

September 20, 2020
The Bridge Bible Fellowship
Pastor Paul S. Brown
James 3:13-18

“Show Me God’s Wisdom” – Part 3

VII. Show Me God’s Wisdom

A. The Question (13a)

B. The Command (13b)

C. The Contrast (14-18)

1. Wisdom from Below (14-16)

a. The Heart (14)

1) Bitter jealousy

2) Selfish ambition

3) Arrogance

4) Lies / Deception / Hypocrisy

b. The Home (15)

1) Earthly

2) Natural

3) Demonic

c. The Harvest (16)

1) Disorder

2) Every evil thing

So what?

Discussion & Application:

1. Before discussing the sermon with others, take a moment and meditate on Matthew 7:1-5. Ask the Holy Spirit to show you if there are any logs of the “wisdom from below” in your heart.
2. What is jealousy? When is jealousy (zeal) a good thing? When does jealousy become a bad thing? Give some examples of bitter jealousy in the Bible and in our contemporary culture (please don't use politics, that one is too obvious). Have you ever struggled with it? What is the opposite of bitter jealousy? What can you do this week to practice the opposite characteristic of bitter jealousy?
3. What is selfish ambition? What other passages of Scripture speak of this problem? Is it wrong to have ambition? How does a person know if their ambition is turning into selfish ambition? What can you do to keep that from happening?
4. Why does James command the professing followers of Jesus to stop being arrogant? How are they being arrogant? How are they lying against the truth?
5. What are some examples of “wisdom from below” in everyday life that people will claim is actually godly wisdom? How do we know for sure that it isn't godly wisdom?
6. James says the wisdom from below is earthly, natural, and demonic. What do those terms mean? According to 2 Cor. 11:13-15 say about the deceptiveness of worldly wisdom? What are some examples of worldly wisdom in the religious realm that looks and sounds good to most people? What are you doing to develop a greater ability to discern the difference between wisdom from below and wisdom from above?
7. According to James 3:16, what impact does the wisdom from below have on our individual lives and our corporate life as a church? Do an overview of 1 Corinthians and see how many examples of wisdom from below were being practiced in the church at Corinth that had a negative impact on that church. Do you see any of those things happening in our church? What can you do to help others stop practicing worldly wisdom?
8. What does the word “evil” mean when James concludes his section on wisdom from below with “every evil thing”? What are some examples in your daily life of temptations to engage in things that are ultimately trivial or worthless? How much time do you spend on things like that? Is that wise? What are some better options for you to wisely invest your time, talents, and treasures?
9. How has the wisdom from below impacted our secular educational system? Music? Movies? Media? Sexual freedom? Finances? Abortion? Racism? Rioting? Politics? Pastor Paul believes that wisdom from below is the true systemic problem in America today. What can we individually and as a church do to change the tide and bring wisdom from above back to our culture?
10. Read James 3:17-18. Do some word studies on each of the words James uses to describe the wisdom from above. Pray for Pastor Paul as he prepares to teach this absolutely crucial portion of God's Word next week. Pray for all those who hear it to have open hearts ready to repent of the wisdom from below and seek to skillfully apply the wisdom from above.
11. If you haven't already done so, memorize James 3:13-18. Recite it in the morning and at lunchtime. In the evening, go back over James 1:1-3:18 so you don't forget what you have already memorized. Ask the Lord to give you wisdom from His Word and to make you a doer of what you have learned. Encourage others to join you in memorizing Scripture.

“James tears away the veneer of empty profession or pious claim and is only satisfied with the real spiritual status and fact.”

“If Christianity really links men with God, imparting His life to men, then men ought to become like God...”

It is not a question of creed or character, but it is always creed and character, for what we believe determines what we are.”

VIII. Show Me God's Wisdom

James 3:13–18 (NASB95) – ¹³ Who among you is wise and understanding? Let him show by his good behavior his deeds in the gentleness of wisdom.

¹⁴ But if you have bitter jealousy and selfish ambition in your heart, do not be arrogant and *so* lie against the truth.

¹⁵ This wisdom is not that which comes down from above, but is earthly, natural, demonic. ¹⁶ For where jealousy and selfish ambition exist, there is disorder and every evil thing.

¹⁷ But the wisdom from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, reasonable, full of mercy and good fruits, unwavering, without hypocrisy.

¹⁸ And the seed whose fruit is righteousness is sown
in peace by those who make peace.

A. The Question (13)

¹³ Who among you is wise and understanding?

Wisdom = skillful application of God's truth
to every area of life

B. The Command (13b)

“Let him show by his good behavior his deeds in the gentleness of wisdom.”

C. The Contrast (14-18)

True wisdom includes discernment

1. Wisdom from Below (14-16)

a. The Heart (14)

¹⁴ But if you have bitter jealousy and selfish ambition in your heart, do not be arrogant and *so* lie against the truth.

1) Bitter jealousy

2) Selfish ambition

3) Arrogance

do not be arrogant

4) Lies / Deception / Hypocrisy

Stop lying against the truth

b. The Home (15)

¹⁵ This wisdom is not that which comes down from above, but is earthly, natural, demonic.

1) Earthly

2) Natural

3) Demonic

c. The Harvest (16)

¹⁶ For where jealousy and selfish ambition exist,
there is disorder and every evil thing.

1) Disorder

2) Every evil thing

So What?

1. Is there any wisdom from below in your lifestyle?

2. Are you boasting about things you have accomplished with worldly wisdom? Are you trying to convince yourself and others that you did it God's way for God's glory?

3. Are you diligently aware that the wisdom from below is from below? Its home is earth, not heaven. Natural, not supernatural. Demonic, not Divine.

4. What kind of harvest is your wisdom producing?

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