

If Any of You Lacks Wisdom...

Message 5 of 5 in the series: "If"

A. "If" we are willing to ask God for wisdom, He will be glad to give it to us.

"If any of you lacks wisdom, **you should ask God**, who gives generously to all without finding fault, and it will be given to you." James 1:5 (NIV)

"My son, **if you accept my words** and store up my commands within you, turning your ear to wisdom and applying your heart to understanding—indeed, **if you call out** for insight and **cry aloud** for understanding, and **if you look for it** as for silver and **search for it** as for hidden treasure, then you will understand the fear of the Lord and find the knowledge of God. **For the Lord gives wisdom**; from his mouth come knowledge and understanding." Proverbs 2:1-6 (NIV)

1. Wisdom = knowledge and understanding gained through learning and experience, skill in the handling of affairs, prudence, discretion, sound judgment.

2. God cares about every detail of our lives and wants to guide us down the best pathway for our lives.

"Give all your worries and cares to God, for **he cares about you**." 1 Peter 5:7 (NLT)

"The Lord directs the steps of the godly. **He delights in every detail of their lives**. Though they stumble, they will never fall, for the Lord holds them by the hand." Psalm 37:23-24 (NLT)

3. Wisdom is the best thing we could ever ask God to give us.

"Joyful is the person who finds wisdom, the one who gains understanding. For wisdom is more profitable than silver, and her wages are better than gold. Wisdom is more precious than rubies; nothing you desire can compare with her. She offers you **long life** in her right hand, and **riches and honor** in her left. She will **guide you** down delightful paths; all her ways are **satisfying**. Wisdom is a tree of life to those who embrace her; **happy** are those who hold her tightly... You can go to bed without fear; you will lie down and **sleep soundly**. You need not be afraid of sudden disaster or the destruction that comes upon the wicked, for the Lord is your security. He will keep your foot from being caught in a trap."

Proverbs 3:13-18 & 24-26 (NLT)

"That night the Lord appeared to Solomon in a dream, and God said, 'What do you want? Ask, and I will give it to you!' Solomon replied... 'Now, O Lord my God, you have made me king instead of my father, David, but I am like a little child who doesn't know his way around. And here I am in the midst of your own chosen people, a nation so great and numerous they cannot be counted! Give me an understanding heart so that I can govern your people well and know the difference between right and wrong. For who by himself is able to govern this great people of yours?' **The Lord was pleased that Solomon had asked for wisdom.**" 1 Kings 3:5 & 7-10 (NLT)

Life Application: We must decide "if" we want God to give us wisdom or "if" we want to figure out life on our own.

"Trust in the Lord with all your heart; do not depend on your own understanding. Seek his will in all you do, and he will show you which path to take. **Don't be impressed with your own wisdom...**"

Proverbs 3:5-7a (NLT)

"The Lord says, 'I will guide you along the best pathway for your life. I will advise you and watch over you.

Do not be like a senseless horse or mule that needs a bit and bridle to keep it under control."

Psalm 32:8-9 (NLT)

B. Four ways God gives us wisdom:

1. When we surrender our lives to Jesus, God gives us wisdom through the Holy Spirit who is working in us, changing the way we think.

"Don't copy the behavior and customs of this world, but **let God transform you into a new person by changing the way you think**. Then you will learn to know God's will for you, which is good and pleasing and perfect." Romans 12:2 (NLT)

"When the Spirit of truth comes, **he will guide you into all truth.**" John 16:13a (NLT)

"For his Spirit searches out everything and shows us God's deep secrets. No one can know a person's thoughts except that person's own spirit, and no one can know God's thoughts except God's own

Spirit. And we have received God's Spirit (not the world's spirit), so we can know the wonderful things God has freely given us." 1 Corinthians 2:10b-12 (NLT)

2. God will give us His wisdom as we spend time reading and meditating on the Bible.

"Your word is a lamp to guide my feet and a light for my path." Psalm 119:105 (NLT)

"All Scripture is inspired by God and is useful to teach us what is true and to make us realize what is wrong in our lives. **It corrects us when we are wrong and teaches us to do what is right.** God uses it to prepare and equip his people to do every good work." 2 Timothy 3:16-17 (NLT)

3. God gives us wisdom through others. (parents, spouses, teachers, friends, etc.)

"He who walks with the wise will be wise, but the companion of fools will be destroyed."

Proverbs 13:20 (BSB)

"Instruct the wise and they will be **wiser still**; teach the righteous and they will add to their learning."

Proverbs 9:9 (NIV)

4. God gives us wisdom through difficulties, delays, and discipline.

"Consider it pure joy, my brothers and sisters, whenever you face trials of many kinds, because you know that the testing of your faith produces perseverance. **Let perseverance finish its work so that you may be mature and complete, not lacking anything.**" James 1:2-3 (NIV)

"The glory of the young is their strength; the **gray hair of experience** is the splendor of the old."

Proverbs 20:29 (NLT)

"My child, don't make light of the Lord's discipline, and don't give up when he corrects you. For the Lord disciplines those he loves, and he punishes each one he accepts as his child.' As you endure this divine discipline, remember that God is treating you as his own children. Who ever heard of a child who is never disciplined by its father? ...No discipline is enjoyable while it is happening—**it's painful! But afterward there will be a peaceful harvest of right living for those who are trained in this way.**"

Hebrews 12:5b-7 & 11-12 (NLT)

C. **"If" we aren't willing to trust God's wisdom when He gives it, we shouldn't bother asking.**

"But when you ask him, be sure that your faith is in God alone. **Do not waver**, for a person with divided loyalty is as unsettled as a wave of the sea that is blown and tossed by the wind. Such people should not expect to receive anything from the Lord. Their loyalty is divided between God and the world, and they are unstable in everything they do." James 1:6-8 (NLT)

"Remember, it is sin to know what you ought to do and then not do it." James 4:17 (NLT)

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Connect Group Questions:

Read James 1:5-8 & Proverbs 2:3-11, and then discuss the following questions:

1. Who is the wisest person you know? What makes them so wise? How did they get that way?
2. Share one foolish decision you made as a teenager and what you learned from it. Now read Proverbs 20:29. What is "the gray hair of experience," and why is it described as a virtue?
3. Read Proverbs 9:9 & 13:20. Share a nugget of wisdom passed on to you by a parent, teacher, or coach. Whose counsel do you seek when facing a difficult decision?
4. Read Proverbs 3:13-26. Make a list of benefits of wisdom in these verses. Which of these benefits have you experienced?
5. Read 1 Kings 3:4-28. If God gave you one wish, what would you ask for? Why was God pleased with Solomon's request?
6. Discuss Proverbs 3:5-7 & Psalm 32:8-9.
7. Read Romans 12:2 & 1 Corinthians 2:10-12. How does the Holy Spirit change the way we think?
8. Spend some time as a group sharing prayer requests that require God's wisdom, and then pray for each other asking God to give you understanding.