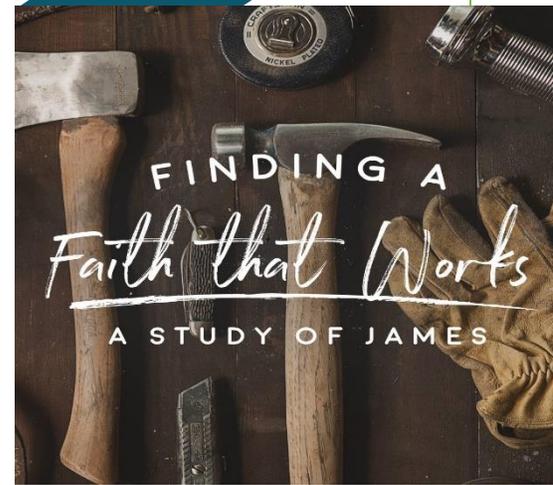


# JAMES: FINDING A FAITH THAT WORKS

## Lesson 7 - False Wisdom/Godly Wisdom

### INTRODUCTION/THOUGHTS

- There is a lens by which we must view what we find in James 3.
  - God is at the center of all things. "God is for God."
  - Man is not at the center of all things. "Man is made for God."
- Humans are not designed to be the supreme focus of the universe.
  - This will change what we view as true and false wisdom.
  - What the Bible teaches as wisdom will not make sense if you think that the end results are "for you."
  - False wisdom is anchored in the thought that "I am great, and things center around me." This type of "wisdom" leads to self-centric decisions, actions, and attitudes.
- A God-centered mindset frees our souls to live in a wonderful way.
- My soul was designed to be satisfied in and magnify the Lord. God's call on my life to live for him will ultimately lead to my joy and satisfaction. True delight in God leads to joyful rejoicing in Him.
- Vs. 13 - A truly wise person will display his Godly wisdom by his works from his wisdom's meekness/gentleness. (True wisdom, like power, displays only what is needed. Not a display of wisdom for vanities sake.)



### FALSE WISDOM

#### 1. Marks of False Wisdom - Vs. 14

- Bitter Jealousy - this word for envy literally means "a feeling of warmth against; to be zealous"
- Self-Seeking Ambition - this manifests itself in rivalries, feuds, strife, and the seeking of followers

**~ These marks develop out of a selfish mindset. "I am uppermost in my affections."**

#### 2. Descriptions of False Wisdom - Vs. 15

- Earthly - false wisdom is based on physical reasoning. It is focused on what, here, and now. What are the primary motivators in our decisions and actions? Are they things of earth?
- Unspiritual - the word *sensual* in verse 15 means natural, forms of the word describe animals. False wisdom is focused completely apart from the spiritual gifts, reasoning, and goals that God has given us in the Holy Spirit.
- Devilish - you can see that this is not an excusable way to live in God's eyes. He describes it here as being influenced by demons. What is the ultimate "devilish" influence in our lives? Lies. False wisdom is just that, wisdom based on something that is not true.

#### 3. Results of False Wisdom - Vs. 16

- Confusion - means "disorder, revolution, upheaval, anarchy. In other words, false wisdom brings chaos into our lives. Wisdom that is based on earthly reasoning tosses things out of order and revolts or rebels against the design that God has for our lives.
- Evil Works - This makes sense, right? James has been teaching us that a life that is changed by God produces good works. A life that is lived ignoring the truths of God will obviously produce evil works. It is inevitable. In fact, it says "every" evil works. When we live with selfish ambition, there is nothing from which we will hold ourselves back.

### GODLY WISDOM

#### A Life Guided by Godly Wisdom Is... - Vs. 17

- Pure - without defilement or fracture (not double-minded - James 1)

- Peaceable – disposed to peace, profitable
- Gentle – does not need to force things to happen for self
- Obedient – *easy to be intreated*, means compliant or willing to submit; a life driven by selfish ambitions will not want to submit to anyone or anything
- Full of Mercy -
- Full of Good Fruits – the life of a God-centered person produces God-pleasing fruits
- Impartial – literally: “complete, whole-hearted; indistinguishable” – a life that is God-centered will look at others in a God centered way.
- Without Hypocrisy – the word used can be translated “sincere”; true wisdom from God leads to a life that does not have to be faked because it is not self-focused.

### **A Final Word Picture – Vs. 18**

Imagine a field that is ready to harvest. The fruit of this field is righteousness, godliness, or goodness. How did that fruit come to be ready? It was sown in peace by those who “make peace”. He uses a word within the picture meaning to cultivate or bring forth. Someone who lives their life with Godly wisdom cultivates peace.

Why? We cultivate peace in our lives because we trust that God provides, meets every need, and plans what is best for His purpose in our lives.

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## IS YOUR LIFE RULED BY WORLDLY WISDOM OR GODLY WISDOM?

If you answered, “Godly Wisdom”, how can you explain or defend your answer?

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## FAMILY DISCUSSION / PERSONAL STUDY

The Book of James teaches us that true faith reveals itself by works. What we do in our Christian life is fueled by what we believe.

Take time together as a family in God’s Word. Think throughout the day to reinforce the main truth of the week. Remember significant ways God has worked in your lives.

### **TAKE TIME**

Read James 3:13-18 again – highlight or underline each descriptive word. If you are reading with your children, have them read descriptions of Godly wisdom in a superhero voice! (or you could do that if you are an adult too!)

### **THINK**

- How do we know what someone values? Money, time, physical outward characteristics, habits, advertising, etc... These all can combine to show where society, individuals, and our own hearts have placed value.
- Describe things that you have seen on bumper stickers, t-shirts, media, social media, or advertising and explain what it tells us is being valued.
- Describe the key points of your own life (time, money, decisions, actions, commitments) and explain what it tells us that we are currently valuing.

### **REMEMBER**

Even in this moment of crisis and pandemic, what wisdom has God been giving you?

What has God revealed to you in this experience? How will you use this wisdom in the future?