

**40 Day Refresh Discussion Questions**  
**Expectant Prayer – James 1:5-7,16-18**  
Drawn from the January 14, 2024 sermon by Pastor Rick Dietzman

Opener: Do you have something in your life you believe God has been leading you to pray for?

This small group study is a companion to the 40 Day Refresh devotional readings for January 15-20 as well as a reflection on the January 14 sermon outline.

**I. What am I expecting from God?**

*If any of you lacks wisdom, you should ask God, who gives generously to all without finding fault, and it will be given to you. But when you ask, you must believe and not doubt, because the one who doubts is like a wave of the sea, blown and tossed by the wind. That person should not expect to receive anything from the Lord. Such a person is double-minded and unstable in all they do. James 1:5-8*

A. The command is to ask God for wisdom.

1. Why is it better to seek wisdom than the answer you are looking for?

B. Wisdom is about insight, perspective, knowledge.

*“Come to me with your ears wide open. Listen, and you will find life. Isaiah 55:3*

2. Can you describe a time you received insight or perspective from God’s word that you would say helped you “find life”?

C. Wisdom is a gift from God which helps us know what to hope for.

*I pray that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened in order that you may know the hope to which he has called you, the riches of his glorious inheritance in his holy people, and his incomparably great power for us who believe. Ephesians 1:18-19*

*The earnest prayer of a righteous person has great power and produces wonderful results. James 5:16b*

3. Where do you need the “incomparably great power” of God to be at work in the coming week?

## **II. What is causing me to doubt God?**

A. Lack of faith in God's character and promises.

What makes us unstable?

- Indecision and distractions
- Criticism instead of encouragement
- Lack of opportunity or resources
- Fear of failing

*“Blessed is the one who perseveres under trial because, having stood the test, that person will receive the crown of life that the Lord has promised to those who love him.” James 1:12*

4. How have trials or the overcoming of temptation been a gift from God to you? How have they produced life and good fruit in your life?

B. Divided loyalty.

*“Each person is tempted when they are dragged away by their own evil desire and enticed. Then, after desire has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and sin, when it is full-grown, gives birth to death.” James 1:14-15*

5. What does it mean to be a double minded person? How does it relate to doubt?

C. Not applying God's word.

*Don't just listen to God's word. You must do what it says. Otherwise, you are only fooling yourselves. James 1:22*

6. Why might only listening to God's word and not applying it cause us to lose expectancy?

### **III. What does God want me to do now?**

*Trust in the Lord with all your heart; do not depend on your own understanding Seek his will in all you do, and he will show you which path to take. Proverbs 3:5-6*

*He wakens me morning by morning, wakens my ear to listen like one being taught. The Sovereign LORD has opened my ears, and I have not been rebellious; I have not drawn back. Isaiah 50:4-5*

*He calls his own sheep by name ...and they follow him because they know his voice. John 10:3-4*

*Don't forget what you heard, then God will bless you for doing it. James 1:25*

*Don't be deceived, my dear brothers and sisters. Every good and perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of the heavenly lights, who does not change like shifting shadows. He chose to give us birth through the word of truth, that we might be a kind of firstfruits of all he created. James 1:16-18*

7. Comment on one or more of the following "Steps to awareness and action."

- What are you hoping for?
  
- What are you sensing?

- What needs correcting?
  
- What is being birthed in you?

**Group Prayer Time:** James reminds his readers to keep God’s perspective through trials, difficulties, poverty, prosperity, and temptations. We are to keep in mind that every good gift comes from God and that we are to remain thankful in everything. Pray that members of the group will take his message to heart. If there are any issues people are dealing with, pray that God will help them grow in that area. Pray also for any needs people are facing.

**For Personal Reflection your own:**

A. Memorize Proverbs 3:5-6 *“Trust in the Lord with all your heart; do not depend on your own understanding. Seek his will in all you do, and he will show you which path to take.”*

B. Do this week’s Bible reading plan in the YouVersion Bible app (see Downloads page)

C. Review the daily devotions for January 15-20 in 40 Day Refresh

**Next week, January 21, pastor Jeff will cover the subject of Fasting. There will be discussion questions available in “Downloads” on the SCC website.**