

Preparation for Scattering, Struggling, & Suffering

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[0:00] Amen. Let's pray. Father, we come to you this morning and we praise you, Lord, as we gather in this place today. Our prayer is that you would just be with us until you come or until you call us home.

We're going to stand in Christ. And so, Lord, we pray that you just be with us, you guide us, that you direct us. As we open your word together, Lord, we've sung your praises together, which which are just the cries of our heart so closely associated with prayer as we sing out to you.

And as we sing to one another, we do so as an encouragement to each other so that we can just lift each other up as we worship you together. Now, as we open your word together, Lord, our prayer is that you would speak.

And Lord, not just like the songs that reflect truth, but as we open up your word, Lord, we're praying that your words, that your truth would penetrate our hearts and our lives.

And that your Holy Spirit will use these things to draw us into the presence of Christ and that you would empower us to walk with Jesus and talk with him and live our lives in his presence.

[1:25] And so, Lord, I pray that you would just be with us in the remainder of this time and then send us out so that we can just move into this week with great momentum and power in Jesus name.

So be with us now. We pray this all in his name and all God's people said, amen. Amen. You can be seated. Amen. I'm glad this light, you know, the sunlight is really kind of shining down.

I'm glad it's not like shining on my head and blinding all of you this morning. It's just, you know, the lighting in here can be a little tricky and sound in this room can be a little tricky.

I'm grateful for our worship team. and just it's so hard to hear up here and hear each other and they really do a great job just trying to pull it together and lead us in a time of worship so thank you guys so so much as uh as you have led us yeah let's give them a hand uh if you haven't turned in your bible to james chapter one you you could do that at this point as dale read the passage that we're going to be in in first or in james chapter one beginning in verse five uh we'll be talking about that this morning in terms of just the requirement of a mature faith there are some requirements for a mature faith and i think james is going to encourage us in that i was thinking about this this morning and uh brandy i was thinking about your your mom uh just how your mom always amazed us when she would come and visit us and wherever we live uh we might live there for a few years but she comes for a few hours and she would end up knowing more about everything uh more about everything around the town that we live in than we did and it was just i mean she had an amazing skill she would she would go out for a walk and she'd go walk around you know the neighborhood walk around you know where we lived and and go into town or walk around a little bit there and come back and she would have all these stories and questions and and did you know that this town used to be a military installation did you know uh that there's nuclear waste buried here uh did you know uh your neighbor uh so and so did you know that she lost her husband a few years ago and and she's got cancer and her kids are moved away and they live in georgia now did you know and she would just go through all these details and and we're just like you've only been here a few hours and you know like everything about our town and our neighborhoods but it was just the way she was she just you know kind of an inquisitive kind of person and she just loved learning things and she would just absorb everything and i just thought about that because i was thinking about going through the epistle of james and how sometimes as we approach the scripture we're so busy doing the things that we do that we just we kind of run right through it instead of being more inquisitive and stepping back and asking a lot of questions and getting to know what's going on and and it's amazing how some people can get into it and and just spend a little time digging in and asking right questions and they walk away with all kinds of understanding and my challenge for us this morning

