

Where TO Get Wisdom

(James 3:13-18)

There are two kinds of wisdom in this world. Wisdom that comes from the world and wisdom that comes from God. In order to choose correctly you have got to have all the facts. Facts matter!! And the origin of wisdom matters!!! Let's look at both sides.

What are the fruits of false wisdom or earthly wisdom?

1. **Envy (14)**. This word carries the meaning of selfish ambition and zeal. The wisdom of this world says, Promote yourself. You're just as good as the other guy. Sad to say, there is a great deal of selfish, carnal promotion among God's people. Even the apostles argued over who would be the greatest in God's Kingdom.

- It's easy to go onto an ego trip under the guise of spiritual zeal. The Pharisees used their religious activities to promote the praise of men.
- We ought to be zealous for the things of the Lord, but we must be sure that our motives are right. The wisdom of the world exalts man and robs God of Glory.
- Is our zeal for the Lord spiritual or carnal? Do we rejoice when others succeed, or do we have secret envy and criticism?

2. **Strife (14)**. This word means "Party Spirit." It was used by the Greeks to describe a politician out canvassing for votes. The world's wisdom says "Get all the support you can! Ask all the people you can if they are for you or against you!" The spirit of self-seeking only creates rivalry and division in the church.

Phil. 2:3 says, "Let nothing be done through strife or vain glory; but in lowliness of mind let each esteem others better than themselves."

3. Boasting (14). Pride loves to boast, and nothing is prouder than the wisdom of man.

- We like to measure ourselves by our own set of standards or by our friends within our own circle, but that isn't an accurate estimation either.
- When God's wisdom is at work there is a sense of humility and submission, and you actually want God to get all of the glory.
- You have no desire to compare yourself to anyone else because next to God we all have a long way to go!!

4. Deceit (14). "Lie not against the truth." The sequence is not difficult to understand. First there is selfish ambition that leads to rivalry. Which leads to boasting and lies? A man's life is not read in his press release; it is read by the Lord in his heart.

What a relief it is to turn to the evidences of true spiritual wisdom.

The first evidence of true spiritual wisdom is....

1. **Meekness. (13).** Meekness is not weakness; It is power under control. The meek person does not selfishly assert himself.
 - Meekness is the right use of power, and wisdom is the right use of knowledge. They go together! In other words, attitude and action go together.

2. **Purity (17)**. Purity indicates the importance of holiness. How important is it to have clean water? I need someone to take a drink of this water. After they take a drink put a drop of doe urine in the cup and ask them to take another drink.

- God's wisdom leads to purity of life. Man's wisdom may lead to sin.
 - Purity means, free from defilement.

3. **Peace (17)**. God's wisdom leads to peace based on holiness, not on compromise. If the church is pure, devoted to God, then there will be peace.

- The church can never have peace by sweeping sins under the rug and pretending they are not there.
 - Illustration: Bugs under the board.
- Man's wisdom says to cover it up, but God's wisdom says, Confess sin and my peace will keep things together.

4. **Gentleness (17)**. The gentle person does not deliberately cause fights, but neither does he compromise the truth in order to keep peace.

- Abraham Lincoln was known as the man of "velvet steel." That is a good description of gentleness.

5. **Compliance (17)**. God's wisdom makes a person agreeable and easy to get along with. Man's wisdom makes him stubborn and hard to get along with.

Lastly, origin determines outcome. The most important thing we can do in our local churches is measure our ministries by the Word of God, not by the wisdom of men. The many battles among Christians, the church splits, the absence of purity and peace, all suggest that something is wrong. Perhaps that “something” is the absence of the wisdom of God.

- A compliant believer can disagree without being disagreeable. He is swift to hear, slow to speak, and slow to wrath.
- Many people think that stubbornness is conviction, and they must have their own way. When God’s wisdom is at work, there is a willingness to listen, think, pray, and obey whatever God reveals.

6. **Mercy (17)**. To be full of something means to be controlled by.

- The person who follows God’s wisdom is controlled by mercy. “Be merciful, as your father is also merciful.”
- God in his grace gives us what we do not deserve, and in His mercy He does not give us what we deserve.

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