

Wisdom sustains and doubt drains.

PRELIMINARIES:

Subtle humor – ‘*IF any of you lacks wisdom...*’ – 1:5

Q: What is wisdom?

A: In this context, it is the God-given skill to properly respond to trials – 1:2-5.

Q: What shows us our need for wisdom?

A: The challenge of suffering produced by trials – 1:2-5

APPLICATION:

What should I do if I lack wisdom?

1. Go to the **source**: Ask of God! – 1:6 (imperative).
2. Be reminded of God’s **character** and **relationship** to you (for believers) – like a father to a child (Matt. 7:7-11; Luke 11:11-13).
3. Ask in **faith** and take God at His word – 1:6.

Keith Ward, “*To live by faith is to accept the inevitable disorder in this world, to accept the power of divine love to open up a positive relationship to God, to begin to allow oneself to be conformed to the divine image, and to trust in the promise of a new creation that will both cancel and fulfill this one.*”¹

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4. Remember the **draining** effects of doubt: removes stability so that the doubter is likened to a wave tossed around by the wind – 1:6-8.

What is doubt? Doubt is not synonymous with unbelief. However, doubt can produce a fertile breeding ground for unbelief. At the very least, doubt debilitates.

5. Remember how God **responds** when you ask for wisdom in faith: He will **give** it to you – 1:6.

*Alister McGrath, "The worst thing you can do in the event of a spiritual dry spell is to give up going to church, spending time with Christian friends and colleagues, or reading Scripture. These can keep you going when your prayer life seems to dry up. They are like roots, searching for precious moisture in a dry land."*²

¹Keith Ward, *Religion & Human Nature* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1998), 185.

²Alister McGrath, *The Sunnier Side of Doubt* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1990), 141-142.

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