

Wisdom: Is It Really Attainable?

A Single Bible Study Outline

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In his letter, James implored Jewish Christians to not only hear and know the truth, but also to put it into action. This little book of the Bible is jam-packed with practical advice for a Christian's walk in Christ. The passage this outline is studying is James 1:5-8. I encourage you to read it in your own physical Bible but it is also printed here:

James 1:5-8 says:

If any of you lacks wisdom, he should ask God, who gives generously to all without finding fault, and it will be given to him. But when he asks, he must believe and not doubt, because he who doubts is like a wave of the sea, blown and tossed by the wind. That man should not think he will receive anything from the Lord; he is a double-minded man, unstable in all he does.

Dr. Henry H. Halley defines wisdom as **“Sound Judgement about the Practical things of Daily Life, in all its phases, so as to live, in all things, as a Christian should.”** Wisdom can also be described as a **mental excellence of the highest sense**. And in his letter, James tells us we can ask and receive that! Let's talk about that...

Bible Footnote*:

By wisdom, James is talking not only about knowledge, but about the ability to make wise decisions in difficult circumstances. Whenever we need wisdom, we can pray to God, and he will generously supply what we need. Christians don't have to grope around in the dark, hoping to stumble upon answers. We can ask for God's wisdom to guide our choices.

Questions to Ask & Discuss

- According to James, how can a person attain wisdom?
- What is the difference between human (world) wisdom and God's wisdom?
- Have you ever felt like you couldn't ask God for something? Describe the situation.
- For a broader understanding of the context in which the above passage was written, now read James 1:2-18.
- Why do you think wisdom is important during times of trial?
- Is it easier for you to trust in your own abilities or God's? Why?
- How should we, as Christians, treat God's wisdom?
- What does James say will happen when someone doesn't trust in God's wisdom? Have you ever felt yourself in this situation? Describe.
- Can you recall specific people in the Bible who were called wise? Why?
- Think of someone in your life who seems to have great spiritual wisdom. What are his or her characteristics? How is the wisdom evident?

*NIV Life Application Study Bible, Tyndale House Publishers, Inc.