



James / Faith that Works - Wk. 3
"Wisdom for the Double Minded"
By Pastor Jody May 09/13/2026

[CALL TO HEAR]

James 1:5-8 ESV

⁵If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask God, who gives generously to all without reproach, and it will be given him. ⁶But let him ask in faith, with no doubting, for the one who doubts is like a wave of the sea that is driven and tossed by the wind. ⁷For that person must not suppose that he will receive anything from the Lord; ⁸he is a double-minded man, unstable in all his ways.

Pastor – "People of God, this is the Word of God."

People – "Thanks be to God."

Pray

Illustration: A week to remember.

Introduction

Trials will always be with us, so there will always be a need for wisdom. We want to discuss this week how James supposes we deal with our trials and that comes by way of 4 different actions we will develop through our text this week. We start off first by **realizing the need for wisdom**. Not just any wisdom but the type of pure wisdom that can not only answer the immediate trials of life but get us through to the other side. Next, we discuss the **receiving of God's generosity** in the giving of wisdom. Good news, God has a lot to give, and he withholds from no one that really wants it. Then we will discover the way we get that is **requesting in faith the wisdom** we need. Do you believe in the one in who you ask of? Lastly, along with asking we must practice **rejecting doubt and instability** in order to receive such wisdom.

MP

**God freely gives Wisdom to those who ask in faith,
while double mindedness only produces instability.**

1. Realizing we need Wisdom.



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^{5a} If any of you lacks **wisdom**, let him ask God, who gives generously to all without reproach, and it will be given him.

Who needs it?

Well, who would it be that James is talking to here, who is the **one that lacks wisdom**?

²Count it all joy, my **brothers**, when you meet trials of various kinds

The brothers/sisters who will be meeting trials, the ones that are building endurance through steadfastness, the ones who are testing their faith - the CHURCH! So, Let's not fool ourselves, for all in this room need wisdom, and if you are facing trials everyday then you should be asking for this wisdom every day. There is no one here that does not need Wisdom and there is no one in this room that does not lack it. What's more, if trials are how we build faith and faith is needed for our preservation to get through this life to get to the Lord, then if you heed not this warning, you are placing yourself in danger of falling away, as in you may be one of those that discovers your faith was never real.

What is [Wisdom](#)? I read this explanation this week from one of the men I am studying for this series. "*Wisdom is skill at life, particularly the ability to make sound judgments and speak the right words.*" - McCartney (88). So, wisdom is what makes your life successful, without it, you keep making wrong decisions. That's pretty useful. I don't think anyone would disagree with that definition; **wisdom is the right application of knowledge**. It needs to be said also that people with lower IQs may have higher degrees of wisdom over people of higher IQs. The amount of intellect does not determine the amount of wisdom one can have (example of G3), although the more knowledge one can absorb the propensity for greater Wisdom is there.

What type of wisdom should we seek?

What we want to do upfront is ask then what does James consider a good type of wisdom to have? Thankfully for us he describes it later in his letter, so we



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will use that today and then talk about it more in depth when we get there a few weeks from now.

James 3:17 ESV

But the **WISDOM** from above is first **pure**, then peaceable, gentle, open to reason, full of mercy and good fruits, impartial and sincere.

1st, when James is talking about wisdom, he means that which **comes from God not a man**.

Proverbs 2:6 ESV

6 For the LORD gives wisdom; from his mouth come knowledge and understanding;

7 he stores up sound wisdom for the upright; he is a shield to those who walk in integrity,

A **pure wisdom** does not have the taint of man on it, it has a divine spring, it comes straight to the receiver from the source, the LORD. This type of wisdom comes from contemplating on what God has said and then doing it. It is the revealed will of God in your life, shaping what you already know to be true. It is God's take on the actions you should take, not man's.

