

James 1:5-8

God's Provision in Testing Your Faith, Part 2

How Firm is Your Foundation?

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James 1:5-8 (NASB)

5 But if any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask of God, who gives to all generously and without reproach, and it will be given to him. 6 But he must ask in faith without any doubting, for the one who doubts is like the surf of the sea, driven and tossed by the wind. 7 For that man ought not to expect that he will receive anything from the Lord, 8 being a double-minded man, unstable in all his ways.

The Greeks

Greek (peirasmos [trials])

a testing with a view toward failure; a solicitation to sin

Greek (dokimion [testing])

a testing with a view toward approval; an opportunity to glorify God

Greek (hypomonē [endurance])

an abiding under

Greek (sophia [wisdom])

insight imparted from God in respect to the divine counsels; as conjoined with purity of heart and life

Those who don't ask

*5c and it **will be given** to him. 6a But he must ask in **faith** without any doubting,*

- Prerequisite of the gift – asking (in faith)
 - Is there such a thing as faith without asking?
- The gift is spiritual maturity – heavenly perspective
- A promise is only as good as the promiser
 - What do we know about this promiser?

Greek (pistis [faith])

conviction of the truth of anything, belief

- Specific word is used 16 times in the book

Beyond a reasonable doubt

*5c and it will be given to him. 6a But he must ask in **faith** without any **doubting**,*

- Faith must always have an object
 - Faith in who God is
 - Faith in what God has revealed
 - Faith that God can and will accomplish what He has promised

Greek (diakrinō [doubting])

to be at variance, or strife, with one's self; hesitate; waver

- “Doubt” is the contrast to “faith”
 - What happens in the absence of faith?
 - See Hebrews 11:6
- All faith, and no doubt
 - Is this all or nothing?

The Tempest

6b for the one who doubts is like the surf of the sea, driven and tossed by the wind.

- Lack of faith leads to instability/inconsistency
- We are constantly buffeted about – difficulties are guaranteed
 - What is our “default” position?
- The trials and the tribulations are the waves
 - What is it that is being “tried” and “tested”?
- The natural man has no explanation for the difficulties of life
 - “Do good while you can”
 - “It gets better”
 - “So it goes”

What to expect while you're ...

*7 For that man ought not to **expect** that he will receive **anything** from the Lord,*

- *Wuest: let not that individual be supposing that he shall receive anything from the presence of the Lord,*
- By faith we “expect” God to fulfill His promises
 - See Hebrews 11:1
 - Our hope is sure
- Important reminder: Romans 8:28-39
 - Our position is secure – the only security
- The person in doubt is not resting in his position in Christ
 - He is subject to all the vacillations of life
- Anything = any of the wisdom, or godly perspective
 - He is stuck with the earthly perspective, which can be nothing but grim

The Man with Two Brains

8 being a double-minded man, unstable in all his ways.

Greek (dipsychos [double-minded])

wavering, uncertain, doubting; divided in interest

- Only James uses this word – see also 4:8
- “Double-mindedness” amounts to lack of focus on one thing
 - What is there in this world that absolute, outside of God?

Greek (akatastatos [unstable])

unstable, inconstant, restless

- See also 3:8
- The natural man has nothing firm and concrete in his life

How Firm a Foundation (1)

How firm a foundation, ye saints of the Lord,
Is laid for your faith in His excellent word!
What more can He say than to you He hath said
To you who for refuge to Jesus have fled?

Fear not, I am with thee, oh, be not dismayed,
For I am thy God, and will still give thee aid;
Ill strengthen thee, help thee, and cause thee to stand,
Upheld by My gracious, omnipotent hand.

When through the deep waters I call thee to go,
The rivers of sorrow shall not overflow;
For I will be with thee thy trouble to bless,
And sanctify to thee thy deepest distress.

How Firm a Foundation (2)

When through fiery trials thy pathway shall lie,
My grace, all-sufficient, shall be thy supply;
The flame shall not harm thee; I only design
Thy dross to consume and thy gold to refine.

The soul that on Jesus doth lean for repose,
I will not, I will not, desert to his foes;
That soul, though all hell should endeavor to shake,
I'll never, no never, no never forsake.