

# Liberating Faith Studies

Summer Quarter – 2020

## ***MANY*** faces of **WISDOM**

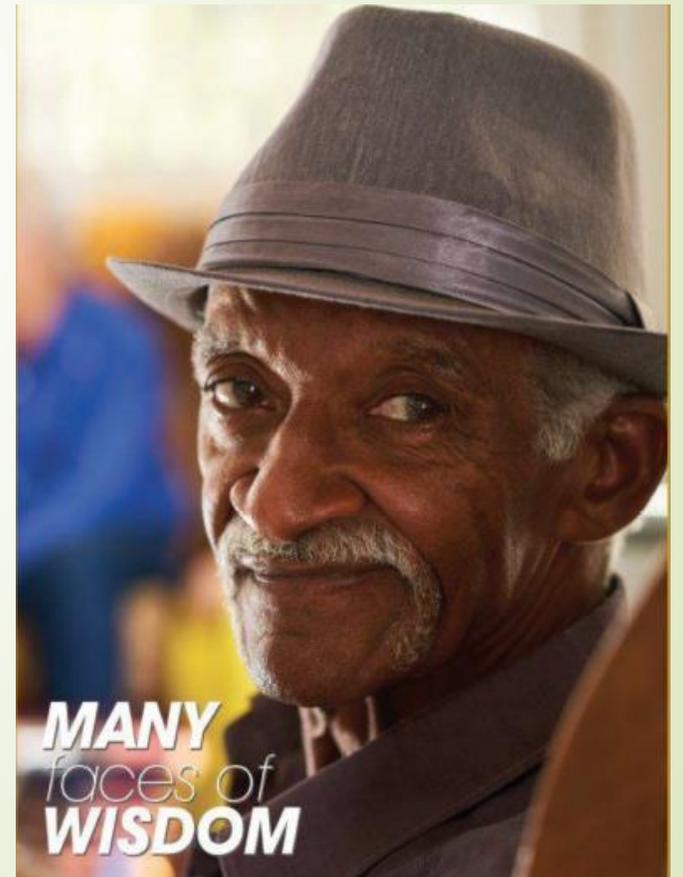


The focus is the many faces of God's wisdom  
& God as sovereign, liberating, and all wise

# Many Faces of Wisdom

## Sabbath School

August 1, 2020



# Summer Quarter 2020

➔ **Unit 3:** Faith and Wisdom in James – Explores the New Testament letter attributed to James

August 1: Faith and Wisdom, James 1:1-11

August 8: Hearing and Doing the Word, James 1:19-27

August 15: Faith Without Works is Dead, James 2:14-26

August 22: Taming the Tongue, James 3:1-12

August 29: Two Kinds of Wisdom, James 3:13-18; 5:7-12



# Faith and Wisdom

Lesson Scriptures: James 1:1-11

Key Verse:

**5** If you need wisdom, ask our generous God, and he will give it to you. He will not rebuke you for asking.

John 1:5 NLT

# Background and Setting

- James, the brother of Jesus, was a leader in the Jerusalem church (Acts 12:17; 15:13; 21:18; Gal. 2:12). He was a “pillar” of that church along with Peter and John (Gal. 2:9). He was also known as James the Just because of his devotion to righteousness.
- James is dated to have been written around A.D. 44-49, making it the earliest written book in the NT canon.
- The recipients of this letter were Jewish believers who had been dispersed, possibly as a result of Stephen’s martyrdom (Acts 7), but more likely due to the persecution under Herod Agrippa I (Acts 12).
- James, with its devotion to direct statements on wise living is reminiscent of the book of Proverbs. It has practical emphasis on godly behavior.



# Background and Setting

- James complements Paul's emphasis on justification by faith with his emphasis on spiritual fruitfulness demonstrating true faith.
- 

# James 1:1-11

## Greetings from James

<sup>1</sup>This letter is from James, a slave of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ. I am writing to the “twelve tribes”—Jewish believers scattered abroad. Greetings!

## Faith and Endurance

- <sup>2</sup> Dear brothers and sisters, when troubles of any kind come your way, consider it an opportunity for great joy.
- <sup>3</sup> For you know that when your faith is tested, your endurance has a chance to grow.
- <sup>4</sup> So let it grow, for when your endurance is fully developed, you will be perfect and complete, needing nothing.

# James 1:1-11: Faith and Wisdom

- 5** If you need wisdom, ask our generous God, and he will give it to you. He will not rebuke you for asking.
- 6** But when you ask him, be sure that your faith is in God alone. Do not waver, for a person with divided loyalty is as unsettled as a wave of the sea that is blown and tossed by the wind.
- 7** Such people should not expect to receive anything from the Lord.
- 8** Their loyalty is divided between God and the world, and they are unstable in everything they do.
- 9** Believers who are poor have something to boast about, for God has honored them.
- 10** And those who are rich should boast that God has humbled them. They will fade away like a little flower in the field.
- 11** The hot sun rises and the grass withers; the little flower droops and falls, and its beauty fades away. In the same way, the rich will fade away with all of their achievements.

# Wisdom, James 1:5

- By “wisdom” James is talking not only about knowledge but about the ability to make wise decisions in difficult circumstances. Whenever we need wisdom, we can pray to God, and he will generously supply what we need.
- The wisdom that we need has three distinct characteristics:
  - (1) *It is practical.* The wisdom from God relates to life even during the most trying times. It is not a wisdom isolated from suffering and trials. This wisdom is the tool by which trials are overcome.
  - (2) *It is divine.* God’s wisdom goes beyond common sense. Common sense does not lead us to choose joy in the midst of trials. This wisdom begins with respect for God, leads to living by God’s direction, and results in the ability to tell right from wrong. James describes this wisdom at length in chapter 3.
  - (3) *It is Christlike.* Asking for wisdom is ultimately asking to be like Christ. Christ is identified as the “wisdom of God,” 1 Corinthians 1:24; 2:1-7).

## Jesus is the manifestation of God's wisdom

<sup>24</sup> But to those called by God to salvation, both Jews and Gentiles, Christ is the power of God and the wisdom of God. **1 Corinthians 1:24**

---

### Paul's Message of Wisdom

<sup>1</sup> When I first came to you, dear brothers and sisters, I didn't use lofty words and impressive wisdom to tell you God's secret plan. <sup>2</sup> For I decided that while I was with you I would forget everything except Jesus Christ, the one who was crucified. <sup>3</sup> I came to you in weakness—timid and trembling. <sup>4</sup> And my message and my preaching were very plain. Rather than using clever and persuasive speeches, I relied only on the power of the Holy Spirit. <sup>5</sup> I did this so you would trust not in human wisdom but in the power of God.

<sup>6</sup> Yet when I am among mature believers, I do speak with words of wisdom, but not the kind of wisdom that belongs to this world or to the rulers of this world, who are soon forgotten. <sup>7</sup> No, the wisdom we speak of is the mystery of God—his plan that was previously hidden, even though he made it for our ultimate glory before the world began. **1 Corinthians 2:1-7**