

Facilitator

1. Open with Prayer
2. Welcome any newcomers
3. Read James 1:5-12 and give a five-minute review of the sermon using Peppy's sermon notes.

CONNECT Group study questions, James 1:5-12

February 16, 2014

Title: God's Protocol for Wisdom

Read to the Group: A number of years ago, my grandson, who is now 13, was playing with the recliner lever in the backseat of our mini-van. With too little strength to push it back, the seat pinned him forward, instead. "Papa, I have a situation here," was his way of seeking wisdom. Did I laugh, keep on driving and tell him to figure it out on his own? Of course not—well, I did laugh a little. I stopped the car and went around to the other side, and helped him push the seat back into position. And I offered a little wisdom: It's fine to recline, but wait until you're a little older, bigger, stronger. It won't be long. Andrew's 'situation' was what James called a 'trial.'

Question: Have you ever found yourself in one of those 'Help! I need wisdom!' trials you got yourself into and couldn't figure a way out? Briefly share with the group an example that comes to mind.

Read to the Group: We learn in James 1:5 that God gets excited about giving wisdom to us. Many Christians, however, when they find themselves in a trial, have a tendency to turn to friends, co-workers, or self-help books for answers.

Question: Why do suppose it's so difficult for Christians to first go to God for wisdom and help when they find themselves in a trial?

Read to the Group: This is a hypothetical trial----Tommy works for a boss who wants him to do things that are unethical. Tommy needs this job to support his family and is afraid that if he doesn't obey his boss, he will lose his job. Wisdom is asking the question--What would Jesus do?

Question: Brainstorm as a group what you think Jesus would do in this situation. Try to support your answer with scripture if you can.

Read to the Group: James 1: 6 and 7 says God's promise to give wisdom comes with a condition: Ask in faith without doubting. Keep in mind, James is about faith in action. When you ask in faith without doubting, God expects you to act on it.

Question: How generous and excited about dispensing wisdom do you suppose God would be with a person who listed His wisdom among a number of options to decide which made the most sense? Could it be that the person who considers everything receives nothing from God? Verse 8 identifies this person as double-minded and unstable. What do you think?

Read to the Group: Verses 9 through 11 offers perspective on trials by comparing the tests faced by the person humbled by his circumstances to the one who is wealthy. In God's economy, the person of humble means is raised to a high position in Christ, while the wealthy person can glory in knowing he is humbled in Christ.

Question: Which trial do you think is more difficult; the trial of poverty or the trial of prosperity? (Explain your answer)