is as we as we go through this i'm not going to rush through the book of james because this is just so packed with wisdom we're going to go through verse by verse we're going to go through word by word line by line precept by precept we're going to keep going through it and however long it takes is just how long it takes and so i know sometimes people will joke about it oh man i wish you changed books or something periodically i may delve out into something else and then come back okay but as we go through this i i really am praying that you will get to know james and that you'll ask questions and that as you dig into this you'll soak in the scenery and that you'll absorb the things that you come across in here and learn with me as i'm learning in just some fresh ways just to live out my faith with some depth because the reality is what this is teaching us is is the wisdom of walking with jesus and if there's anything that we need right now we don't just need to add more knowledge although we do need to add knowledge we need to add wisdom and we need wisdom from god and it's only going to come through walking with jesus and so so really that's my prayer as we get into this today's focus on these verses is really i think preparation for those that are going to be scattered and suffering and struggling in life and which means everybody it's all of us we're all going to come to points of struggling and suffering and in times where we're we're just scattered the letter opened that way as we talked about last week just uh as it's addressed to the 12 tribes in the dispersion those that are scattered those that are suffering those that are enduring persecution and hardship and and as we look at this verse this morning i really think we're going to see not only the need for us to ask how to get out of our trials in our life but to ask what we need to get out of our trials in life because i think oftentimes when we're facing trials we're asking god how to get out of these things which is not wrong it's not wrong to want to get out of those things but more importantly if our faith is going to be mature it's not asking how to get out of it but it's asking god what i need to get out of it and learning what i need to learn in the middle of the trials the cir the crisis that comes the difficulty which is why james was saying count it all joy brothers when you meet trials of various kinds so this is the context that's leading into this we're not called to be sociopaths gluttons for punishment or masochists that enjoy pain that's not what he's saying what he's saying is in spite of the trials we're to have a right mind we're to have a right perspective and that is a mature perspective in christ when we face trials and difficulties is that we we're learning what we're going to get out of these things not just how to get out of these things so the context you got to let's keep in mind that james along with jude is the biological brother of jesus this is not insignificant as we saw last week he has gone from skeptic to believer he's had a moment of confrontation with jesus after the resurrection and this helped him to see jesus no longer from the perspective of sibling but as servant of the lord jesus christ he has been changed because he had an encounter with christ it was the turning point of his life as far as we know the only information we have to go off in his life tells us that somehow his encounter with jesus was the turning point he was changed if you've come into an encounter with christ where you've been confronted with your sin and he showed you who you really are and you saw who he really was by the power of god him opening your eyes to see who jesus really is in your life and you have turned from sin and turned

[10:17] to christ this moment of confrontation has absolutely radically altered your life changed you you have been changed from from who you were you are not perfect yet positionally you've been made right with god and one day he's going to rescue you from this world but in the meantime your goal from from the time you accept christ until the time he takes you up as we sang about is that you learn to walk with jesus that you learn to walk in obedience and in faith and that you grow in your relationship with him that this letter from james is is known as the proverbs of the new testament it is an encouragement it's packed with instruction for you so that as you are scattered as you are suffering as you're dealing with the struggles of life that you will find strength as you mature in your faith and as you grow and that's god's goal in your life so that you'll no longer be babies in the faith crying every time something comes your way which we do can i get an amen some of you didn't say amen i i'm i'm gonna say it for you amen because we cry all the time we get mad we pout uh in life when struggles come when circumstances happen when when things are really hard let me give you a clue you don't really know how strong you are when things are good you don't know how

mature you are when everything's comfortable it's only when the crisis comes and the difficulty comes and the the testing comes not so that god can figure out where you're at because he already knows but so that you can see where you're at so that you can grow the testing is a tool of god in your life so that you're to count it all joy not because of the testing but because of what the testing will produce is giving instructions in how to move on to maturity and so the first half of chapter one you could title it gleaning wisdom from the field of trials that you're picking up wisdom as you go as you're going through the trials of your life the testing and so our focus this morning is on verses five through eight uh one summary of this section uh one one guy summarized it this way he said that it's broken into three parts really one is the great deficiency of the average christian character and that is wisdom another is the great means of supplying it and that is the asking and the third part is the great guarantee of the supply from a giving god the gist of the passage as i'm seeing this passage break down is really three requirements that mature faith recognizes if you want your faith to be a mature kind of faith if you're going to grow and stop being a baby about everything that happens in your life then this is good news for you and kind of some direction as you think about what it looks like to mature so that when you go through testing and you analyze your response to it which is being a baby a lot right that you realize that i can't

stay here and be a baby i love hearing the babies in our room i mean right you know they're they're crying they're they're playing they're trying to figure things out uh for some of you it's hard to listen because you're like oh i can't when new people come into our church they're like how are you guys listening with all this stuff going on and we've just gotten used to it because we're really focused on trying to mature our children in the context of worship we want them to learn to be worshipers and they're not always going to be crying they're going to be they're going to get to a stage where they start listening and some of them are going to be coloring pages and and they're going to be they're going to be they can't even spell yet but they're going to be coloring pages and they're listening to the sermon and the message and the singing and all these things and they're they're getting a hold of a whole lot more than you realize and as they mature in this they're going to start listening more intensely and they're going to come to a place because of the teaching and the discipleship that you do at home, that they're going to recognize the facts of the gospel. They're going to grow in knowledge and in understanding. And the Holy Spirit of God is going to start giving them wisdom. And they're going to be able to see the gospel at some point and respond because they've been in a context where the word of God is being taught. And you as a parent or as a friend or as a fellow member of the body of Christ, we're encouraging them along the way by allowing them to be in here next to you and be agitated and irritated at times. But you've allowed them to grow up in this. And because of that, they're going to come to maturity in Christ.

