

THE WISE LIFE

Part 1 of THE LIFE JESUS OFFERS. James 1:1-8.
Peter Foxwell. Cornerstone Church. March 26, 2023.

THE WISE LIFE

Wisdom has never been more needed than today.

- Life is so complicated. Every decision matters.
- The wise life helps us bring glory to God.
- Without wisdom, we'd go in unhelpful or unhealthy directions.

DEFINITION OF THE WISE LIFE

Here's what I mean by a wise life:

- God's directions for a successful life.
- Inspired insight into the practical issues of life.
- Realistic instructions for the nitty gritty of life.

The instructions for the wise life are in the Bible.

- For example: how to improve relationships, defuse conflict, handle finances, and make decisions, etc.

JAMES 1:1-8

Writer and recipients: James, a servant of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ. To the twelve tribes in the Dispersion. Greetings.

An Example of Wisdom: 2 Count it all joy, my brothers, when you meet trials of various kinds, 3 for you know that the testing of your faith produces steadfastness. 4 And let steadfastness have its full effect, that you may be perfect and complete, lacking in nothing.

How to Find Wisdom: 5 If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask God, who gives generously to all without reproach, and it will be given him. 6 But let him ask in faith,

with no doubting, for the one who doubts is like a wave of the sea that is driven and tossed by the wind. 7 For that person must not suppose that he will receive anything from the Lord; 8 he is a double-minded man, unstable in all his ways.

AN EXAMPLE OF WISDOM - verses 2-4

James shared three wise insights into coping with hard times:

- It's wise to expect hard times - verses 2
- It's wise to have a positive attitude in hard times - verse 2
- It's wise to expect God to use hard times for our good - verses 3-4.

HOW TO FIND WISDOM - verses 5-8

Condition one: We must ask God to give us wisdom - v. 5.

- He gives wisdom happily and abundantly.
- He does not withhold wisdom and he doesn't criticize us for asking.
- So, we should pray for wisdom every day, in every situation.

Condition two: We must commit to follow God's wisdom - vv. 6-8.

- God will not give wisdom if we are undecided between God's ways and the world's ways.
- We must ask for wisdom, no strings attached, totally surrendered to God.

When we meet those conditions, God will answer our prayer for wisdom:

- Out of the blue, a biblical word of wisdom comes to mind, something we heard/read years ago maybe, perfect for the situation.
- Prompting from the HS, a still, small, internal voice, a nudge in the right direction, check in our spirit, sense of peace.
- A wise friend gives us advice.
- Charles Stanley's 30 Life Principles are priceless, practical, gems of wisdom. www.intouch.org/topics/30-life-principles. Its on the Bible App - Life Principles to Live By - 30 days of readings.
- The Bible is full of wisdom. Jesus's teachings. Paul's letters. I google, "What does the Bible say about ..."
- The book of Proverbs. Thirty-one chapters, one for each day:
 - Proverbs 15:1 (NLT) A gentle answer deflects anger, but harsh words make tempers flare.
 - Proverbs 15:22 (NLT) Plans go wrong for lack of advice; many advisers bring success.
- Asking for wisdom from God will change your life in many positive ways.

A SURPRISING DISCOVERY

Jesus is the ultimate wisdom from God.

1 Corinthians 1:20, 24-25 (NLT) So where does this leave the philosophers, the scholars, and the world's brilliant debaters? God has made the wisdom of this world look foolish. ... 24 But to those called by God to salvation, both Jews and Gentiles, Christ is the power of God and the wisdom of God. 25 This foolish plan of God is wiser than the wisest of human plans ... Job one: foundations.

- There is only one way to be truly wise: Embrace Jesus as Savior, and follow his teachings. This is the wisest decision anyone can make.

CORNERSTONE GROUPS - TALK IT OVER

Pick one or more of these questions to discuss this week.

Review Sunday's teaching on James 1:1-8.

- Review Sunday's study guide or watch Peter's teaching on YouTube.
- What part of the teaching most impacted your thinking?
- Summarize the main ideas in your own words.

Prayerfully apply the teachings of James 1:1-8.

- Describe an example of worldly wisdom that contrasts with biblical wisdom on a specific issue; for example, finances, conflict, etc.
- What are some examples of biblical wisdom that you practice in your life? What has been the impact of these practices?
- What are some of your favorite places to find wisdom when you need it?
- Who is your wise counselor when you need to make an important decision? In your opinion, can a non-believer offer good wisdom?

Pray together. Be bold.

Our loving and wise Father-God, we thank you for the wise insights you give us in the Bible and other sources. Thank you for insightful friends, and the gentle, internal nudges you give when we're making decisions. Help us to always follow your counsel. We need your guidance and direction in so many ways. Help us to always surrender to your will, and to walk in your ways, confident in your good plans for us. Amen!

Preparation for Next Sunday.

- <https://www.gotquestions.org/new-creation.html>
- <https://www.gotquestions.org/born-again.html>