

July 22,2018

KIBC Sunday Worship Service

Message by Pastor Teiichiro Kuroda

Title of the Message: "Pure Joy That Is Produced by Wisdom"

— The Lord's Presence—

Text: James 1:5~8

1:5 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.

1:6 But when you ask, you must believe and not doubt, because the one who doubts is like a wave of the sea, blown and tossed by the wind.

1:7 Those who doubt should not think they will receive anything from the Lord;

1:8 they are double-minded and unstable in all they do.

Introduction

I mentioned last time that facing trials is meaningful. We studied that trials produce perseverance and make us spiritually mature.

When we read the context in the epistle, James first earnestly wrote about trials, but suddenly he started writing about **wisdom**. However, he returned to write about **trials** in Verse 12 again.

Then, why does the word **wisdom** appear here? It is because James understood that those who were undergoing trials could overcome them by **wisdom**. Therefore, he encouraged them like this.

It teaches that when we face trials, we need the **wisdom** that James mentioned. Therefore, let's consider what **wisdom** is like.

Wisdom can be classified into these two kinds—

1) **Worldly wisdom**

It is wisdom that we already have at birth and also wisdom that we get through experiences in our life and society. It is good wisdom that helps us work out a solution. I can't support those who use it in a cunning way though. Good wisdom is blessed one.

2) Wisdom from heaven

It is **wisdom that is given from above** by the Holy Spirit. It is not only indispensable for us to discern things but also to take action to do right deeds in daily life. It is given from heaven (by God). James records that such wisdom helps us to overcome trials as below in Chapter 3—

James 3:13 Who is wise and understanding among you? Let them show it by their good life, by deeds done in the humility that comes from wisdom.

3:14 But if you harbor bitter envy and selfish ambition in your hearts, do not boast about it or deny the truth.

3:15 Such “wisdom” does not come down from heaven but is earthly, unspiritual, demonic.

3:16 For where you have envy and selfish ambition, there you find disorder and every evil practice.

3:17 But the wisdom that comes from heaven is first of all pure; then peace-loving, considerate, submissive, full of mercy and good fruit, impartial and sincere.

3:18 Peacemakers who sow in peace reap a harvest of righteousness.

Let's study **wisdom from heaven** that helps us overcome trials according the following two points today.

Main Points

1 . To Ask God for Wisdom from Heaven.

1:5 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.

1) Wisdom from Heaven that God Gives Us

Verse 5 above records three characteristics: to all, gives generously and without finding fault

① To all

God gives **wisdom from heaven** to those who seek God's righteousness. Thankfully, **the wisdom** is given **to all** by faith.

② To give generously

God doesn't begrudge giving wisdom, therefore, He gives it **generously** to those who seek it.

③ **Without finding fault**

God doesn't find fault with us. For example, when parents teach (give wisdom to) their child, they sometimes carelessly scold him or her; "Why don't you understand?" "You can't do anything, can you?"

The parents want their children to be wise, however, at the same time they find fault with them. "**Without finding fault**" means that God wouldn't do such a thing. God wouldn't give **wisdom** with scolding, saying "Why don't you understand?" and "Why can't you do it?"

It means that God won't give us **wisdom** while looking down on us. We have lots of faults and problems, however, God doesn't blame us for them but willingly gives us **wisdom**. How happy we are.

We human beings always criticize and get angry with each other. When we live in such circumstances, we exhaust ourselves and come to feel helpless. However, God **generously** gives wisdom from heaven **without finding fault to all** who believe in Him. It is an amazing gift.

Then, what are the necessary conditions for God to give us **wisdom from heaven**?

2) **Conditions In Order to Receive Wisdom**

My friends, do you know that we need to meet certain conditions to be given **wisdom from heaven**? What conditions should we meet? ⇒ We should realize that we lack **wisdom**.

In Verse 5 it is written, "**If any of you lacks wisdom**".

It teaches that realizing our lack of **wisdom from heaven** is the first condition. Those who are smart, attentive and achieve good results actually don't realize they are lacking wisdom. They are confident in themselves.

My friends, we sometimes cannot overcome trials without **wisdom from heaven**. We face an event in our lives that we cannot overcome without **wisdom from heaven**. No matter how bright people are by nature and no matter how much experience they have, they face things that they cannot overcome by human wisdom.

Paul records this below—

2 Corinthians 1:12 Now this is our boast: Our conscience testifies that we have conducted ourselves in the world, and especially in our relations with you, with integrity and godly sincerity. We have done so, relying not on worldly wisdom but on God's grace.

Church members of Corinth spread news about Paul regardless of whether it was true or not. He was in a difficult situation. On top of that, he was seriously persecuted and sometimes faced a great trial, so that he was even prepared for death during his mission journeys. Paul experienced problems that were impossible for him to deal with by human wisdom even though he was a greatly talented man.