God is moving us to maturity. And so three requirements that mature faith recognizes, and if you're taking notes, I'll give you the outline so that if I go long, you know, and you start dozing off, you've got it. Okay. The first is this, and these are interrelated. You can kind of see the progression of this through the passage. One, trials require wisdom.

That we may not have. Trials require wisdom that we may not have. The progression then is into wisdom. Trials require wisdom that we may not have. Wisdom requires prayer that we may not offer.

Trial requires wisdom that we may not have. Wisdom requires prayer that we may not offer, and prayer requires faith that we may not commit to and this is the gist the requirements that mature faith recognizes mature faith recognizes these principles you see these things at work when you are faced with trials you realize you come to realize through some experience and through some knowledge of god's word that these trials are going to come it's actually part of your christian life it is an expectation if you don't expect this you're going to be blindsided by it you're not going to understand what's going on in your life but the reality is mature faith actually recognizes and expects these things trials require wisdom though and it's wisdom that you don't always have

wisdom requires then prayer that sometimes you don't offer you're not you're not asking you're not asking god for the wisdom you're pouting you're you're you're enduring it you're you're you're trying to figure it out yourself you're trying to do it your own way but really these trials actually require wisdom and wisdom requires prayer we're not just talking about street wisdom street wise it's not just merely the application of knowledge this is a spiritual wisdom that god gives and if we don't ask for it guess what we don't get it it's wisdom that we are required to ask for and when we ask this this prayer requires faith trusting god that faith is is reliance upon putting your life in his hands as we've described it and oftentimes we're vacillating between faith and unbelief and we end up not committing ourselves to trust god and what he's saying is trial requires wisdom wisdom requires prayer prayer requires faith so first trials require wisdom that we may not have this is the problem problem the problem of wisdom is that we lack wisdom so notice how he says it in verse two or in verse five i mean if any of you lacks wisdom now the word lack there is connected to the verse before it in verse four where he said and let steadfastness have its full effect that you may be perfect and complete lacking nothing maturity lacking nothing but we are not completely mature and we're not mature in every area and so he goes on in verse five if any of you lacks wisdom when you are at a place of immaturity which you will be you're not mature in every area when you lack wisdom so he uses the word lack here which means to fall short of something or to be deficient the crisis has revealed something in you about your maturity the trial that has come into your life that was allowed by god and you say what you mean god allowed the trial in my life you mean that's the are you sure god allowed i mean that doesn't sound like a loving god that would allow me to go through some hard times or trials and yet the reality of scripture is oh it was definitely god who allowed it there's nothing that happens in your life apart from god when job went through his suffering we got a peek into the spiritual realm to see that when job lost his

[20:57] job and his income and his livelihood it was something that was allowed by god that when job lost his health and the dogs are licking his wounds we realized that this was allowed by god and even when it came to the point of loss in his family uh and the the disaster comes upon his family and he loses a child or all of his children and you would say well what kind of cruel god would would do something like he's not a cruel god he's actually good god completely good and his ways are higher than our ways we don't always understand what he's doing but one thing you can rest assured of is that he is absolutely sovereign over the things of our life and that there's not a single thing in our life that does not have at its heart his ultimate glory as its reason and it's enough if he never did it for our good even if it's done merely for his glory it's enough because you and i are not the center of the universe he is and yet god is good and so because he's good he shines the light of his goodness into our life and allows all of those circumstances somehow to be also not only for his glory but for our good and so somehow we don't understand always and we may never understand but the reality is he's going to use these things for our good and so when landon is sick and the situation is unexplainable and he is 27 years old and unable to walk the god of the universe is doing something in landon's life and when you're going through difficulty with your kids or your parents or your family and there's some unexplainable thing and you're going what in the world trial what is god doing in this there's something for me to learn there's some good that's going to come out of this god is going to be glorified maturity crisis reveals our lack of wisdom it's not that we lack standing with god we've got standing with him if i've been born again i've been i've been transferred from the kingdom of darkness to the kingdom of life i'm a child of god i've got standing with him it's not that i lack resources or tools i've got my bible i have the holy spirit in my life if i've been born again the holy spirit lives inside of me i'm not lacking as far as resources go but sometimes i'm lacking in knowledge because i don't know my bible and i don't understand i can't understand the circumstances that are going on around me because i don't know my bible well enough i don't know god's word i can't come to a place of wisdom

