**Just Ask God for Wisdom**

**by Pastor Fee Soliven**

**James 1:2-8**

**Sunday Morning**

**September 18, 2022**

**James 1:2-8**

2 My brethren, count it all joy when you fall into various trials, 3 knowing that the testing of your faith produces patience. 4 But let patience have its perfect work, that you may be perfect and complete, lacking nothing. 5 If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask of God, who gives to all liberally and without reproach, and it will be given to him.

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

**There is a difference between knowledge and wisdom**

Saints, our current period in history is described as the information age, and we have access to more knowledge than we know what to do with.

But something is still missing—great wisdom. For example, there are many people who boast about their level of education and degrees, but they make disasters of their lives because they lack true spiritual discernment and understanding.

Saints, although few Scriptures advise us to acquire more information, many admonish us to seek wisdom.

Because God is the only source of truth, all wisdom comes from Him. He sees beyond the immediate circumstances and knows the future.

That’s why, if we follow biblical principles, He will give us understanding and guidance for every decision and situation we encounter in life.

**What is wisdom?**

The Bible makes a distinction between two very different kinds:

**Worldly Wisdom**

Saints, it is the combination of knowledge and information. It’s based on human understanding and reasoning, but it is foolishness to the Lord.

**1 Corinthians 3:19**

“For the wisdom of this world is foolishness with God. For it is written, "He catches the wise in their own craftiness";

**Godly Wisdom**

Saints, it is the capacity to see things from the Father’s viewpoint and respond according to scriptural principles. With it, a person can survive any circumstance.

**How do we acquire Godly Wisdom?**

It takes time and effort to become truly wise, and it comes as a result of learning from the decisions we make.

Throughout life, we’ll face challenging questions and situations that demand a greater wealth of knowledge and understanding than human beings can possibly possess. We can acquire the godly wisdom we need by several:

**Key Biblical Principles**

**Seeking It**

No one is born with wisdom, so we have two options—seek it or face the consequences of living without it.

However, we must ask ourselves if we truly want wisdom or if we are searching for something else.

The world offers other things that cater to our desires—security, wealth, friends, health, popularity, prestige, or beauty. But Proverbs 8:11 says:

**Proverbs 8:11**

“For wisdom is better than rubies, And all the things one may desire cannot be compared with her”

Saints, Wisdom is a gift God gives to those who search for it like hidden treasure.

**Proverbs 2:4-7**

4 If you seek her as silver, And search for her as for hidden treasures; 5 Then you will understand the fear of the LORD, And find the knowledge of God. 6 For the LORD gives wisdom; From His mouth come knowledge and understanding; 7 He stores up sound wisdom for the upright; He is a shield to those who walk uprightly…

Saints, when we pay attention to the behaviors of others, we can see that consequences—both good and bad— always follow.

In our culture, which emphasizes personal achievement and pleasure, few people think about the future effects of their actions.

But the Bible helps us understand life from God’s perspective and helps us make the wise choices that produce positive results.

**B**asic

**I**nstructions

**B**efore

**L**eaving

**E**arth

**Heeding Godly Counsel**

Saints, everyone needs guidance at times, but not all advice is godly. Some people— even trained counselors—can actually lead us astray instead of helping us find God’s way.

**Psalm 1**

1 Blessed is the man Who walks not in the counsel of the ungodly, Nor stands in the path of sinners, Nor sits in the seat of the scornful; 2 But his delight is in the law of the LORD, And in His law he meditates day and night.

3 He shall be like a tree Planted by the rivers of water, That brings forth its fruit in its season, Whose leaf also shall not wither; And whatever he does shall prosper. 4 The ungodly are not so, But are like the chaff which the wind drives away.

5 Therefore the ungodly shall not stand in the judgment, Nor sinners in the congregation of the righteous. 6 For the LORD knows the way of the righteous, But the way of the ungodly shall perish.

Saints, whenever we seek out someone for direction, we should examine that person’s lifestyle and determine the source of his or her advice.

Is the counsel based on God’s Word or on academic knowledge and personal opinions?

Once we’ve determined that the guidance is from Him, we must be willing to heed it and accept reproof if necessary.

**Proverbs 15:31-33**

31 The ear that hears the rebukes of life Will abide among the wise. 32 He who disdains instruction despises his own soul, But he who heeds rebuke gets understanding. 33 The fear of the LORD is the instruction of wisdom, And before honor is humility.

**Associating with the Wise**

We should never underestimate the influence of friends. They can either help us grow in wisdom or cause us to suffer harm.

**Proverbs 13:20**

“He who walks with wise men will be wise, But the companion of fools will be destroyed”

Saints, that’s why we need to examine our friends closely to determine whether they’re building us up spiritually or leading us astray.

We should also evaluate what kind of friends we are to others. Are we willing to tell them the truth based on what Scripture says, or is our goal only to tell them what they want to hear?

Giving people bad advice just to make them feel better or to gain approval for ourselves is a disservice.

Wisdom is a choice, one that begins with the decision to trust Christ as Savior and increases as we follow the teachings of God’s Word.

