

Introduction: By means of review “let him ask of God” is an imperative verb. It's not giving personal advise but a command. The word “knowing” comes from the idea of understanding something beyond mere knowledge. We know we are a child of God, not because we learn this in church, but because God has raised us from the dead and given us life. We are not the same. 32 times in 1 John the word know appears. 1 John 2:3-5 “By this we know that we have come to know Him, if we keep His commandments. The one who says, “I have come to know Him,” and does not keep His commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him; but whoever keeps His word, in him the love of God has truly been perfected. By this we know that we are in Him.” 1 John 2:29 “If you know that He is righteous, you know that everyone also who practices righteousness is born of Him.” 1 John 4:8 “The one who does not love does not know God, for God is love.”

Knowing that the testing of our faith is producing patience and endurance, we can be assured of knowing this. Not by classroom instructions but personal knowledge and trust. If we lack spiritual understanding we are told to ask of God for this.

ASKING - Vs. 5

Where else can we get spiritual wisdom? Where can we get true wisdom? You may learn some things as you age in this world, but nothing can give you wisdom during a trial like asking God for it. Ask Him to help you understand. Ask Him to guide you through this. We aren't promised any bypass but He will see you through it.

God gives wisdom graciously. This word carries the idea of without boundaries. There's no limit to the wisdom God gives. He doesn't have any barriers. Cf. Matthew 7:7-11

The Lord gives without reproach. The word means without reviling. And it will be given to him. If we ask for wisdom it will be given. Do not take this out of context to fill your own fleshly desires. If you want something that feeds your human desire of pride, that's asking for the wrong motives. But if you ask for wisdom during a trial, ask for help from the Father, He will give it.

DON'T DOUBT - Vs. 6-8

As we look at this text, it has the meaning of a request that is backed by genuine trust in the Lord. Some believers simply doubt God will give them what they need, they feel unworthy, which may be true, but irrelevant. Other believers are inclined to dispute with God as to why they are enduring a trial.

We should ask in faith knowing the Father will give us spiritual wisdom. Hebrews 11:6 “And 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.” Matthew 21:21-22 “And Jesus answered and said to them, Truly I say to you, if you have faith and do not doubt, you will not only do what was done to

the fig tree, but even if you say to this mountain, Be taken up and cast into the sea, it will happen. And all things you ask in prayer, believing, you will receive.” Again, we have to keep this in context. Asking for wisdom and help through a trial is key. Asking for things that satisfy your flesh and pride aren’t in context. Furthermore, here is the great promise of God we have if we seek and trust Him, Philippians 4:19 “And my God will supply all your needs according to His riches in glory in Christ Jesus.”

The one who doubts is like the surf of the sea just tossed around. This describes the man who isn’t trusting and faithful to God. He is blown around by every trial, not steady in his belief of God. In essence he does not trust God. His request isn’t a request at all, he foolishly and disdainfully does not believe God will honor it.

Trusting God and believing in Him does much for us. According to Ephesians 4:14 we see that one who fully relies on God is not carried to and fro with every wind that blows “As a result, we are no longer to be children, tossed here and there by waves and carried about by every wind of doctrine, by the trickery of men, by craftiness in deceitful scheming.” When God is not trusted the only course for us to take is from bad to worse.

The results of lacking a trust in God or asking in a selfish way is he won’t receive anything from the Lord. There is no way to put this into easy terms. He is like ancient Israel whom the prophet Elijah rebuked “How long will you hesitate between two opinions? If the Lord is God, follow Him; but if Baal, follow him.” Or you may be in danger of who is described in Revelation 3:16 “So because you are lukewarm, and neither hot nor cold, I will spit you out of My mouth.”

The description of such a man is that he is double-minded. Regardless of how we try to look at it the double-minded man tries to serve two gods. He trusts God when things are well. But when trials come, he cries out in bitterness as to why this is happening or he seeks worldly answers. If anything, a trial should drive us to God to trust Him more. Jesus describes the double-minded man in the sermon on the mount “No one can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and wealth.” If you have ever read the allegory, *Pilgrims Progress* there is a character called Mister Facing Both Ways. In fact, we have this timely truth we must adhere to in Deuteronomy 6:5 “You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might.”

HUMBLENESS - Vs. 9-11

James first addresses the brother of humble circumstances. This is the saint who was economically poor and who represented most of the scattered and persecuted Jewish believers. They likely were once well off in wealth, but had lost their homes and their possessions due to persecution. At this time, their most common lot was poverty. Despite the circumstances believers were to glory in his high position. Sounds prideful right? Scholars have said this is a legit form of pride, but not in what

man has or achieved, but in being a child of God. Here is Paul's description of being a Christian to the Corinthians (1 Cor. 4:13) "And we labor, working with our own hands. Being reviled, we bless; being persecuted, we endure; being defamed, we entreat. We have been made as the filth of the world, the offscouring of all things until now." There's nothing to be boastful about in this world as being a Christian, but we boast in Christ because we are a child of God. We can have nothing and yet possess all things. Dr. John MacArthur says, "The believer who is deprived in this life can accept that temporary and insignificant deprivation because he has a future divine inheritance that is both eternal and secure."

The rich man should glory in his humiliation. The fact that when a person is well off, healthy and otherwise physically blessed, he should rejoice when trials come. They teach the man the transitional nature of those things and the inability to give inner peace or lasting satisfaction. So don't glory in what you have, glory in the fact you're a child of God, whether rich or poor.

Men, including believers, have a natural tendency to trust in material things, James gives special attention to the dangers of wealth. Trials have a purpose. In trials we see the uselessness of material things. Trials drive us to deeply trust God more and more. Both the rich and the poor man are the same in the midst of trials. Both should deeply trust God for who He is and what He does rather than what position or wealth one has.

The rich man who pursues wealth will fade. They (things) won't help him in times of trials.