without knowledge which is why we study the scriptures it's why every sunday morning i'm i'm not just giving my ideas i'm unpacking the scripture to say here's what it says here's what he's teaching us here's what he's showing us about himself here's what he's teaching us about ourselves so that we can understand so that we can have enough knowledge to come to a place of understanding but i can have all knowledge and still not have wisdom knowledge is not wisdom there are seminary trained doctors of theology that i have met that have displayed zero wisdom i've seen people that know all kinds of theological truth they can talk about every intricate part about the trinity and yet in you as you look at their practical life the application of truth in their life with the right measure in the right way in the right time is not present they don't know how to use what they've learned and and the reality is if our theology is not working its way out into holiness in our life if our theology is not working its way out to a fiery evangelism in our life there's something wrong with our knowledge it has not matured to the point of wisdom we don't know how to apply it knowledge is the building block of wisdom a.b. simpson described wisdom this way he said it's the quality which enables us to suit the right means to the right end in view it is wholly practical and concerned not with theories and ideas but with actual conditions and the way to meet them it teaches us how to live and enables us to meet every emergency rightly and successfully it does not mean that we're infallible it is not the wisdom of our common sense and level-headedness it presupposes our ignorance and our fallibility and it takes god's wisdom instead of our own even when we cannot understand his leading faith can still trust him that it will be right in the end even when we err god's wisdom can still overrule our mistakes and bring blessing out of it in the end and then he goes on to describe how spurgeon would tell about a weather vane at the top of a farmer's house and on the top of that weather vane he had inscribed god is love and and when asked why did you inscribe god is love on that weather vane you know what a weather vane is right every time the wind blows it points it in a different direction right and and at the top of it it said god is love and spurgeon said that the man responded for god is love whichever way the wind blows wisdom understanding that no matter what happens in life no matter what the circumstances are the end of all things is that god is love he has a purpose in everything he has a reason behind it and we're not socialists in the faith well we shouldn't be socialists anywhere amen but we're not socialists in the faith where we say well everybody's the same and we're all we've all got the same wisdom and we're all equal before the lord in that sense now the reality is we're all equal in standing before the lord but some of us are not obedient and some of us are some of us are growing in maturity and some of us are not some of us have matured more and some of us have stayed stagnant in our faith we we've got to realize that this is actually a pursuit that we are called to to actually pursue not just knowledge of the scripture but wisdom from god supernatural wisdom that he gives us as we ask so that when we're in these situations that we don't know what to do and i got news for you if you haven't gotten to one of those places yet you're going to where you have no idea what to do in your circumstances maturity is going to say in this moment you need wisdom that you don't have and i know where to get it because the scripture says christ is for us wisdom you think of somebody like daniel going through difficulty in the old testament as he's trying to serve god in a pagan culture and what does he seek he seeks wisdom from god and you see it as he's praying and he's seeking the lord and as he responds when god blesses he says let the name of god be blessed forever and ever for wisdom and power belong to him where does he realize he needs wisdom he's facing you know standing up against the government of his time trying to be a godly man when it's illegal and when they're telling him not to pray and when he needs to bow down to the pagan idols i'm telling you we're not far from that in our culture and when our government is trying to tell us how we can and cannot worship we're not far from that the reality is going to come at some point where you're not going to be allowed to worship god the way the scripture says to do it and you're going to need wisdom in that moment and what daniel found was he said let the name of the lord be blessed forever and ever for wisdom is not coming from the university and wisdom is not coming from the world and wisdom is not coming from the news sources and the internet and whatever else it is coming from god and if i'm going to have wisdom to face the things that are going on in my life i'm going to need his wisdom then not my own he said let the name of the lord be blessed forever and ever for wisdom and power belong to him and it is he