Can you have true wisdom without God? Not really, if God makes the world, and He is sovereign over all things, then what you and I want is to receive from Him how to live in His world. If you spend a lot of time trying to gain knowledge for living in the world according to the world's ways, in the end it will leave you empty. Even if you were to live with some type of temporary contentment based upon earthly knowledge, then you are still foolish for it is a way that leads to death: Proverbs wisdom from 2 weeks ago (Proverbs [14:12](#); [16:25](#)). That is what TikTok is full of, people who give earthly wisdom for earthly ways, that will change in a few years as the world keeps developing. God's Wisdom is eternal and is meant to give you a return that is also eternal, providing for eternal security, wealth, health, and love. You saw the payout this week in Revelation 20-21 with the New Jerusalem and the River of Life coming out of it. Spend your time ensuring you are gaining Wisdom that gets you that pay-off!



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So, **1st** the **wisdom we want comes first from God** not man. It means we are people of God's Word, people who ask others about God's Word, we are people who pray back to God His Word, and then our conclusions should show the truth of God's Words. It does not mean everything goes smooth without problems; it just means you played it the way God wanted you to play it. So, the type of wisdom we seek, and use is a pure wisdom from the Divine/LORD, not watered down by the world.

2nd, James also tells us that Godly wisdom is *peaceable, gentle, open to reason* it is a **wisdom that leads people to peace**, that sounds a lot like Proverb's Wisdom again.

Proverbs 15:1 ESV

15 A soft answer turns away wrath, but a harsh word stirs up anger.

You ever hear someone that loves to argue, or when they talk to 'you' they can't hear your answers as shown by an abrupt reply, the cutting off of your answer, the speaking over you. They can only defend their answers, they love to use the word 'you' because they don't attack a problem, they attack what they don't like about 'you'. That is a worldly argumentative technique that comes from a lack of Godly wisdom, it shows fear. Godly wisdom knows how to answer for it hears the concerns of others, it knows how to take in information, and it quells rejections to reason.

So, we want a wisdom that comes from God and while being truthful the expression of it seeks to bring peace; always means it has an offer of Grace. Wisdom from God is not only corrective but restorative, it seeks the good of others, it is as James says full of Mercy. Doesn't mean people will always like it, but the reason you give it is that they too might find the eternal benefit of living it.

3rd, This type of wisdom **shows no partiality**. James also said that Godly wisdom is *full of mercy and good fruits, impartial and sincere*. That sounds a lot like Proverbs 24.



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Proverbs 24:23 ESV

²³ These also are sayings of the wise. Partiality in judging is not good.

Godly wisdom is needed for judging others rightly for it is fair. Fair discernment comes from operating with right judgments that are set upon the scales of God's laws and God's Mercy. When we use God's Wisdom for everyday life it reminds us not to look at people like the world does but to view people through the lens of Jesus Christ. You either see people who follow Him and therefore you are to help them follow Him better. Or you see them as lost and what they need to hear from you is that they too can be found, by confessing of sin, crying out for forgiveness, and trusting in Jesus. Wisdom from above sees a need in each person and responds without partiality to the need of that individual and situation.

In conclusion here to **Realizing the Need for Wisdom**, we know that God's people, the church will endure trials and therefore they will need wisdom to get through them. We also see the need for a **Pure Wisdom**, wisdom that comes from God, for it is the only thing that develops an eternal payoff. Worldly wisdom for eternal perspectives will fail to bring us into our future eternal home. I think this pretty much lays out all our need for a pure wisdom from God.

But PJ, what if you have asked before and received not? What if you have not followed the advice of scripture or good counsel, is wisdom still there for you to be gained?

2. Receiving God's Generosity

^{5b} If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask God, who **gives generously** to all **without reproach**, and it will be given him.

We will need wisdom for life, for our trials, to get through them but sometimes **people have a hard time asking God** for this. Sometimes that comes from the perception that God is not listening to our requests. I would say asking God for things to work a certain way isn't the same as asking for Wisdom. Don't judge God's desire or ability based on the 'No's' you have received in prayer. Perhaps judge those events as God knows more than you, hence why he said 'no'. Some



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are afraid to ask God for they know that have not heeded God's Wisdom in the past. As in, why should he help me now when I have spurned His help in the past. Because God is not man and is not to be judged by our standards, go back and read the last 4 chapters of Job again. Or perhaps let us learn from the Wisdom of God's Word today and change that perception.

