

Connection to Proverbs 8:6-21

Solomon tells us that wisdom loves those who love wisdom and those who search for wisdom will find it (Prov. 8:17). James tells the church that we can ask God for wisdom and He will provide it to us. The key to both passages is pursuing wisdom from God.

Introduction/Opening

It has long been said that you are either heading in to a storm, in the middle of a storm, or coming out of a storm. While we wish this was not the case, reality shows that it is. Given this truth, the quest for God's wisdom in the midst of life is vital. Just as Solomon called on his reader to pursue wisdom, James, in talking to the church that was scattered because of persecution, shows whom to ask for wisdom and how to ask for it.

Outline

1. Whom Do I Ask for Wisdom?
 - a) First, we must acknowledge that we need wisdom. James told the church, "if any of you lacks wisdom, he should ask God" (v. 5). The context of this passage is trials. Our lack of wisdom is exposed in and through the storms of life. If we are going to go to God for wisdom, we must first acknowledge that we lack wisdom.
 - b) James used a present tense command when he directed his readers to ask (v. 5), meaning that asking God should be the first thing we do and without delay. We might be tempted to do a quick Internet search for the answer or even phone a friend, but we need not delay in going to Him. Also, His commands are always meant to help us and not harm us.
 - c) Some may wonder: if they go to God for wisdom, will He provide it? Verse 5 says that He will give us wisdom generously and ungrudgingly. We get the English word *eulogy* from the Greek word for generously. It means to bless another. God wants to bless us with His wisdom, and He seeks to do so with no strings attached. In order for this to happen, we must go to God for His wisdom.
2. How Do I Ask for Wisdom?
 - a) The Bible provides great clarity in answering the question of how to ask for wisdom. First, we are to go to God for wisdom in faith (v. 6). The author of Hebrews defined faith as, "the reality of what is hoped for, the proof of what is not seen" (11:1). We need to have faith that wisdom can be found in Him and that He will provide it as He said He would.
 - b) Second, we are to ask for wisdom without doubting (v. 6). Once again, the context of trials is key. Trials can cause us to doubt God's goodness. We might doubt that He cares or that He is even there with us in the midst of the trial. We need not doubt His goodness and His ability to provide wisdom in the storm no matter the circumstances.

- c) Finally, we need not be “double-minded and unstable in all [our] ways” (v. 8). To be double-minded means to behave one way one minute and then behave in a completely different way the next minute. If we engage in this type of behavior, then we should not expect to receive anything from the Lord. We receive His wisdom when we are consistent in our approach of Him. This can best be had when we approach Him apart from the storm and not just when it is storming.

Conclusion

In God sharing His wisdom, He is also sharing Himself. When we face trials, which we all do, we tend to either turn toward God or away from God. If we turn toward Him, we find Him to be gracious, generous, loving, and caring. While we don't enjoy trials, maybe we can see why He allows them. He wants us to come to Him without doubting His goodness or being double-minded.

If you know Jesus as Lord, take time to thank Him for His goodness in the midst of the trial. If, however, you do not know Him as Lord, look at your trial through His eyes today and see that He is using it to show Himself to you.

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