who changes the times and the epics he removes kings and establishes kings he gives wisdom to wise men and knowledge to men of understanding it is he who reveals the profound and the hidden things he knows what is in the darkness and the light dwells with him you want wisdom for the trials that you're in it's coming from the lord you do not have it in yourself this is the requirement of mature faith to recognize it solomon is going to take the place of his father david in leading the kingdom what does he ask for he could have asked for anything he asks for wisdom he says give your servant an understanding mind to govern your people that i may discern between good and evil for who is able to govern this great people of yours proverbs 4 verse 7 solomon said it he said get wisdom and whatever you get get insight pursue it you're to pursue it when you come to a place of crisis all it's doing is revealing your need for christ because the scripture says christ first corinthians 124 to all those who are called both jews and greeks christ is the power of god and the wisdom of god all james is saying is you got to learn to walk with jesus if you walk with jesus you get wisdom he who walks with the wise will become wise walk with jesus you get wisdom number two wisdom requires prayer so trials require wisdom wisdom requires prayer and oftentimes we don't pray that way we're going to do it ourselves we're going to take care of it we're going to figure it out we're going to look at youtube whatever it is we're going to figure these things out so he says if any of you lacks wisdom let him ask of god who gives generously to all without reproach and it will be given him a prayer for wisdom the way that he words this is calling for a personal response let let he himself ask this is a call for you to do a little introspection you're facing your trials you're not responding rightly uh instead of that you're trying to work toward maturity and so you realize that i don't have wisdom for the trials i need to ask i need to come to god in prayer if any of you it's a consciousness a self-awareness about your lack that you don't have it you need it and it's wisdom that you need and so so as he uses the word here ask it means to ask in the sense of a request to ask in the sense of a demand a prayer that's asking for something to be given not for something to be done notice the distinction we're not asking for god to do something necessarily you can ask that that's that's that's open game for you to ask but that shouldn't be the first response of a mature faith a mature faith is not asking how to get out of the problem but what i'm going to get out of the problem it's going to god for wisdom and asking god what i need to learn in this how do i need to deal with this how do i need to respond to this ask for wisdom i'm asking for god to give me wisdom to supply it you learn something about god in the process of this because as he describes god ask of god and verse 5 where he says let him ask of god who gives generously to all without reproach and it will be given that god is a giving god it's it's part of what you're seeing about god if there's a few attributes that you see of him one that he's a giving god he's not a withholding god god is giving it's the the characteristic of an immature faith that sees god with a clenched fist it's characteristic of a mature mature faith that sees god with an open hand at one immaturity you think god's not going to give it uh with maturity you understand that god is wanting to give it that god is looking to give it he is a giving god it's it's it's who he is we think of him not just as a giving god but as a generous god uh you you don't need to think that god is the kind of god that's withholding things but he's a generous god and and you don't need to think that god's limited in what he's giving he's not just giving you a little bit he's not just trickling good things into your life he's actually wanting to bless you in great ways he's a generous god he uses the word generously here which means uh literally it means singleness of heart uh it means that he's giving for one reason and one reason only uh it's it's a a liberal giver that's giving just because you asked it's it's just because you needed something and you look to him he's responding generously he's opening his hands to you because you understood that the trial was requiring wisdom and wisdom was requiring prayer and you sought god he's responding to that with his goodness because he's good he's not going to turn away from you and he's generous he's going to give open-handedly to you as one commentary described this this word he said only occurs here in the new testament but the adjective is not rare the basic meaning is simple and single as in matthew 6 22 in luke 11 34 where it references a single eye for something accepting this meaning for the adverb the teaching of james is that god gives with a single motive to further the welfare of the asker he gives without ulterior motives he harbors no calculated desire to get something in return he's looking one way it's not a two-way situation it's totally of his grace that he's giving you it's totally for your welfare he goes on to say he gives to all wholeheartedly and with singleness of purpose and with a wealth of liberality he is a giving god and he is a generous god and he is a gracious god if you're looking at what you're gleaning about god in this you're getting a picture of who he is mature faith understands the character of god he's actually doing things because he's good and he's he's