James says in the second part of v.5, that God is **generous - to all - without reproach**. Those are 3 separate things about God's generosity that are good to understand, that brings us wisdom on how to approach God.

1st James says **God gives generously**, why, because simply put, God is generous by nature. Man is selfish by nature because we don't really own anything, and we know we can lose it at any moment, and that tends to make us stingy. God owns all and therefore whatever God gives He always gives in abundant generosity.

Romans 8:32 ESV

He who did not spare his own Son but gave him up for us all, how will he not also with him **graciously give us all things?**

God, if he would not even spare the giving of his Son for the payment for sins, then how in the world can we believe that our Father is not generous. Paul knows after a life of trials and constantly requesting wisdom in his life that God had given him all that he needed in abundance. No, if we don't ask, it should not be because we think He isn't generous.

2nd James also says that **He gives to all**. That means God does not show partiality. It does not matter whether you have been following God for a 1 month or ten years, the person that asks for wisdom from God receives the same amount of abundance from God. Jesus' teaching in the *Laborers in the Vineyard* ([Matthew 20:1-16](#)) teaches that all receive their just reward from God no matter how long they have served Him, *our Identity is not in our years of service but in the one whom we serve*. The benefit of that is that Grace is not restricted by how well we know God, but Grace is given by how well He knows us and our needs.



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3rd James says **God's generosity is without [reproach](#)**. That's a line that needs a little explaining. There's no hesitation from God in this blessing. For those trying to practice their faith, to develop their steadfastness through those trials, God gives to that person whether they have failed in obedience in the past or not. God does not withhold from the person, that when they knew the right thing to do in the past, they chose not to. God does not look at them and is like, "Remember last time, what guarantees do I have that you won't blow it again, remember how much you begged me for that answer, and then you turned and did the exact opposite!" That's reproach, but James says, God gives wisdom without all of that, because the one thing we have that the world doesn't is we already have FORGIVENESS. In Christ, our reproach has been handled, the Savior took the reproach of the Father due to us, therefore God gives to His children without holding back wisdom, to all with no partiality. Wisdom is ours simply because God is Generous, period, it is His nature.

So, the quest for Wisdom starts **first** with **realizing your need** for it, and then **secondly receiving the generosity** of God that means simply with no partiality and no reproach.

But right now, you may have something you need to make a decision on, and you still are frozen in what to do, well where does that come from?

3. Requesting in Faith

6a But let him ask in faith, with no doubting

Faith is required in going to God for that much needed wisdom.

1st Command – Count trials all joy!

2nd Command – Submit to Sanctification – Let maturing be perfected in you!

3rd Command – Ask God for wisdom in faith without doubt!

It doesn't mean there is no usefulness in being cautious, it just means our skepticism needs to be mastered by our faith in Jesus, when it comes time to request wisdom from Him.



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John the Baptist while he was in jail sent messengers to Jesus, whom he already had baptized and declared that he must decrease for this man, but he still asked one more time if he was the Messiah ([Matthew 11:1-6](#)). Jesus' answer was tell Him what you have seen and blessed is the one who is not offended by me. Jesus knew exactly what to tell John for John had been looking for the one that would do the miracles of cleansing for the common man.

Doubting Thomas, the disciple, was a skeptic, and would not believe in the risen Jesus unless he could touch those scars ([John 20:24-29](#)). Jesus appears to Him and gives Thomas exactly what he needed for his days ahead, and Thomas reply was, "My Lord and my God."

There was the story of the unbelieving father, who knew enough in that Jesus could cast out spirits and help his abused son, but he didn't know who Jesus fully was. Jesus makes the comment of the lack of faith in that generation and makes the declaration ***all things are possible for the one who believes.*** ([Mark 9:14-29](#)). That's when that man cried out, *I believe help my unbelief!* Jesus did and cast out that spirit that no one else could.

