

“THE UNKNOWN GOLDEN KEY” by Don Myers

James, the Lord’s half-brother, was inspired by God’s Holy Spirit to write the Epistle of James. Among other things, it seems to be a letter (General Epistle) addressed to Christians who were facing hard times. In all seasons of life (but, especially in hard times) this letter is a must-read for Christians who encounter various trials (1:2); who are of humble circumstances (1:9); who are preserving under trial (1:12); who might encounter someone of lowly estate (2:1-13); who may be called upon to allow faith to take legs to help a hungry or naked person (2:14-26); who might be tempted to take advantage of someone who cannot defend themselves (5:1-6); being put in a position to trust God for protection and repayment to those who abuse us (5:7-11); not to allow life’s circumstances and abuses to embitter us (5:12); and, to rely on God through prayer (5:13-18).

It is in this context that the Holy Spirit through the pen of James offers the Christian who trust God’s promise in an unwavering manner the treasure of the universe. He writes:

"But if any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask of God, who gives to all generously and without reproach, and it will be given to him. But he must ask in faith without any doubting, for the one who doubts is like the surf of the sea, driven and tossed by the wind. For that man ought not to expect that he will receive anything from the Lord, being a double-minded man, unstable in all his ways" (James 1:5-8).

Frankly, this promise from God to give the treasure of wisdom has become one of my greatest comforts in what seems to be an uncertain world with unexpected turbulence and terrifying situations which can come upon us as quickly as a storm on the

Sea of Galilee in Jesus' day. Never forget that if we have the water-walking Jesus in the boat with us, He can issue His "peace be still" anytime He is ready. Often, when I cry, "Lord, help me and please help me now," He comes walking on the water in the fourth watch of the night. Little did those frightened disciples in the boat know that the Lord who had commanded them with urgency to get into that boat and get away from the tempting circumstances of 5000 men coming to make Jesus king by force (men they, themselves had recruited during the limited commission fueling the expectations of all that the Messiah had come to lead an overthrow of the Roman yoke) had been watching them from a mountainside for eight to ten hours as they struggled in the teeth of the storm into which He, himself, had sent them. Jesus did not come to them in the first, second, or even third watch of the night—but, He came walking on the very thing that had terrified them in the fourth watch of the night. Mind you, He walked all over what terrified them!! Can we make application and visualize our Jesus walking all over what is terrifying us?!

Yet, in the midst of the storm, He bids us to ask for wisdom promising us that He (who is the Fountainhead of infinite wisdom) will give it to us gladly with only one qualifier—we must trust without any doubt that He will, in fact, give it to us. How overwhelmingly exciting that the God of all wisdom promises to give wisdom to us "generously"!

Have you ever thought of God giving you a "set of keys" when you became a Christian—mind you, a full set of keys? I hate keys because they are bulky and the sharp points gouge my leg. One day I was complaining again about my keys, when my wife said, "Give me those keys for a minute." I handed her my key ring and she asked me, "What is this key?" I answered, "That is the key to the house." She, then asked, "What is this key?" And I said, "That is

to the car.” She continued the interrogation, “What is this key?” I said, “That is, well...ugh..well, I don’t know what that key unlocks,” so she took it off my key ring and laid it aside. When she finished going around the ring of keys, there were at least four or five keys which I had no idea what they unlocked. She then, wisely, said, “I am going to put these unknown keys in a cup on top of the refrigerator and if you ever get to a door or lock you can’t open just remember the key that fits that lock is likely in this cup.” Smart girl! I had been carrying around keys in my pocket that I had no idea what lock they fit—what door they had the power to open.

Could it be that God provides all Christians a full set of keys the moment we become Christians, but, due to immaturity and lack of knowledge, we do not know what many of those keys unlock—the doors behind which are treasures beyond our imagination? Then, one day we are reading the Scriptures or talking to a mature Christian and, suddenly, we shout, “Now I know what this key is and what it unlocks!” The 24-karat golden key all of us have been carrying about in our spiritual pockets is the one that unlocks the door to God’s infinite storehouse of wisdom. It teaches us how to deal with bosses, money, relationships, family, children, neighbors, and all of life’s circumstances. Yet, if we have not known what that key of wisdom was for, then it has been there never used to appropriate the treasures God has always had for us.

What use or value is wisdom? Let me illustrate. Take the time to look at an electrical outlet cover in your home there on one of your walls. To a child, it seems like nothing and that is why we must take precautions with small children because they do not realize the power represented by those simple-looking covers. Yet, we know that we can plug into that outlet which is connected to Alabama Power Company that has a system of generating tremendous voltage to power our devices, appliances, electronics,

AC, etc. If someone asks, “What is the use of wisdom?,” we would think of them as a little child who cannot imagine what the simple covering on the electrical outlet represents—the power it can deliver.

God, often, does not just send \$1000 when we need it, but gives us wisdom to manage the \$100 we have in our pockets. If He kept sending us a \$1000 every time we ask Him, we would continue to squander it and mismanage it. Instead, He sends wisdom to teach us how to manage. Which is greater—all the gold in Ft. Knox, or wisdom? If we had all the gold in Ft. Knox but no wisdom, how long do you suppose it would take us to have nothing and coming back to God asking for a \$1000?

What is the purpose of this piece? Well, I spoke of the comfort the promise of wisdom presents to me as a Christian. God did not say it was possible that He would give us wisdom, but it is an iron-clad promise. That means I will never face a challenge in life that God will fail to give me the wisdom to navigate—never.

Is that not a tremendous comfort? So, look again at the keys God gave you the day you became a Christian and look for that golden one. It is labeled, “wisdom.”