generous and he is gracious as he says here and he gives to all any of you lacks wisdom let him ask if god who gives generously to all without reproach a gracious giving aren't you glad god's gracious unlike us aren't you glad god is kind unlike us he gives with an open hand he gives graciously and i think it's the king james that translates it he will not upbraid he won't insult you in response he gives to all uh verse five he gives to all without reproach he's not going to insult you i mean you think about how we do i mean guys give each other a hard time all the time i mean that's just how we roll uh if i do something and i goof it up i know david or aaron is going to call it out you know they're say hey way to go clumsy you know they're gonna if i do something if i if the sermon goes too long somebody's going to say something hey hey you preached a little long today didn't you buddy uh we give each other a hard time like that if i'm in need however i know if i was to go to one of these guys if i was to go to dale and say man and i just i really goofed something up if it was something that's not so serious we rib each other we give each other a hard time but when it's serious we click into a different mode and all of a sudden we are are very kind and gracious with each other and we say man i know what it's like to mess up i know what it's like to stumble i know what it's like to need help i get into projects at the house and i get into a project i get halfway in and realize i don't know what i'm doing i mean i i'm bold at the start yeah i got this figured out i'm you know i'm a man right i'm gonna handle this i'm gonna deal with this situation i get in there halfway in i'm like i have no clue what i'm doing and so i work on something i work on you know the plumbing or whatever and and the plumbing's all backed up and the line running from the back of the house goes downhill about you know however long 40 yards or something just long downhill slope and it gets clogged up i know what to do on a few things i i can run the snake down the toilet to make sure that it clears whatever out or down the sink and i can clear i can take the little you know the little trap out from under the sink and i can make sure it's not clogged and and then i realized that you know i've learned over time there's a clean out for the whole house out back and right next to the house there's a little thing that screws out of the pipe right next to the house and this clean out enables you to see if it's if it's clogged you know up to the the sewer line and and if there's a clogged you can you can go with the you know snake down this not a real snake there might be a real

[41:25] snake in there i don't know but but you take that little metal snake and you run it down there and you turn it around or if it's one of the big ones you crank it up or it's electric and it it turns around it grinds out whatever's down in there and and it gets it going and then if it's way down the line then i've got sewage backed up from you know 40 yards down all the way to the house and i'm trying to figure it out and i realize where the leak is because the ground's wet down there about halfway and i realize the pipe's leaking and i i dig it up a little and i realized that the tree right there has separated the pipe and so things are catching right there in the pipe and and it's clogged up 40 yards to the house until it overflows in my basement and it's 40 yards of goodness and it's it's so packed in the pipe that it is like concrete and what do you do well you've got to dig this stuff out and and and so with a with a pry bar i'm from a distance you know trying to pry this stuff i'm are you guys disgusted yet i mean it gets worse and then i i pry it and i hear it starting to break loose now mind you 40 yards of pressure that's built up all the way to the house so when it breaks loose i back up and it sprays everywhere right and so so through through experience you know i've learned how to do some things i've got a little bit of wisdom up to the point where now it's like i ain't doing this no more i'm gonna call one of those guys that does plumbing at some point and he's gonna come fix this because i'm not i'm not dealing with all that you know uh there there is a point where we've got needs for wisdom that we don't have and there comes a point where i run out of my knowledge and i run out of my experience and i've actually got to ask somebody for some help and in the circumstances of my life what james is saying was there's gonna come times where there's nobody that's gonna be able to help you but jesus he's not talking about those times where you can do this yourself he's talking about when your marriage is falling apart he's talking about when

your kids are dying he's talking about when your persecution comes and you're losing your job he's talking about difficulties he's talking about when only Jesus can step in walk with Jesus because you're gonna need his wisdom you're gonna need his strength you're gonna need him with you in these times where you run out of all your wisdom you don't know what to do and now it's it's so far out of your league that it's and it's gonna be a disaster if you keep going in this with your own strength God's giving God he's not withholding good from you he uses the word did my in the present tense tense emphasizing that God's generous nature is that of a father who is continually giving generous generous he's gracious Hebrews 4:16 says let us then with confidence draw near to the throne of grace that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need because Christ is the prince of peace Christ is the one who gives us access to the throne of grace when we need it I need Jesus if I'm not in fellowship with Christ I have no access to wisdom wisdom I don't have

