

February 4, 2024 AM – Pastor Kevin Olivier  
**James 1:1-8** — “Seek Endurance and Wisdom”

- A. Tonight’s message gives us a priority of things we should ask God for.
- B. In **v1** James gave his identity along with his intended audience: → **v1**

You are to seek endurance and wisdom from God.	I. <u>SEEK ENDURANCE THROUGH TESTING</u> II. <u>PRAY IN FAITH FOR WISDOM</u>
--	---

I. SEEK ENDURANCE THROUGH TESTING → **vv2-3**

- A. This passage is not saying that you ought to seek to encounter trials so you can grow in endurance.
  - 1. It is a given fact that trials come in this life.
    - a. Because of the fall of our first parents we have illness, injury, pain, disability, weakness, suffering, and death. None of us can escape that.
    - b. Some of us may enjoy our work; however, God told Adam of the curse in **Gen 3:17-19**:  
**“Cursed is the ground because of you; in toil you will eat of it all the days of your life. Both thorns and thistles it shall grow for you; and you will eat the plants of the field; by the sweat of your face you will eat bread.”**
  - 2. Since trials are inevitable, James tells you to **“consider it all joy, my brethren, when you encounter various trials” (v2)**.
- B. The reason you can consider trials as a source of joy is because Scripture teaches **“that the testing of your faith produces endurance” (v3)**. God’s use of testing for the believer is found throughout the OT.
  - a. David concluded **Ps 139** by saying, **“Search me, O God, and know my heart; try me and know my anxious thoughts; and see if there be any hurtful way in me, and lead me in the everlasting way” (vv23-24)**.
  - b. The man after God’s own heart also said in **Ps 26:2** **“Examine me, O Lord, and try me; test my mind and my heart.”**
    - 1. David was tested multiple times during his life. Sometimes he fell into sin, yet God brought him to faith and repentance.
    - 2. Job never asked to be tested by God, yet he was tested anyway.
    - 3. The question is not if you will be tested. The question is when!
  - c. The person of faith who undergoes testing while guided by God’s Word and Spirit will grow in endurance. → **v4**
    - 1. Other translations also rightly have **“steadfastness”** or **“patience”** here in **v3** and **v4**.
    - 2. Metal that is heated, hammered, and folded over and over again becomes much stronger.
    - 3. Paul wrote this same sort of thing as James yet tied it with the gospel. → **Rom 5:1-5**
    - 4. A practical way one demonstrates patience, steadfastness, or endurance is by suffering hardships and continuing to trust and worship God through it all.
    - 5. James and Paul both said that God’s people who cling to Him and His Word will be like tough, hearty trees firmly planted by rivers of water **“which yields its fruit in its season and its leaf does not wither; and in whatever he does, he prospers” (Ps 1:3)**.

## II. PRAY IN FAITH FOR WISDOM → v5

A. God is the ultimate source of wisdom. You should ask Him to give you the storehouse of His wisdom.

1. James implied the answer when he opened v5 with a contingency: **“But if any of you lacks wisdom.”**
  - a. Who among us could say we have all the wisdom we need?
  - b. It is a proud, arrogant person who would say, “I don’t lack wisdom. I don’t need to ask God for wisdom.”
  - c. **Prov 26:12 says, “Do you see a man wise in his own eyes? There is more hope for a fool than for him.”**
  - d. → **Prov 2:1-10**
2. Knowing that you should ask God for wisdom because you lack it, you are to ask God for wisdom because He **“gives to all generously and without reproach.”**
  - a. The Greek word for **“reproach”** can also be translated as **“insult”** or **“reprimand.”**
  - b. Have you ever asked a friend, family member, or fellow church member a question and got treated with **“insult”** or **“reprimand”**?

B. When you pray to God to ask Him, you must do so with sincere faith. → **vv6-8**

1. Part of the answer to gaining wisdom from God is that it may be a long process.
  - a. Knowledge that is applied through experience is often what God uses. That takes years for most of us.
  - b. Steadfastness or endurance is what you need to gain this wisdom.
2. To ask without doubting, you must ask God with a hopeful anticipation.
  - a. **Heb 11:1-2 “Now faith is the assurance of *things* hoped for, the conviction of things not seen. For by it the men of old gained approval... In v6 he said, “without faith it is impossible to please *Him*, for he who comes to God must believe that He is and *that* He is a rewarder of those who seek Him.”**
    - b. If you feel incapable and lacking in wisdom and other attributes necessary to your calling in this life, ask God with that assurance of His answer and provision.
    - c. When you pray to God, come to Him believing that **“He is a rewarder of those who seek Him.”** Pray that He will reward you with endurance, wisdom, and the fruit of His Holy Spirit: **“love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, [and] self-control” (Gal 5:22-23).**
  - b. James warns us against being **“a double-minded man, unstable in all his ways” (v8).**
    - a. An example of this is one who seeks God in church or perhaps for a private time of devotion, yet lives a whole other, unbelieving way during most of his or her life.
    - b. You cannot truly find out who that sort of person is because they may be seeking to be all things to all people.

Review, further application, and conclusion: