"WHERE TO LOOK IN TROUBLED TIMES"
James 1:5-12
8/16/200

Intro. One of the most frustrating things in life is being in a difficult situation and not knowing what to do.

*** YOU NEED TO KNOW WHERE TO LOOK IN TROUBLED TIMES!**

I. SEEK GOD'S PROMISE OF <u>WISDOM</u> (v.5-8)
(seek the essential wisdom that God gives)

When the storms of life hit your shore, you need to know what to do! Most people panic, worry, become discouraged etc.

Sometimes when in the midst of trials (testings) there is a tendency to not know how to respond. We tend to speak & act hastily. Wisdom is needed!

We need wisdom so we will <u>not waste</u> the opportunity God is giving us to mature.

In order to gain wisdom you must first <u>know you need it</u>.

A. He will answer if you <u>depend</u> upon Him. (v.5-6a)

You can depend on God because: He is the source of wisdom, He is impartial, generous, kind, and faithful.

1. God is the <u>source</u> of wisdom. "ask of God"

   Note: He did not say: "try to figure it out yourself" Nor his He say "if any of you lack wisdom go to <u>college</u>"

   Jews thought the rabbis were the source of true wisdom because they "passed it on since Moses by word of mouth" No! God is the only source.

   You can turn to the eternal fountain of wisdom in <u>all</u> the circumstances of life.

2. God is <u>impartial</u>. "all"

   His giving of wisdom is not limited to a favored few.

3. God is <u>generous</u>. "liberally" lit.= with singleness of heart. A banking term meaning "without interest", God has no ulterior motives.

4. God is <u>kind</u>. "Upbraideth not" = without insulting, humiliating or rebuking the asker.

   he film "The Wizard of Oz" - He, with frightening lighting, loud voice etc., <u>rebuked</u> the lion who asked for courage, scarecrow - brain, tin man - heart, and Dorothy - home to Kansas.

5. God is <u>faithful</u>. "It <u>shall</u> be given him" Knowing this about God gives positive assurance. It encourages prayer. Cp. Mt.7:7-11.

When troubled times come you can stand up under that test a lot easier when you know what God's purpose is & what to do about it. He is always willing to give you the needed wisdom if you will

believe He can and will answer.

The assurance (promise) of answered prayer does not mean that God is some kind of a dispensing machine into which we put a prayer and out comes whatever we select. A proper attitude is required first. This attitude is stated positively & negatively.

Pos. = "faith"; Neg. = "nothing doubting"

Faith is the proper response to a God who is impartial, generous, kind and faithful.

Belief in asking is man's necessary attitude because:

B. He will not answer you if you doubt Him (v.6b-8)

Ill. of a woman who prayed every day for the salvation of her husband. When asked "do you believe God will save Him?" She replied: "not really. You see, no one in his family is saved, and he is so set in his ways."

To not believe God is to insult Him. You are actually denying God's faithfulness and calling Him a liar.

"Let him ask in faith" - There is no acceptable prayer without faith!

Heb.11:6 "impossible to please God";

Mt.21:22 "And all things, whatsoever ye shall ask in prayer, believing, ye shall receive." cp.Mk.11:24.

"nothing wavering" = in no way doubting

"wavering" refers to a man with a divided mind. One who is torn in two directions; mental indecision; inner conflict; a desire to say yes & no at the same time.

When a doubter prays he is merely going through the motions of prayer. His words go no higher than the roof of his mouth.

The raging sea = pictures unrest. For example when the wind blows from one direction, the billowing waves move with it. When it blows in the opposite direction again the waves move with it.

v.7 - It is "faith that unlocks the divine storehouse, but unbelief bars its doors"

v.8 - "double minded" = Lit. "two souled" - He acts as if 2 distinct souls or personalities were in his body. Living 2 lives at once. Trying to go in 2 directions at once.

"unstable" = unsteady, wobbling like a drunkard.

In troubled times you need to seek God's promise of wisdom but also you must:

II. SEE YOUR POSITION OF WEALTH (v.9-12)
(see the true wealth that you have)

This is actually an act of wisdom.

When trouble strikes - rich people can suddenly become poor (ex. Job) and the poor can become poorer.

Keep in mind that riches were not something to glory in after all. Read Jer. 9:23-24.

A. FORGET YOUR EARTHLY POVERTY
AND GLORY IN YOUR HIGH POSITION IN CHRIST (v.9)

In the eyes of the world this man with humble external circumstances would be looked down upon and considered a nobody, but in God's eyes he has a high, exalted position of dignity & wealth.

(forget your problems and look at your position)

You are a son of the King & heir to a future kingdom!

Eph. 1:3 "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ"

Jesus said to his disciples don't rejoice that you have power to do miracles, but that your names are written in heaven!

True wealth is spiritual riches!

B. FORGET YOU EARTHLY RICHES
AND GLORY IN YOU HUMBLE POSITION IN CHRIST (v.10-11)

A loss of wealth is a gain of humility (which is true wealth) You can have materialism removed from obscuring your spiritual eyes and can see your need (dependance) upon God.

"Rich" = "one who does not need to work for a living"

Mt. 19:23 - "easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle..."

If you are a wealthy Christian who is stripped of your riches & possessions you can humbly be glad that you will never lose you spiritual riches.

If you are unsaved & lose your riches this may be God's blessing in disguise. You may be humbled to the point of being willing to stop trusting in yourself and trust Christ!

v.11 - The Sirocco winds off of the Arabian desert can scorch all vegetation and within hours turn what was formerly green into dried up brown.

When the hot winds of trials blow your way (and that which you took so much pleasure in suddenly disappears) will you be able to look at your true riches in Christ and be glad?

v.12 - Blessedness in not achieved by being free from trials, but by enduring them!

Such perseverance is a sign of genuine faith.

James does not say that you earn eternal life by enduring trials. You don't get saving faith

by enduring, rather you reveal your faith.

"crown" - victors crown - ex. Athletic contests. This is a lasting crown.

Read Rev.2:10,11 "crown of life" for overcoming trials & tribulations.

Concl. Do you know where to look when the troubled times come your way? 1) Seek God's promise of wisdom; 2) See you position of wealth.

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