it's wisdom I need to ask for and and this wisdom that I need to ask for that oftentimes I don't ask for it requires faith that I often won't commit to now this is not this is really a point of application here as he comes to to this part in verse 6 but let him ask in faith with no doubting no doubting for the one who doubts is like the wave of the sea driven and tossed by the wind let not that person suppose you will receive anything from the Lord he is double mind a double minded man unstable in all his ways so these trials are revealing something about God that he's good and he's generous and he's gracious it's also revealing something about me and how I'm approaching God and how sometimes uh I'm desperate I'm in crisis and I'm driven by the wind uh this person that he's describing in this situation is driven by the wind which means the circumstances the trials are driving him instead of the principles of truth that should lead him to wisdom and application of that in his life and application is not listening to God he's listening to the trial he's listening to the wave he's listening to the wind the wind is driving him he's just going with the wind now he's he's been driven by the trial to the point where he's not listening to God he should be listening to God he should be listening for God's wisdom and he's listening to the wind driven by the wind his emotions are driving him the circumstances are driving him he's doubting and this is the picture of the doubter because for us we need to keep in mind that doubting is not the antithesis of faith unbelief is the antithesis antithesis if I could say it antithesis of faith say that 10 times fast right it's belief and unbelief doubt is the vacillating between the two it's not that he's unbelieving he does believe and then he doesn't believe and then he does believe and then he doesn't believe it's it's doubting I won't stay in believing I I'm going back and forth in this issue I'm trusting God I'm not trusting God I'm I'm gonna listen to him I'm not gonna listen I'm listening and then I'm gonna take it in my own hands I'm gonna I'm gonna I'm gonna trust God and I'm gonna pray and I'm gonna seek his face now I'm gonna take it back and I'm gonna I'm gonna do it myself he used the word diacrino dia means separation krino means to decide or distinguish it means to thoroughly go back and forth between two things OS Guinness in a book described doubt this way he said it is an interesting analysis on doubt contrary to widespread understanding doubt is not the same as unbelief so it is not the opposite of faith rather it is the state of mind in suspension between faith and unbelief to believe is to be of one mind in accepting something as true to disbelieve is to be of one mind in rejecting it to doubt is to waver somewhere between the two thus being two minds he is double-minded he's believing and unbelieving this important distinction he said uncovers the major misconception of doubt the idea that a believer betrays faith and surrenders to unbelief by doubting it's not true he does believe and then he doesn't believe and then he does believe and then he doesn't what James says is this is immaturity this is you approaching the problems of your life in the flesh and in immaturity you're trying to move toward a mature faith a faith that is single-minded a mind that is set on one thing just as he's playing on the words here of God being generous with one mind to do things single-mindedly toward you for your benefit you are to be single-minded toward him in faith you are to trust him you are to believe him you are to hold on and to cling to him in these situations double-minded double-minded means unstable it's restlessness it's you not being settled on the issue that God is in control and that God is sovereign it's like taking a chair and trying to balance it on its back two legs I mean I can remember as a teenager just that was like a challenge for me I was always trying to get that chair to balance just right and so I would lean it back and and

