

Growing Older & Wiser Bible Study I: Wise Up – James 1:1-8, 12

Opening Questions:

1) Is there a difference between being smart & being wise? If so, what is it?

2) Is there a difference between a test/trial and a temptation? If so, what's the difference?

3) Think about someone you know who you believe to be wise. What has the person said or done that makes you feel that s/he is wise?

Going Deep:

1. James, the brother of Jesus, opens today's lesson by suggesting that people of faith should "count it all joy"/"consider it a great joy" when they experience the different trials that come with living for God. Does this advice give you the same reaction when you're in the midst of a trial as it does once you've successfully survived a trial? If so, why so? If not, why not?

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2. James' words in today's lesson are those of someone who has made it through some tough times. How does perseverance (or the ability to stick with God no matter what) help make someone wise?

3. Is there a difference between the doubt that leads to double-mindedness and a Christian who thinks for a moment that God won't answer his/her prayer while s/he is in midst of praying through a difficult time? If so, what's the difference?

4. God uses trials to make us more faithful and committed followers. How has God used trials to strengthen your faith and witness?

5. If you were in James' shoes and God asked you to encourage someone going through hard times, what would you say or do?
