

**JAMES SERIES #17:
Be A Wise Man, Not A Wise Guy (Part 2)
James 3:13-18
Grace Community Church
Kingston, Tennessee
Sunday, April 7, 2019**

1. INTRODUCTION:

- a. Scripture refers to two kinds of wisdom. The wisdom of man and the wisdom of God.
- b. In our text James discusses the WISDOM OF GOD, and what it is and is not.
- c. The wisdom which comes from God empowers believers to serve God effectively.

2. TEXT: James 3:13-18, (13) Who is wise and understanding among you? Let him show by good conduct that his works are done in the meekness of wisdom. (14) But if you have bitter envy and self-seeking in your hearts, do not boast and lie against the truth. (15) This [kind of] wisdom does not descend from above, but is earthly, sensual, demonic. (16) For where envy and self-seeking exist, confusion and every evil thing are there. (17) But the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, willing to yield, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality and without hypocrisy. (18) Now the fruit of righteousness is sown in peace by those who make peace.

3. REMARKS:

- a. The epistle of James teaches that if you are saved your life will show it in numerous ways. The way he elaborates on in this passage is WISDOM.
 - i. 1 Cor. 1:24, "Christ is the power of God and the wisdom of God."
 - ii. When people are saved, Christ, Who is the wisdom of God takes up residence within them.

I. FALSE WISDOM

A. THE REVELATION OF FALSE WISDOM, *How it will manifest itself in our lives*

- 1. #1 MANIFESTATION OF FALSE WISDOM: v. 14, "bitter envying"
- 2. #2 MANIFESTATION OF FALSE WISDOM: v. 14, "strife"

B. THE ROOT OF FALSE WISDOM (v. 15, "This wisdom does not descend from above, but is earthly, sensual, demonic.") [3]

- 1. "Earthly"

2. “Sensual”

3. “Demonic”

C. THE RESULT OF FALSE WISDOM (v. 16, “For where envy and self-seeking *exist*, confusion and every evil thing *are* there.)

1. #1 RESULT OF FALSE WISDOM BEING EXERCISED: ***CONFUSION***

2. #2 RESULT OF FALSE WISDOM BEING EXERCISED: ***EVIL THING***

a) The Greek word translated as “Evil” literally means, “worthless”

II. TRUE WISDOM (vv. 13, 17-18)

A. CHARACTERISTICS OF TRUE WISDOM

James 3:17-18, (17) But the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, willing to yield, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality and without hypocrisy. (18) Now the fruit of righteousness is sown in peace by those who make peace.

1. **PURITY FROM SIN (v. 17, “is first pure”)**

a) Purity has to do with holiness of one’s character.

b) 1 Jn. 3:3, “And everyone who has this hope in Him purifies himself, just as He is pure.”

c) Heavenly wisdom hates sin and will deal with sin whenever it creeps into one’s life.

d) **PURITY** is outward manifestation of inward holiness.

2. **FREE OF STRIFE (v. 17, “peaceable”)**

a) Heavenly wisdom is always ready for peace, but always in purity—doesn’t allow peace with ungodliness

b) James 3:16, “For where envy and self-seeking exist, confusion and every evil thing are there.”

3. **FREE OF STUBBORNNESS (v. 17, “gentle”)**

a) The Greek word translated here as **GENTLE** is a difficult word to translate. It denotes consideration for the feelings of others and a willingness to forego “severity in its dealings with others.”¹

¹ D. Edmond Hiebert, *The Epistle of James*, p. 235.

b) Someone who is **GENTLE** has convictions about, but is not inflexible about the things that do not matter.

(1) Ex—meat sacrificed to idols (1 Cor. 8)

(2) Ex—Church splits over insignificant things

c) The Greek word translated as **GENTLE** comes from two words (Lit., “fitting” and “into”) and means the ability to fit into, to adapt to be gentle in things that do not matter.

(1) Ex—Abraham Lincoln having dinner with some elegant people.

4. **WILLING TO YIELD** (v. 17)

a) The Greek word translated as **WILLING TO YIELD** means, “easily persuaded.”²

b) This believer realizes that he is not the final authority on all things.

5. **FULL OF MERCY** (v. 17):

a) **MERCY** is an attitude of compassion toward those in distress that leads to assisting them.

6. **FULL OF GOOD FRUITS** (v. 17)

a) Since the term **GOOD FRUITS** is listed with **MERCY**, it probably denotes demonstrations of mercy.

7. **WITHOUT PARTIALITY** (v. 17)

a) The Greek word translated as **WITHOUT PARTIALITY** literally means “undivided” and denotes without division.