How about you? We are sometimes put in a difficult situation or are driven into a corner at our home, office, or school, aren't we? It may be a trial of our faith. What attitude do we take at that time? What do we say? Our faith is being tested by our trials.

The Bible encourages us to **receive wisdom from heaven**. Then, what should we do to receive wisdom from heaven?

2 . Pray to God in Faith.

1) Faith without Doubt

How should they live who are given **wisdom from heaven**?

We who are given **wisdom from God** naturally come to control our attitude and conversations. We come to willingly deal with trials with simple, peaceful, generous, obedient and faithful attitudes.

We need to meet an important condition to receive **wisdom from heaven**.

The necessary condition is to believe and not doubt.

1:6 But when you ask, you must believe and not doubt, because the one who doubts is like a wave of the sea, blown and tossed by the wind.

1:7 Those who doubt should not think they will receive anything from the Lord;

To doubt is to sway in all directions. It looks like a wave of the sea, blown and tossed by the wind. People's minds sway and it causes confusion.

The verse above teaches when we ask God we must believe and not doubt. It doesn't mean to ask God blindly. James emphasizes here to **become humble**. What does it mean to ask without doubt? It means simple faith(trust).

Mark 11:23 Truly I tell you, if you say to this mountain, 'Go, throw yourself into the sea,' and do not doubt in your heart but believe that what you say will happen, it will be done for you.

11:24 Therefore I tell you, whatever you ask for in prayer, believe that you have received it, and it will be yours.

James says, “when you ask, you must believe and not doubt.” It is very difficult because, if we don’t throw away our pride and self-confidence, it is impossible for us to believe without doubt. However, when we throw away our pride and conceited attitude and become humble, we are first given the ability to trust (have faith) in God. Therefore, we should completely believe and ask. It is a faithful prayer. We should trust in God and pray.

James teaches that he who doubts is a person who is double-minded.

1:8 Such a person is double-minded and unstable in all they do.

It means that he keeps a foot in both camps, faith and faithlessness.

Psalm 12:2 Everyone lies to their neighbor; they flatter with their lips but harbor deception in their hearts.

Psalm 119:113 I hate double-minded people, but I love your law.

God doesn’t respond to prayers of double-minded people. Therefore, we should pray to God without doubt.

2) We Need Wisdom from Heaven at the Very Time of Trials.

Believers in the early church faced various trials, hardship and persecution.

Let’s imagine those days. It was the beginning days of the early church (It is like one’s infancy if compared to a human life.) They had hope to grow and move forward. At that very time, great persecution occurred.

Christians at that time were overtaken by various trials. Under trials some believers probably came to doubt God. I understand that opinions were divided about how to deal with trials they were suffering. As a result their various opinions might have caused confusion.

My friends! This epistle was written in such a situation. James would not be able to overcome difficult situations without God’s help. Therefore, we should believe God and ask (pray to) Him without doubt.

{**Illustration**}

I heard a certain story a short time ago. George Washington Gozalez was an American military officer. He was a chief engineer when they built the Panama Canal.

The Panama Canal was very difficult to construct because of rough weather and geographical features.

However, the most painful problem was severe criticism from his own country. Many people thought that the project wouldn't be completed.

One day, his fellow worker said, "When are you thinking of publishing a response to their criticism?"

Gonzalez answered, "I will do it later."

"Later? When? (How much later?)"

"When the Canal is completed."

He didn't care about what they might say. He kept believing he would complete the Canal.

My friends! We need **wisdom from heaven** when we are under trials.

So, how can we get **wisdom from heaven**?

- ① **Become quiet before the Lord**
- ② **Trust in the Lord and read the Word of God**
- ③ **Ask (pray) for wisdom from heaven**

* **These are some fundamental rules of the Christian life.**

We studied pure joy that is produced by wisdom.

Then, why will we have pure joy when we are given **wisdom from heaven**?

⇒ God's righteousness (the Lord's presence) is revealed there.

When the Lord is present, we can find resolution of the difficulty. God blesses the saints who pray with perseverance, who trust in God without doubt when facing any trials. Therefore, their situation changes into pure joy.

My friends. How about us? How was our attitude when we were under trials, and how have we accepted them? Let's take time and consider it now.

Conclusion

Title of the Message: "Pure Joy That Is Produced by Wisdom"

—The Lord's Presence—

Today, the Lord gave us God's blessed Word.

It is important to experience pure joy that is produced by wisdom and necessary for us to ask (pray) for **wisdom from heaven**;

Then, how can we become saints who receive **wisdom from heaven**?

1. Have quiet time before the Lord
2. Trust in the Lord and read the Word of God
3. Ask (pray) for **wisdom from heaven**

* God Bless You!