
Relating Wisely to Others

James 3:13-17 (ESV)

“Who is wise and understanding among you? By his good conduct let him show his works in the meekness of wisdom. 14But if you have bitter jealousy and selfish ambition in your hearts, do not boast and be false to the truth. 15This is not the wisdom that comes down from above, but is earthly, unspiritual, demonic. 16For where jealousy and selfish ambition exist, there will be disorder and every vile practice. 17But the wisdom from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, open to reason, full of mercy and good fruits, impartial and sincere (James 3:13-17)

1. We must recognize the origins of worldly wisdom

“This is not the wisdom that comes down from above, but is earthly, unspiritual, demonic. v 15

- It embraces the secular
- It craves the sensual (what looks, feels appealing)
- It’s rooted in the demonic

2. We must resist from operating in worldly wisdom

“For where jealousy and selfish ambition exist, there will be disorder and every vile practice.” v 16

- People secretly want the status/stuff of others
- People selfishly push their agenda all the time
- People live with chaos in almost every area of life
- People are ‘caught’ in evil that just gets worse

3. We can and should reflect wisdom from above

“But the wisdom from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, open to reason, full of mercy and good fruits, impartial and sincere.” v 17

- We embrace purity – outcome honors God not self
- We are peace ‘makers’ – not troublemakers
- We are considerate of the feelings of others

- We are reasonable and willing to yield
- We are quick to forgive fully and mercifully
- We are a refreshment to others in speech/deeds
- We are fair w/o prejudice – we don't play favorites
- We are transparent/vulnerable not pretenders

4. Jesus and the message of the cross are God's wisdom from above – let's stay close to Him and His message!

"But the wisdom from above is..." v 17

The 'Origin' of wisdom from above...

"18For the message of the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it's the power of God. 19As the Scriptures say: I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, the intelligence of the intelligent I will frustrate. 20So where does this leave the philosophers, the scholars, and the world's brilliant debaters? God has made the wisdom of this world look foolish. 21Since God in His wisdom saw to it that the world would never know Him through human wisdom, He has used our preaching, foolish to many, to save those who believe..."

24but to those called by God to salvation, both Jews and Gentiles, Christ is the power of God and the wisdom of God."

1 Corinthians 1:18-21, 24