

“Show Me God’s Wisdom” – Part 4

VIII. Show Me God’s Wisdom

A. The Question (13a)

B. The Command (13b)

C. The Contrast (14-18)

1. Wisdom from Below (14-16): Heart; Home; Harvest

2. Wisdom from Above (17-18)

a. The Home (17)

- Philosophy = “the love of wisdom.”
 - Which wisdom do people naturally love? From above or from below? (John 3:19)
- “Enlightenment” = Reason vs. Revelation
 - Deism. Skepticism. Atheism. Humanism. Communism.
 - Ethics?
 - Existentialism – “existence precedes essence.” Search for and create your own identity and meaning in life. (See Ecclesiastes)
- **Above** – John 3:3; James 1:5, 17; 1 Kings 3:12; Prov. 2:6
 - Lk. 12:13-21; Mt. 7:24-27
 - Ps. 119:98-100

b. The Heart (17)

1) Primary Characteristic: First pure

- Verse 13 – good behavior; gentleness
- **First** – Mt. 7:5; Lk. 14:28; Mt. 8:21; Lk. 9:59, 61
- **Pure** – Greek hagnós – holy; having no faults; integrity; sincerity
 - James 4:8
- Two primary characteristics:
 1. _____ & _____ purity (2 Cor. 11:2; 1 Jn. 3:1-3; 1 Peter 1; 1 John 1)
 2. _____ - _____ / _____ (2 Cor. 11:3)
- 1 Thess. 4:3; 1 Pet. 4:1-3; 2 Cor. 7:1, 8-11

So what?

1. Run to Jesus (1 Cor. 1:30; 6:12-20)
2. Run from impurity (1 Cor. 6:18; 2 Tim. 2:22; Eph. 5:3-4)
3. Ruminant on purity (Phil. 4:8)
4. Run with accountability partners (Titus 2:5)
5. Reflect on Heaven (2 Pet. 3:10-14)

Discussion & Application:

1. What comes to your mind when you hear the word “**pure**”? What does it mean when it describes gold or silver or a breed of dog? Why is purity so important to God? (see Hab. 1:13; Ps. 11:4-6; 34:15-16; Lev. 19:2; 20:7)
2. What happens when a person **mixes** wisdom from above with wisdom from below in order to accomplish their goals in life? Read **Mt. 16:1-12**. What is the warning Jesus is giving to His disciples? How much corrupt leaven (false teaching; worldly wisdom) does it take to ruin the bread?
3. A song says, “Looking for love in all the wrong places...” Where are some wrong places people look for wisdom? Where are the right places to look for true wisdom? How many hours per week do you spend watching television vs. reading/studying your Bible? When you watch television (or other secular entertainment) is it usually at a time when you are alert & vigilant/ discerning or fatigued & less vigilant? What new habits could you develop this week to use your time more wisely? What choices could you make with your entertainment that would enhance your exposure to wisdom from above?
4. The **first characteristic** of the word pure is “**moral and sexual**” purity. What does current wisdom in the world (from below) say about morality and sexuality? What does their wisdom say about pornography, premarital sex, adultery, homosexuality, abortion, euthanasia, pragmatism, etc.? In their worldview, who determines morals and ethics? What would the wisdom from above say about all of that?
5. The **second characteristic** of the word pure is “**whole-hearted devotion / dedication.**” What other words / thoughts / attitudes / actions come to your mind that are necessary for a person to have undivided loyalty; whole-hearted dedication to something? (See 1 Cor. 9:24-27; 2 Tim. 2:1-10 to help get you started)
6. Based on those two characteristics, **how pure are you in relationship to Jesus Christ right now?** Are there any impurities that you have allowed into your view of morality & sexuality? Are there any idols (self; wealth; power; laziness; another person) clamoring for your dedication / devotion? Read **1 Peter 1:16; 2 Peter 3:10-18; 1 John 3:1-3**. How pure does God want you to be? What steps will you take this week to grow in purity in both of these areas?
7. What are the **benefits** to living a pure life? Both in this life and in the life to come. List as many as you can. Allow this list to motivate you when the impurities of this life come knocking at your door.
8. If the “wisdom” a person is living by does not first and foremost promote purity, it is not from above. It doesn’t matter how long it has been in your family traditions or circle of friends or business practices, it isn’t from God. This isn’t just in the BIG decisions of life, it’s in the seemingly insignificant decisions we make hundreds of times each day. Are you skillfully applying wisdom from above in such a way that your life (thoughts, attitudes, words, actions) is characterized by purity? Spend some time this week asking the Lord to reveal to you any areas of worldly wisdom, any areas of impurity, any areas where you are not demonstrating whole-hearted devotion to Jesus Christ. When He answers your prayer, repent with the zeal of **2 Cor. 7:8-11** and recommit to denying yourself, taking up your cross, and following Jesus.
9. 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.

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 (13a)
- B. The Command (13b)
- C. The Contrast (14-18)

1. **Wisdom from Below (14-16)**
Heart; Home; Harvest

“Philosophy” = love of wisdom

2. *Wisdom from Above* (17-18)

a. The Home (17) – “from above”

Luke 12:13-21; Matthew 7:24-27
Psalm 119:98-100

b. The Heart (17)

Insert your name: “_____ is first pure, _____ is peaceable, _____ is gentle, _____ is reasonable, _____ is merciful, _____ is fruitful, _____ is unwavering, and _____ is unhypocritical.”

1) **Primary Characteristic:** First pure

First = firstly; before anything else; foremost;
of first importance; above all

Pure

1) Moral and Sexual Purity
2 Cor. 11:2; 1 John 3:1-3

2) Whole-hearted dedication / devotion
2 Cor. 11:3

To be whole-hearted in your devotion to Jesus
leads to a lifestyle of moral & sexual purity.
1 Thess. 4:3; 1 Pet. 4:1-3; 2 Cor. 7:1, 8-11

So What?

1. Run to Jesus.

2. Run from impurity.

1 Cor. 6:18; 2 Tim. 2:22; Eph. 5:3-4

3. Ruminare on Purity

Phil. 4:8

4. Run with Accountability Partners

Titus 2:5

5. Reflect on Heaven
2 Pet. 3:10-14

“There are those who talk holiness and are hypocrites... The mysticism which contents itself with pious frames and phrases, and comes short in actual

sacrifice and **devoted service**, will find its antidote (in James). The antinomianism that professes great confidence in free grace, but does not recognize the

necessity for corresponding **purity of life**, needs to ponder the practical wisdom of this epistle... All who are long on theory and short on practice ought to steep themselves in the spirit of James."