

Wisdom for A New Year – A Study in the book of James

James 1:1-8

January 12 & 13 2008

Tool # 1- TROUBLE

Dear brothers and sisters, when trouble comes your way, let it be an opportunity for great joy.

James chapter 1 verse 2 (930)

- “whenever” – when it happens – Troubles are a reality
- The Greek word for troubles is the same word for temptation.
- God brings troubles to strengthen our faith.
- Satan brings temptation to tear us down.
- From God’s Perspective ... Troubles = Opportunity
- Joy is possible in the midst of troubles!
“Joy is a deep sense of well being; joy is more decision than a feeling”

For you know that when your faith is tested, your endurance has a chance to grow. So let it grow, for when your endurance is fully developed, you will be perfect and complete, needing nothing. *James chapter 1 verses 3 & 4 (930)*

- Tested Faith- to prove that your faith is real. “proved genuine”
- Endurance- to determine the depth of your faith. Its faith stretched out; it involves trusting God for a long time.
- When you cooperate with God in the midst of your troubles you allow your endurance to grow.
- “you will be perfect and complete, needing nothing.”- MATURE
- God will use people who have had their faith tested.

TESTED FAITH:

- ... is strong faith.
- ... increases dependence upon God.
- ... gives me the ability to empathize with the sufferings of others.
- ... helps me comfort and support others.
- ... provides a Godly perspective on life.
- ... helps me to identify with Christ.
- ... causes me to desire heaven more than anything.

Q. Have you let God use the tool of troubles in your life?

Tool # 2 - WISDOM

If you need wisdom, ask our generous God and he will give it to you. He will not rebuke you for asking. James chapter 1, verse 5 (930)

- ✓ Wisdom is not the same as Intelligence! Intelligence gives me the ability to know the Bible but wisdom gives me the ability to use the Bible to understand and deal with life.
- ✓ God’s wisdom gives a reason to our trials.
- ✓ God’s generous and when he gives, he gives more than enough!

But to those called by God to salvation, both Jews and Gentiles, Christ is the mighty power of God and the wisdom of God. 1 Corinthians chapter 1 verse 24 (870)

But when you ask him, be sure that your faith is in God alone. Do not waver for a person with divided loyalty is as unsettled as a wave of the sea that is blown and tossed by the wind. Such people should not expect to receive anything from the Lord.

James chapter 1, verses 6-8 (930)

- ❖ Faith is a requirement for Wisdom.
- ❖ “divided loyalty” – am I focused on God or focused on me?
- ❖ Doubting is not sin but can lead to sin.

What do I doubt?

- ✓ That God loves me.
- ✓ That God is powerful enough.
- ✓ That God is good.

But when you ask him, be sure that your faith is in God alone. Do not waver for a person with divided loyalty is as unsettled as a wave of the sea that is blown and tossed by the wind. Such people should not expect to receive anything from the Lord.

James chapter 1, verses 6-8 (930)

- God did not save you to live an unsettled life.
- There is an undeniable connection between Wisdom and Peace.

"I am leaving you with a gift-peace of mind and heart. And the peace I give is a gift the world can not give. So don't be troubled or afraid. John 14:27

- Circumstances are the decision makers in an unsettled person's life.
- A “divided loyalty” will produce INSTABILITY in “all” you do.

Troubles feed Faith, Faith feeds Wisdom, and wisdom makes it possible to live the life God intended for me.

Some questions for further thought and study:

1. What do you expect from God?
2. Are you constantly trying to escape your troubles and how's that working?
3. Read 2 Corinthians 9:12- What does God promise when I am weak?
4. What does god promise when temptation hits? 1 Corinthians 10:13
5. How has God tested your faith this past year? List the events and struggles.
6. Do you ask for God's wisdom?
7. Spend a month reading through Proverbs to learn the value of Godly Wisdom.
8. If you were to ask those close to you would they say your life is characterized by instability or stability?
9. Read Ephesians 3:16-19 to discover God's plan and process for you spiritual stability.

Next week: Pride & Prejudice -James 1:9- 2:13