

James 3: Wisdom From God

Introduction:

- A. Text: James 1:5-11
 - 1. Wisdom is a commodity that many find hard to come by
 - a. not an abundance of it in the world
 - b. yet, this is the overriding theme of James
 - 2. specifically mentioned in vs. 5
 - a. right after “Count it all joy”
 - b. takes wisdom to see that! Profound truth!
 - 3. Who doesn’t need wisdom to navigates this world’s complexities
- B. Look

I. Wisdom’s Source

- A. James makes it seem simple to obtain: “Ask”
 - 1. i.e. going to the right source!
 - a. mass media bombards us with all kind to advice
 - b. finances, kids, marriage, your job, personal development etc
 - c. how much wisdom is provided by all of these experts? (1 Cor. 2:6)
 - d. or James 3:13-15 - not tv talk show, but God
 - 2. wisdom is not information or education
 - a. all tools for gaining wisdom - not by itself
 - b. *wisdom is the ability to see reality for what it is and not what it appears*
 - c. I.g. - vs. 9-11 - knowing how to love in this world to obtain the highest result rather than the most immediate gratifying
- B. How James Characterizes God
 - 1. first, “gives generously” - *haplos* - openly
 - a. God wants us to have it - offers
 - b. Proverbs 2:6; Prov. 8 - calling in the street - pleading!
 - c. wanting the “simple” to heed her - avoid disaster!
 - d. giving is fundamental to God’s nature - not scold us
 - e. but invites us to listen - see 1:5! - given
 - 2. second, provides over time - prayer, scripture, advice, experience
 - a. by various trials - 1:2
 - b. hardships plus praying for wisdom equals!

II. One Condition

- A. Faith is required to obtain it (vs.6)
 - 1. doubters are excluded (vs. 7,8)
 - a. “double minded” - two souled - like restless surface of the sea
 - b. to vacillate - faith and unbelief - God or the world
 - c. IG - 1 Kng 18:21 - God or idols! -divided loyalty
 - 2. don’t let your doubts keep you from praying
 - a. Yes God is willing! - all like Mk. 9:24 - “help”
 - b. this is a weakness, but not double - mindedness
 - c. how many times has God exceeded our expectations! Mt.7:19,20

B Doubles minded -no anchor for the soul!

III. Wise Outlook on Wealth

- A. Here's a pertinent example! (Vs.9)
1. this sounded contradictory! Should not rich be boasting?
 - a. shouldn't the poor be embarrassed for their lack of material things?
 - b. not when they have obtained wisdom from God-
 - c. a great reversal on how we perceive the world! So?
 2. first, he speaks of a lowly brother- not people in general
 - a. contrast would be the rich brother
 - b. both have grounds for boasting - but what does each boast?
 - c. here we are reminded of that truly wise realize how unimportant wealth is - the great spiritual wealth we have in Christ!
 - d. thus, the lowliest or rich believer is rich in Christ! (Mt. 16:26)
 3. second, the rich
 - a. reminds them of how poor live on the margin of survival
 - b. life is also fragile for the rich - but his wealth masks that fact
 - c. riches fade like the flower of grass - fade in pursuits
- B. Brevity of Life
1. like a mist - Jas. 4:14; Job 7:7; Psalm 39:4,5
 - a. like a fog, mist, vapor, cloud, breath
 - b. Divine wisdom impresses this truth - fleeting!
 - c. no difference here between the millionaire or the homeless
 - d. rich man will fade in the "midst of his pursuits
 2. Its over when its over!

Conclusion:

- A. So ask God for wisdom - he will make you to know your end- measure your days
- B. Major factor of being wise