

Do You Really Want Wisdom?

What do you do when you don't know what to do? Where do you go and whom do you ask?

It seems that we live in a world where everyone has an opinion about every thing, but there's only one opinion that matters more than any other and that's God's. He is the source of all wisdom.

So, if it is wisdom you want—and since God alone holds the key to this wisdom—you and I must go to Him on bended knee. This shows we have a proper fear of Him. The counsel of the Lord is with those who fear him (Ps. 25:14). You respect Him. You are in awe of Him. You therefore ask for mercy that you might find grace for wisdom in your time of need.

But, what about asking for wisdom in faith *without any doubting*? That is what James said. First, he said that if any of us lacks wisdom, we should simply ask God. I welcome that. James added that God gives this generously to all, “without criticism, and it will be given to him” (James 1:5). I like that a lot too. So far, so good.

But James added something that gives me a sinking feeling. I almost wish he hadn't said it: “But let him ask in faith, without wavering. For he who wavers is like a wave of the sea, driven and tossed with the wind. Let not that man think that he will receive anything from the Lord” (James 1:6-7).

This is not so easy to explain. First, I am not sure how many people pray without ever doubting. Surely only Jesus prayed without ever doubting. He alone had the Holy Spirit without any limit (John 3:34). What James puts before us is virtually the same thing Jesus puts before us.

He said, “For truly I say to you, whoever says to this mountain, ‘Be removed and be thrown into the sea,’ and does

not doubt in his heart, but believes that what he says will come to pass, he will have whatever he says" (Mark 11:23). True. But, apart from an allegorical interpretation of Mark 11:23, how many have literally prayed for a mountain to be removed and it disappeared before their very eyes? I haven't. But there is no doubt that if I truly prayed with that kind of faith such a mountain would disappear before my eyes.

James didn't say that a person who doubts won't have their prayers answered. He said the person who doubts should not expect to have their prayers answered; we may not have the expectancy. But God is greater than our expectancy! He may choose to answer our prayers because we *asked*—not because we prayed without doubting. Behind all our prayers with our limited faith is our great High Priest who intercedes for us at God's right hand with a perfect faith! That is why our prayers are answered. It is Jesus' faith that lies behind answered prayer.

The same is true when it comes to praying in the will of God. In order to be heard, we must pray in God's will. That is the way we are "heard." But if we *"know that He hears whatever we ask, we know that we have whatever we asked of Him"* (1 John 5:14-15).

We have two things here:

- Praying in the will of God
- Knowing you pray in His will

If the latter is the case with you, you are assured your prayer will be answered. But does it follow that if we *don't* know we have been heard that our prayer cannot be answered? No. The proof of this is the prayer of Zechariah who prayed for a son. But after a while he gave up praying for a son. Then one day the angel Gabriel announced to Zechariah.

"Your prayer has been heard" (Luke 1:13). Zechariah didn't believe it! But his prayer was nonetheless answered, and John

the Baptist was born! Zechariah's unbelief did not stop answered prayer. This is because any prayer prayed in the will of God—whether we consciously pray in His will or not—will be answered.

So, do not be overly concerned if you don't pray in perfect faith or know for sure that you prayed in God's will.

What do I do? I know that God holds the key. He knows the next step forward. The Holy Spirit *always* knows what to do next. I simply say, "Lord, I come to You to ask for mercy, that I might find wisdom in this hour—to know what to do now."

That's it. That is exactly how I pray. And although I cannot say God answers me as I wish every single time I pray, He does answer me at times! That's good enough for me.

One last thing. God delights in mercy. He loves to show mercy. He is a merciful God. He knows our frame, remembers that we are dust (Ps. 103:14).

Psalms 103:14 is possibly my favorite verse in all the psalms. It coheres with Hebrews 4:14, that our great High Priest is sympathetic with our weaknesses. So, when we pray we should remember to begin by asking for "mercy," as the writer says in Hebrews 4:16.

Go to your heavenly Father and ask. He has the key. He can unlock your mind, take the dimness from your eyes, increase your ability to hear, and give you wisdom that defies a natural explanation—in one second. Just ask.

✖ Adapted from *In Pursuit of His Wisdom* by **R. T. Kendall**, copyright 2015, published by Charisma House. In this book, the author shows you how to pursue the knowledge of God, which leads to true wisdom. You can take possession of this gift in order to know the next step forward, use the right timing and gain 20/20 foresight in decision making.

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Prayer Power for the Week of November 16, 2015

This week go to the Lord with a humble heart and in meekness. Thank Him for His mercy and grace in your life. Thank Him that Jesus is your High Priest and understands all that you are facing. When you ask for wisdom, thank Him for answering your prayer and giving you direction and the solutions you need. Continue to pray for worldwide revival and lift up our national, civic and spiritual leaders. Pray that Israel would fulfill the mandate God has for it in this hour and remember the persecuted church (Psalm 103:14; Heb. 4:14).