every now and then i could catch it just right so a chair would be sitting there and i would leave the classroom that way i would do several chairs all balancing just perfectly leave the classroom so that when somebody came in all they had to do was bump into one thing and all the chairs fall right i mean it's just the way i rolled your teacher you always appreciated me or it's like the the you know in the army at the mess hall uh we were always turning everything into a game or a bet or something and so so we would have this little thing that we would do with people i bet you your your dessert at lunch that i can balance this egg on its end without breaking it and so so sure enough somebody said okay i'll take you up on that and and they'll be trying to balance the egg but what they didn't realize was is that i would have salt in my hand and i would lick the bottom of the egg stick it on the salt and the salt sticks to the bottom of the egg and then all those salt particles are are sharp edge little you know particles and so on the bottom of that egg you sit the egg down on that and you can balance it because the salt it's standing on the salt particles and then i would always win the bet because they couldn't get it they wouldn't figure it out you can't see the things that are on the bottom of it it's it's like the weeble wobble that doesn't fall down you remember the toy anybody okay we've got some we've got some older people here that remember the weeble wobble what was the commercial the weeble wobbles but it it doesn't fall down right and the reason is because it's it's all the weight of it is in the bottom of it and as the weight is in the bottom you can sit it wherever you want and it's going to roll over to the bottom and it's going to stand right back up and it's because it's it's in a sense anchored with the weight the weight is going to hold it in the right position doubt is vacillating between the two faith is me anchored in the position all the weight is going to one spot so that i'm trusting god with my circumstances i'm in the trial and i'm anchored believing in him and yes i'm going to weeble and i'm going to wobble but i'm not going to fall down i'm going to stand because i'm trusting him i'm going to i'm going to be tempted over and over again to let go james is saying don't let go jesus said everyone who has these words of mine and does them will be like a wise man who builds his house on the rock the rain fell the floods came the wind blew and beat on that house but it did not fall because it had been founded on the rock and everyone who hears these words of mine and does them will be like a and does not do them will be like the foolish man who built his house on the sand the wind and the waves they'll come and the fall of that house will be great only christ brings stability he's the anchor that's why the author of hebrews said in hebrews 6 18 we have fled for refuge and and we might have strong encouragement to hold fast to the hope that is set before us because of him we have this as a sure and steadfast anchor of the soul a hope that enters into the inner place behind the curtain where jesus has gone before for us on our behalf jesus is my anchor i've got wisdom in him i'm learning to walk with him in these times i'm learning to hold on to him because he's going to hold tight to me as i hold tight to him it's the maturity of faith problem for me is i won't commit to faith i vacillate sometimes showing my immaturity get frustrated fall jesus said we're to believe without doubt in matthew 21 21 truly i say to you if you have faith and do not doubt you'll not only say what has been done to this fig tree but even if you say to this mountain be taken up and thrown into the sea it will happen it's it's doubt it's the vacillating it's not unbelief it's not just unbelief it's it's this instability we're to pray without doubting even the command of timothy in first timothy 2 8 manner to pray everywhere lifting up holy hands without wrath and without doubting it's the mark of maturity we're going to be mature men if we're going to be mature women in the faith it's going to be because we stop vacillating between two points and we commit to trust jesus no matter what that's maturity and so you see the progression requirement of mature faith recognizes that trials require wisdom we don't have it wisdom requires prayer sometimes we don't offer it prayer requires faith and sometimes we won't commit to it need to learn to walk with jesus because christ is the anchor for our soul maturity enables me to hold on when i don't see anything else to hold on to i can hold on to christ that's why augustine said pray not for a lighter load pray for stronger shoulders only christ gives strength to these shoulders don't pray for easy lives philips brooks said pray for stronger men do not pray for tasks equal to your power pray for powers equal to your tasks and every day you shall be in wonder at yourself at the richness of life which has come to you by the grace of god alone we need wisdom and it'll change everything it's going to grow us we're going to mature in our faith if we'll if we'll get this picture in our mind because god has brought the trials that you're facing right now every single thing that's going on in your life right now if you'll look at it through these lenses and realize that god has a purpose in your life for his glory and for your good and that you start

looking at these tests as opportunity not just to get out of the trial but to see what you can get out of the trial and you start realizing that i don't have the wisdom that i need to face this god's showing me the wisdom that i need i'm trusting him for it i'm asking him for it and when he gives it i'm making application of it and in the end what we're going to see year after year as we go through these trials is not that the trials are going to stop coming they're not going to stop on this side of heaven but what you're going to see is that you stop crying you stop being a baby in your faith you stopped being immature because you started growing as you walked with jesus so if you found yourself crying being a baby in the faith stop it grow up it's time to get a hold of the lord and start walking with jesus fb meyer wrote a commentary and he said it this way he said a bar of iron is worth two dollars and fifty cents at his time and i don't know how big this bar was and i'm sure today it's worth a whole lot more but the bar of iron is worth two dollars and fifty cents but when made into horseshoes it's worth five dollars if made into needles it's worth 175 dollars if made into penknife blades it's worth sixteen hundred and twenty five dollars if made into springs for watches it's worth a hundred and twenty five thousand dollars what a trial by fire that bar must undergo to be worth this but the more it is manipulated the more it is hammered and pressed through the heat beaten and pounded and polished the greater its value christian are you wondering about the trials through which you are passing with impatient heart with impatient hearts you're saying how long oh lord the heat of the flame and the blows of the hammer are necessary if you are to be more than an unpolished rough bar of iron god's all-wise plan though it calls for the fire produces the valuable watch springs of maturity his very best for your life has behind it his perfect timing what a great statement the three requirements of mature faith these recognitions trials require wisdom wisdom requires prayer and prayer requires faith father we come to you this morning and we praise the name of jesus f ucZ quadratic laws we don't like our trials fjung■■■ fouts fuc f ■■■■ f■■ f f f f f f f