All of these doubting men though came to Christ, simply in faith, knowing they had a problem believing, and Jesus answered each one differently according to their need. **Faith is not about you having everything figured out yet, it is going to Jesus believing you will get the answers from Him that you need.** Is that us family, do we believe Jesus has the wisdom we need for life?

Right before Jesus gives us the golden rule for life in Mat 7:12, "*Do unto others as you would have them do unto you*" Jesus knows we will need His wisdom to live that out.

Mat. 7:7-8 ESV

⁷"Ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you. ⁸For everyone who asks receives, and the one who seeks finds, and to the one who knocks it will be opened."



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Now let's talk about what this looks like. It doesn't say Jesus gives us the things we want in the way we ask, but we are told by the Lord that ways are unlocked to us for discovery. The doubting father who had faith in God had gone to the disciples for delivery after a lifetime of pain for he and his son, but Jesus had Him endure that time so he might be used as a sign to a lost generation. JB was told the truth NOT so he could receive his reward now for paving Jesus' way but so that he could endure prison and the executioner's blade. Thomas was strengthened not for his personal pursuits but for the expansion of the Gospel dying as his own body too was pierced by a spear. No, Jesus gives us what we need, exactly when we need it, according to His plans, to bring the utmost glory for the LORD. Wisdom is not immediate answers, neither is it the reduction of pain and suffering, but wisdom received from the Lord helps us to endure current struggles for a positive gain!

Illustration. Just in a smaller picture of this, my son asked me a question the other day because he lacked the wisdom yet to make a good decision on insurances. What I did instead of giving him direct answers was I told him the process of how to look. My goal was that in his interactions he would learn lessons of communication, and receive information based on his work and involvement in a process, and in return he would gain knowledge that he had not before making him better prepared for days ahead. You see what God does for us in the request for wisdom is not necessarily gives us all the answers up front but He open doors for discovery and lessons to be learned that make us stronger for our days ahead.

A Pure Wisdom from above is not the automatic transfer of answers from the Lord but it is the laying out of lessons, through trials. That means we miss out on gaining wisdom if we abandon the field of instruction or we hide from our teammates the church, who are willing and able to guide us through the tedious times of trial and error.

So, we have **realized what wisdom is**, we have taught on **receiving wisdom in generosity** from God and that we must **request** for such **wisdom** from God **in faith**. That leaves us with one more action to accomplish today.



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4. Rejecting Doubt and Instability

^{6b} for the one who doubts is like a wave of the sea that is driven and tossed by the wind. ⁷ For that person must not suppose that he will receive anything from the Lord; ⁸ he is a double-minded man, unstable in all his ways.

Doubt must be confronted with faith in Jesus and going to Him for answers so what does it look like when we let doubt take control? James uses this picture of a wave on the sea that is tossed about like the wind. Even the ancient Maritimers knew that waves were nothing more than constructs of wind. Wind is what stirs up the seas and the lack of it is what causes the waves to die out. People who allow doubt to take control in their minds and as we said last week, make quick reactionary decisions with their emotions, are driven around, they never stay in one place, and cause havoc on people when they slap up on them. James flat out tells those who are driven around by the wind, that person **should not suppose to receive things from God**. In other words when things happen to you by chance don't assume it was God blessing you.*

These folks like the idea of God but give up on allowing Him to take care of their needs. They like the idea of going to Him in times of desperation when they don't know what to do but if the world offers a distraction in sin they will go after that. They will choose quick strategies to gain happiness now instead of waiting on the Lord to give answers to prayers. They look like the person that is hot in church for a season then disappears for a time. You'll see a pattern of that in their life till eventually they stop going OR you will occasionally see by God's Grace that person strung out and so beat up they finally surrendered to God, all because of election and God's determination to

* [There are a couple of different people I wanted to make all aware of that tend to get pushed around in life but for time constraints we stuck to one today in the sermon but please note - Strangely enough there is another type of doubter that is always in church but suffer from the *frozen chosen* or what we call [Hyper-Calvinism](#). I find people like to employ the being tossed to and from like a wave in life many times because they don't like to make decisions, they neglect praying for wisdom, and shy away from trying to engage the world for God's Kingdom. They would rather not try at much for God's glory and not contend for the good while others are actually trying out the wisdom that James talks about and engage in life for the Kingdom. Family don't mistake nonchalance for high trust in God if you are never praying for wisdom to help you engage others for the cause of Christ.]