8. **WITHOUT HYPOCRISY** (v. 17)

a) In James’ day, the Greek word translated as **HYPOCRISY** referred to a “play actor” who wore masks which portrayed the emotions of the actor in that scene.

b) In early Greek language the term was not a negative one, like it is today, but it came to be applied to persons who “play act” (i.e., NOT who they really are, or what they really feel).

c) Heavenly wisdom does not mask what it is, because it is genuine.

² D. Edmond Hiebert, *The Epistle of James*, p. 235.

B. CONDUCT OF TRUE WISDOM (v. 13, “Who is wise and understanding among you? Let him show by good conduct that his works are done in the meekness of wisdom.”

The presence of **TRUE WISDOM** in the lives of believers will be demonstrated by their **GOOD CONDUCT** and **MEEKNESS** (i.e., will be visible to those around).

1. GOOD CONDUCT

a) The Greek word James used in v. 13 that is translated as **GOOD** does not refer to **BEING MORALLY GOOD** as opposed to evil (there is another Greek word for that). The Greek word the author uses means, “intrinsically good ... honourable ...”³

b) By his choice of words, James was saying that the lives of persons who have the indwelling wisdom of God will be emotionally and spiritually beautiful.

2. MEEKNESS

a) **MEEKNESS** is “the opposite of arrogant self-assertiveness.”⁴

b) “It is that attitude of heart that produces gentleness and mildness in dealing with others—not weakness (Matt. 11:29), but power under control.”⁵

3. The acid test of whether persons possess the indwelling wisdom of God is demonstrated by their WORKS not their words

CONCLUSION

- 1. The theme of the book of James is, “If you are saved, your life will show it.”**
- 2. Some believers try to live their lives by the wisdom of this world, and consequently, their lives are in CONFUSION (v. 16).**
- 3. Believers who think with EARTHLY WISDOM do not accomplish anything for Eternity’s sake. Their “works” are WORTHLESS.**
- 4. How do we obtain the WISDOM OF GOD?**
 - a. James 1:5, “If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask of God ... and it will be given him.”
 - b. Phil. 2:12, “work OUT your own salvation with fear and trembling”

³ *Vine’s Expository Dictionary of the New Testament Words*, “kalos”, p. 504.

⁴ D. Edmond Hiebert, *The Epistle of James*, p. 228.

⁵ D. Edmond Hiebert, *The Epistle of James*, p. 228.

- c. **2 Chr. 1:10 records Solomon asking God to impart wisdom to him so that he could be an effective king over Israel**
- d. **When we are born again, Christ, Who is the Wisdom of God (1 Cor. 1:24, “but to those who are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God”) takes up residence within us.**
- e. **Phil. 2:5, “LET this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus....”**
 - i. **“How do I LET the mind of Christ be in me?”**
 - 1. **#1 NECESSITY TO THE ACQUIRING OF WISDOM: FEAR OF THE LORD, Psm. 111:10 says, “the fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom.”**
 - a. **The term “fear the Lord” refers to having a deep, loving and obedient relationship with God.**
 - b. **Ex:**
 - i. **Hebrews 11:7, “By faith Noah, being warned of God of things not seen as yet, moved with fear, prepared an ark to the saving of his house”**
 - ii. **Exodus 1:17, “But the midwives feared God, and did not as the king of Egypt commanded them, but saved the men children alive.”**
 - iii. **Genesis 22:12, “And He said, ‘Do not lay your hand on the lad, or do anything to him; for now I know that you fear God, since you have not withheld your son, your only son, from Me.’”**
 - c. **The biblical term FEAR OF THE LORD is synonymous with obedience to God and service for God.**
 - 2. **#2 NECESSITY TO THE ACQUIRING OF WISDOM: GODLY LIVING, Ecclesiastes 2:26, “For God gives wisdom and knowledge and joy to a man who is good in His sight”**
 - a. **When Solomon referred to a man who was “good” in the sight of the Lord, he was referring to a man who lived uprightly.**
 - b. **If you want wisdom, you cannot live like you want to live and expect God to give it to you.**
 - 3. **#3 NECESSITY TO THE ACQUIRING OF WISDOM: OBEDIENCE TO THE WORD OF GOD, Proverbs 2:1-2, (1) My son, if you receive my**

words, And treasure my commands within you, (2) So that you incline your ear to wisdom, And apply your heart to understanding

4. #4 NECESSITY TO THE ACQUIRING OF WISDOM: ASK GOD FOR WISDOM

- a. James 1:5, "If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask of God, who gives to all liberally and without reproach, and it will be given to him."**
- f. LOST PERSON, you cannot think with the wisdom of God because you do not have the wisdom of God because you do not know God. 1 Cor. 1:24 says that Christ is the WISDOM of God.**