Holy Spirit saying we are going in the wrong direction. To know the difference, be in prayer. Take comfort; the impossible becomes the possible in Christ (Matt. 21:21-22)! Doubt will hinder you greatly in your service and growth in Christ; doubt can actually cancel out your prayer and His work in you! We are not called to be perfect, as He uses our weakness and failures, but doubt is like putting our shoes on backwards; we will be uncomfortable, hurt, and not go very far! Doubt will greatly hinder us! We have to see how much God loves and cares for us, so we do not need to doubt! Have sin and discouragement got you by the heel or throat? Seek out why you are doubting; is there a good reason, or are past experiences and fears hindering you (Luke 11:10)?

Questions

1. Are you impulsive? Why and how so? How does this benefit your personal life? How can it distract you from growing in faith?
2. How would you define Wisdom?
3. What is not right in your life that needs wisdom and attention from God?
4. How can you become more confident that God gives us the plan and the victory?
5. Why do Christians need wisdom to take us through the avenues of life?
6. What happens if we do not seek wisdom?
7. How will never learning from our mistakes and experiences affect us as well as others?
8. How can you better deal with your expectations and experiences so they do not turn into disappointments?
9. How can you learn to take your life and your surroundings as they are, and then strive to become what you can be for His glory, not just for what you want?
10. What would your life be like living with God's wisdom at work? How would you benefit others? How can you make this so?

You will keep in perfect peace him whose mind is steadfast, because he trusts in you. Trust in the LORD forever, for the LORD, the LORD, is the Rock eternal. Isaiah 26:3-4