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save them. That is a doubter, someone who lacks the faith in Jesus, and instead goes to everything and everyone else for wisdom and quick fixes.

James says the person who gives into doubt and practices not faith is a **Double Minded person**. They are a person that is at war with desires in themselves. They are still under control of this world. James is the only person to use this word in scripture and he uses it again in 4:8, and upon view there tracing the intent of that word backwards to 4:7 a double minded person is a person who is under the sway of the devil still. A Double minded person we see here is in the church, because that is who James is writing to, is a person who is not a converted soul yet, they are attempting the pursuit of religion but not the pursuit of Christ. They are trying to work some angle on God to get Him to go along with what they want. They draw close when in pain and move away when they feel a little better again.

This person is **unstable in ALL their ways**. It is the same image one uses for drunkenness. They wander around, bump into things, they stagger and can't hold a straight line for every decision they make in life is used to make themselves feel better, it's a '*one more for the road*' mentality. My friend this may be you in here today. You spend almost as much time out of the church as you do in it. You think of ways to stay away from God's people and the preaching of His Word to avoid conviction. Friend, please hear this call today, surrender that lifestyle and put all your hope in Christ, ask Him for wisdom, and then wait and see how He leads you.

Family I would call on the rest of you, if you are the one always placating the double minded person or enabling them, because you feel sorry for them you are probably hindering their repentance. People don't turn to God if we are always making excuses for people's behavior, you have to let people hit a bottom especially the unconverted folks, if you really want to see them change. Perhaps that's another area we all can ask for a little wisdom, is how to love those we care about without enabling destructive patterns.

And then remember this when you do.

MP



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**God freely gives Wisdom to those who ask in faith,
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[CALL TO OBEY]

1. Practice asking God for Wisdom

Don't automatically assume that everything that makes life easier for you is a direct blessing from God. Sometimes God puts us on the road less traveled, more perilous, and doesn't have an exit for a while. Practice praying for Wisdom, practice reading for wisdom in His Word, and practice talking wisdom with others before you jump into the easy choice.

2. Practice Wise, Mercy-Driven Discernment in Relationships

As a church body, we are called to bear one another's burdens, but we must do so with Godly wisdom that refuses to enable rebellion. Cease placating those who live double-minded lives of inconsistent devotion. Instead, pursue a wisdom that is 'peaceable, gentle, and open to reason,' offering the truth of Christ without partiality. If you truly love the lost or the struggling, you will stop making excuses for their destructive patterns and instead call them to the repentance and total reliance upon Jesus that leads to life.

If you are the one double minded, then surrender your foothold in the world and commit to a one-way view of life, that which is Christ's.

May we all this week family grow in a pure wisdom, believing in God's generosity, asking in faith, fighting the doubt that hides in our heart.

Prayer

Almighty and Everlasting God, the Source of all true light and understanding, we come before You today as a people who recognize our profound need. We confess that we are often like the waves of the sea, tossed by the winds of this world and distracted by the deceitful desires of our own hearts. We thank You, Father, that You are a God of boundless generosity, who gives wisdom to those who ask without finding fault. We pray that You would grant us a



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wisdom that is pure, peaceable, and full of mercy—a wisdom that does not look to the shifting standards of men but is firmly rooted in Your unchanging Word.

Lord, deliver us from doublemindedness. Strengthen our faith, that when we ask of You, we may do so with the confidence of children who know their Father is good. Oh Lord, please save the lost among us. Those that still move towards answers of convenience instead of answers of deliverance from this world. Help them to see the truth that God wishes to save souls more than answering requests to lessen hardships. My friend if that is you today, know that His wisdom can be yours today if you ask in faith, and He will show you the path. Confess your need of Him, the sin of trying to do life without Him, and ask Him to be Lord in your life, and He will not steer you false. We all pray this in the Name of Jesus Christ, our Lord, Amen.