**Proverbs 3:5-6**

5 Trust in the LORD with all your heart, And lean not on your own understanding; 6 In all your ways acknowledge Him, And He shall direct your paths.

Saints, if we want to be wise, we must have a passion for the Lord’s guidance because there are many ideas, people, and situations that will tempt us to ignore scriptural principles.

The world tells us to live for today’s pleasures and pursuits, but knowing our time on earth is limited should actually prompt us to correct sinful behaviors and attitudes and begin living wisely.

Our heavenly Father will always strengthen, defend, and help those who trust in Him, and blessings are promised to those who heed His perfect counsel.

Wisdom won’t come with half-hearted attempts at reading the Scriptures; it requires diligent pursuit.

**Philippians 4:8**

“Finally, brethren, whatever things are true, whatever things are noble, whatever things are just, whatever things are pure, whatever things are lovely, whatever things are of good report, if there is any virtue and if there is anything praiseworthy--meditate on these things”

**Meditating on God’s Word**

**Joshua 1:8**

“This Book of the Law shall not depart from your mouth, but you shall meditate in it day and night, that you may observe to do according to all that is written in it. For then you will make your way prosperous, and then you will have good success”

Saints, the Bible is God’s mind recorded for us on paper. It reveals His ways, plans, and purposes, and when we read and understand it, His thoughts become a part of us and affect how we live.

That’s why we should begin every day with the Lord and ask Him to give us direction from His Word. Since the Lord is the only one who knows what is ahead, we need His perspective concerning our plans, actions, and choices.

**Psalm 139:4**

“Even before a word is on my tongue, behold, O Lord, you know it altogether”

Saints, if we neglect His Word, we can’t understand His ways and will make poor choices. Instead of experiencing God’s best blessings, we’ll encounter discipline because every unwise action comes with a high price.

**Obeying Scriptural Principles**

Saints, merely having knowledge of the Bible cannot make us wise. God’s wisdom is reserved for those who heed His instructions and choose to apply His truths to their lives.

**Proverbs 8:33-34**

33 Hear instruction and be wise, And do not disdain it. 34 Blessed is the man who listens to me, Watching daily at my gates, Waiting at the posts of my doors.

Saints, any time we need divine direction, it’s available to us in His Word. When we believe in and abide by His principles, we’ll reap the blessings of wisdom that come with obedience.

**Praying For It**

The book of Proverbs doesn’t specifically emphasize praying for wisdom, but James tells us to ask God for it if it’s something we lack.

**James 1:5-6**

5 If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask of God, who gives to all liberally and without reproach, and it will be given to him. 6 But let him ask in faith, with no doubting, for he who doubts is like a wave of the sea driven and tossed by the wind.

However, just requesting wisdom is not enough. We must ask in faith, obey what the Lord says, and watch the results of our actions.

**Hebrews 11:6**

“But 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 diligently seek Him”

Saints, obedience always benefits us, but negative consequences occur when we ignore God and go our own way.

To avoid making foolish and costly decisions, we need to begin each day in prayer, asking the Lord how He wants us to operate.

**Observing how God Works in the World**

Saints, the Word of God teaches us that wisdom also comes from observing various lifestyles and the results they produce. For example:

**Proverbs 14:16**

“A wise man fears and departs from evil, But a fool rages and is self-confident”

God even uses ants to teach us the importance of working diligently for our provisions because laziness invariably leads to poverty.

**Proverbs 6:6-11**

6 Go to the ant, you sluggard! Consider her ways and be wise, 7 Which, having no captain, Overseer or ruler, 8 Provides her supplies in the summer, And gathers her food in the harvest. 9 How long will you slumber, O sluggard? When will you rise from your sleep?

10 A little sleep, a little slumber, A little folding of the hands to sleep--11 So shall your poverty come on you like a prowler, And your need like an armed man.

Saints, Soon and Very soon, Jesus is about to appear, we are almost out of here!

**1 Thessalonians 4:13-18**

13 But I do not want you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning those who have fallen asleep, lest you sorrow as others who have no hope. 14 For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so God will bring with Him those who sleep in Jesus.

15 For this we say to you by the word of the Lord, that we who are alive and remain until the coming of the Lord will by no means precede those who are asleep. 16 For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of an archangel, and with the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first.

17 Then we who are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And thus we shall always be with the Lord. 18 Therefore comfort one another with these words.

**1 Corinthians 15:50-54**

50 Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; nor does corruption inherit incorruption. 51 Behold, I tell you a mystery: We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed-- 52 in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed.

53 For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. 54 So when this corruptible has put on incorruption, and this mortal has put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written: "Death is swallowed up in victory."

**Short Movie Slide>**

**Acts 2:38-39**

38 Then Peter said to them, "Repent, and let every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. 39 For the promise is to you and to your children, and to all who are afar off, as many as the Lord our God will call."

**Let’s Pray!**

**Benediction**

**"May The LORD bless you and keep you, May The LORD make His face shine upon you, May The LORD be gracious to you, May The LORD lift up His countenance upon you, and give you His (Shalom) peace.” In Jesus Name!**