

increases, human wisdom decreases. It is like a seesaw [teeter-totter]. For one side to go up the other side must go down.

b. Again the proof is in the product.

- 1) True wisdom from above has eight qualities. It is...
 - a) *Pure*: holy, clean, modest
 - b) *Peaceable*: bringing peace, peaceful, peacemaker
 - c) *Gentle*: fair, mild, gentle
 - d) *Easy to be entreated*: quickly obeys, compliant
 - e) *Full of mercy*: kindness or good will towards others who are undeserving
 - f) *Full of good fruits*: good deeds, spiritual fruit
 - g) *Without partiality*: no doubt, without uncertainty
 - h) *Without hypocrisy*: with no insincerity, undisguised
- 2) Those with this heavenly wisdom are sowing fruit (deeds) of righteousness when they seek to make peace. Donald Burdick wisely wrote, “A crop of righteousness cannot be produced in the climate of bitterness and self-seeking. Righteousness will grow only in a climate of peace.”^{Donald}

W. Burdick, "James," in Hebrews-Revelation, vol. 12 of The Expositors Bible

Commentary, p. 191-192

Conclusion: Put yourself to the test. **Do you have true wisdom?** Were the choices you made this week **worldly, fleshly or ungodly** or were they **pure, peacemaking, gentle, compliant, merciful, good, certain and sincere**? Did your words and actions contain **envy and strife** or did they **sow deeds of righteousness**? If you have been acting on human wisdom and making a mess of things James said, “*Lie not against the truth.*” Admit it to God and seek his forgiveness.

You **can** have true wisdom! It is available to every true Christian. If you will fear God, He will give you wisdom. To fear God you must give Him the honour He deserves, spend quality time in the Bible, seek his guidance in all that you do. Basically, it is letting God make your decisions instead of making them yourself.

If you are not saved, that is the first step to getting true wisdom.

Song: Cleanse Me - 166

Are You Truly Wise?

6 November 2016 AM – James 3:13-18 – Jas16 – Scott Childs

Introduction: Have you ever made a foolish choice, or said the wrong thing, or responded in an ungodly way? Yes, all have. Why do we do that? One reason is we lack God’s wisdom.

About 3000 years ago Solomon wrote, “*How much better is it to get wisdom than gold! and to get understanding rather to be chosen than silver!*” (Proverbs 16:16) Wisdom was valuable back then and it is still just as valuable today. In James 3:13-18, James describes two kinds of wisdom. One is **genuine** or **true**. The other is **counterfeit**. We must test wisdom to discover the difference.

Transition: In this section, James identifies three **facts to help us test our wisdom** and to direct us to the source of true wisdom.

1. Wisdom Reveals Itself in Our Conduct (v.13-14)

a. Wisdom is the ability to make choices in life.

- 1) James speaks of two kinds of wisdom.
 - a) The first is **true** wisdom. This wisdom refers to “**the God-given ability to make right choices.**” Those who have true wisdom also have knowledge. This refers to **experience** or **being expert**. They follow God’s mind. God wants us to know His desires and to apply them to our daily lives. Every Christian can be wise, but sadly many are not.
 - b) The second is **counterfeit** wisdom. This is the human ability to make choices based on education, reason or opinion. It is often self-seeking. This wisdom may come from education or opinion, but it doesn’t come from God.

2) Which kind of wisdom do you have?

b. If you claim true wisdom, let it show in your conduct.

- 1) James tells us that true wisdom will show out of a good conversation [conduct or way of life] (v.13).
 - a) A truly wise person will live in a way that God says is good. He will **daily study the Bible** so that his choices

will be governed by God's Word. He will **pray much** and seek the mind of God before acting or speaking. A truly wise person will pray, "*Teach me thy way, O LORD; I will walk in thy truth: unite my heart to fear thy name.*" (Psalms 86:11) His heart will cry, "*Let the words of my mouth, and the meditation of my heart, be acceptable in thy sight, O LORD, my strength, and my redeemer.*" (Psalms 19:14)

- b) In Genesis 39 we see **Joseph's** wisdom in his good conduct. In Daniel 1 we see **Daniel's** wisdom in his good conduct. These men made wise choices because they lived by godly principles. They were truly a wise man.
 - c) If we have true wisdom, meekness or mildness will guide our words and actions. A truly wise person is a gentle servant who is not seeking self-glory but to glorify God.
- 2) On the other hand, the person who **thinks he is wise but is not**, his conduct and heart will be full of bitter envy and strife. His actions betray him (v.14).
- a) *Bitter envy* speaks of **harsh excitement, rivalry**, bitterly wanting an object or a position that belongs to someone else.
 - b) *Strife* refers to **self-seeking ambition**. This is the attitude and tactics of one who is striving to win an election. He lacks gentle wise choices.
 - c) If bitterness and strife are in your life James warns, "*glory not, and lie not against the truth.*"
 - (1) Stop boasting about your wisdom. Solomon adds, "*Be not wise in thine own eyes: fear the LORD, and depart from evil.*" (Proverbs 3:7)
 - (2) Stop lying about the truth. You will never conquer a problem until you admit it exists.
- 3) Ronald Blue comments, "**Wisdom is not measured by degrees but by deeds. It is not a matter of acquiring truth in lectures but of applying truth to life.**"¹¹ J. Ronald Blue, "James," in

The Bible Knowledge Commentary: New Testament, p. 828.

2. Counterfeit Wisdom is Not From Above (v.15-16)

- a. **This wisdom is human wisdom. It is not from God.**
 - 1) Human wisdom is *earthly* – existing only on earth.
 - 2) Human wisdom is *sensual* – roused by man's sinful appetite and passions.
 - 3) Human wisdom is *devilish* – encouraged by demons. The devil and his demons really do influence human reasoning.
 - 4) As Christians, we are in a battle against the world, the flesh and the devil. **If the devil can get us to substitute human wisdom for heavenly wisdom, we will make choices that displease God and damage others.**
- b. **The proof is in the product (v.16).**
 - 1) Human wisdom wants what is best for self. *Envy* pushes us to get ahead of others. *Strife* pushes us to step on others to win the election for self.
 - 2) These two actions lead to *confusion* (i.e., disorder) and *every evil work* (i.e., worthless, bad deeds). **When you put God first, others second and self last, you will advance spiritually. But when you change that order, you will always decline spiritually.**

3. True Wisdom is From Above (v.17-18)

- a. **This wisdom is heavenly wisdom. It is from God.**
 - 1) The conduct that follows heavenly wisdom is far superior to that of human wisdom. With the Holy Spirit living in them, Christians are able to live wisely.
 - 2) Heavenly wisdom is not available to unbelievers to the same extent. They may have traces of it in their lives, but only as they unknowingly apply Biblical truth.
 - 3) Heavenly wisdom begins when a person fears the Lord. "*The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom: and the knowledge of the holy is understanding.*" (Proverbs 9:10)
 - a) To **fear the Lord** is not just to tremble before him, but to respect Him, to respect His Word, to obey Him, to desire to please Him more than self.
 - b) The more you fear God and the Bible, the more heavenly wisdom you will gain. As heavenly wisdom