[COMMUNION]

Corinthians 11:23-26 ESV

²³ For I received from the Lord what I also delivered to you, that the Lord Jesus on the night when he was betrayed took bread, ²⁴ and when he had given thanks, he broke it, and said, "This is my body, which is for you. Do this in remembrance of me." ²⁵ In the same way also he took the cup, after supper, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in my blood. Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me." ²⁶ For as often as you eat this bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes.

When we partake of the bread today remember the life of Jesus lived perfect for us. Our Lord in His pursuit of a Pure Wisdom never abandoned His field of trials nor ran to easier challenges but instead braced His life on solid ground of God's Word. When we all have left the source of pure wisdom for an easier life, Jesus stayed the path authoring the only way to get to the Father, Heaven, and our eternal Home with Him. Praise be to our Lord Jesus who knew how to learn wisdom and live it for the Glory of God.

When we partake of the juice, we remember the blood of Jesus that was poured out for our sins. Because we chose to forgo the wisdom of God we



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were condemned by our rebellion and spoiled by our choices. But God being rich in generosity gave us His Son, so that we could again approach God without reproach. All praise to our Savior who has made a way for us through His steadfast love.

[CONFESSION OF FAITH]

*** The Congregation will stand and recites:**

Elder – "Christians, what do you believe?"

LBCF 1689 Chapter 22 Of Religious Worship and the Sabbath Day Paragraph 3. Prayer with Thanksgiving Is Required

Prayer with thanksgiving is one part of natural worship and is required of everyone by God. 8 But to be accepted by God, it must be made

- in the name of the Son 9
- by the help of the Spirit 10
- according to his will 11
- with understanding, reverence, humility, fervency, faith, love, and perseverance
- and when with others, in a known tongue 12

8. Psalms 95:1-7, 65:2; 9. John 14:13-14; 10. Romans 8:26; 11. 1 John 5:14; 12. 1 Corinthians 14:16, 17

[OFFERING+LAST SONG]

[BENEDICTION]

Go in the name of the Father, Who gives an overflowing abundance of divine wisdom ensuring His children will be able to know Him and His ways.

Go in the name of the Son, the revelation of God's wisdom in the flesh, who by His obedience to His trials, won us an eternal victory over sin.



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Go in the name of and power of the HS, that opens our eyes to the need of wisdom, shows us the paths of wisdom, and causes to learn the lesson of wisdom. Now go share with the lost what you have learned from your God.

[FELLOWSHIP CONVERSATIONS]

1. **Defining Our Need:** In the sermon we noted that 'wisdom is skill at life.' In the midst of your current personal trials, what does it look like to pursue 'skill' in Christ rather than seeking immediate relief or worldly 'hacks' to reduce your discomfort?
2. **The Source of Wisdom:** James distinguishes between worldly knowledge and wisdom that comes from above. How can we, as a community, better hold each other accountable to ensure our daily decisions are rooted in the revealed Word of God rather than in the shifting opinions of our culture?
3. **Overcoming Hesitation:** We often fear approaching God for wisdom because we are ashamed of past failures or past instances where we ignored His counsel. How does the truth of Romans 8:32—that God did not spare His own Son—provide the confidence we need to ask Him for help today without fear of reproach?
4. **Recognizing Double-Mindedness:** James describes the double-minded person as 'unstable in all his ways.' What are the common 'backup plans' or 'worldly distractions' that you are most tempted to rely on when life gets difficult, and how do these things keep you from fully trusting Christ?
5. **Loving One Another:** The sermon challenged us to stop enabling those who live in double-minded rebellion. How can we grow in 'mercy-driven discernment'—speaking the truth with gentleness—so that we genuinely help one another grow in holiness rather than simply making excuses for destructive behavior?



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