

TODAY'S VERSES:

James 1:5-8
Ephesians 2:8
Matthew 6:26
Matthew 6:30
James 1:4

THIS WEEK, I CAN APPLY THIS LESSON
TO MY LIFE IN THESE WAYS:

MY NOTES:

JAMES

A FAITH THAT WORKS

PART TWO: JAMES 1:5-8
FAITH, DOUBT AND WISDOM

JAMES

A FAITH THAT WORKS

PART TWO: JAMES 1:5-8 FAITH, DOUBT AND WISDOM

The reading of James 1:5-8 can be scary if we do not understand the context of James' words. Many people have read these verses and thought that they were never allowed to have any doubts or worries because God would not listen to them when they did. But what we see is that faith is the word for trust and faith consists of more than intellectual beliefs. Faith is meant to inform the way we live our lives and the way we respond to circumstances (even difficult and challenging situations).

The first 12 verses in the book of James deal with the trials that followers of Jesus were undergoing; it is about their troubles and suffering. When James writes, *"If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask God,"* he is not talking about wisdom, prayer, faith and doubt in general, he is speaking specifically about when suffering and trouble comes. When the troubles come, what we need most of all, is wisdom. How do we get that wisdom? "ASK GOD." There is a condition we must meet in order to receive wisdom in our trials: faith (trust) in God.

James writes about how when we don't trust God in trials it's like being tossed and driven about in the ocean; we are at the whim of the wind and the waves. He tells us that the doubter of God's goodness in the trials are simply out of control. When James says in 1:6 *"But let him ask in faith, with no doubting,"* this is not telling us we cannot wonder what God is doing, or how something may ultimately work out, or have a blind faith. We can doubt situations, but in those situations we do not doubt the goodness of God.

We must believe in the immense, omnipotent, Holy God of Scripture, and that He loves us. By trusting in Him when in these situations, God will grant us wisdom as we walk through trials.

Read James 1:5-8.

What things, people and or promises do have the hardest time believing?

What's your experience with acknowledging doubt within church culture? Was it avoided? Reprimanded? Encouraged?

If you're in a Gospel Community, what do your group's actions/practices say about what you believe?

Have the actions of other people "of faith" ever led you to question your own?

Why do you think some people who claim to have the same faith can have such different lifestyles?

How can wisdom help us interpret our life events in spite of doubts?

What is needed in order for us to receive wisdom in our trials?

Is it possible for us to have doubts/questions about God while still trusting in who He is? How so?

In what areas of life do you not believe that God is good for His promises?

In what ways are you of "two minds?"

How is an understanding of ourselves as fools in relation to God helpful?

What does it mean that God loves us despite us being fools (or foolish)?