

The Epistle of James

Lesson #9

November 21, 2021

James 3:13-18

13 Who is wise and understanding among you? By his good conduct let him show his works in the meekness of wisdom. 14 But if you have bitter jealousy and selfish ambition in your hearts, do not boast and be false to the truth. 15 This is not the wisdom that comes down from above, but is earthly, unspiritual, demonic. 16 For where jealousy and selfish ambition exist, there will be disorder and every vile practice. 17 But the wisdom from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, open to reason, full of mercy and good fruits, impartial and sincere. 18 And a harvest of righteousness is sown in peace by those who make peace.

The Wisdom and Truth of God

1. What is wisdom?
 - a. Wisdom is (v. 17): pure, peaceable, gentle, open to reason, full of mercy and good fruits, impartial, and sincere.
 - b. Proverbs 1:7 – *“The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge; fools despise wisdom and instruction.”*
 - c. Proverbs 2:6 – *“For the Lord gives wisdom; from his mouth come knowledge and understanding;”*
 - d. 1 Corinthians 1:18-31 – *“¹⁸ For the word of the cross is folly to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God. ¹⁹ For it is written, I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and the discernment of the discerning I will thwart.²⁰ Where is the one who is wise? Where is the scribe? Where is the debater of this age? Has not God made foolish the wisdom of the world? ²¹ For since, in the wisdom of God, the world did not know God through wisdom, it pleased God through the folly of what we preach to save those who believe. ²² For Jews demand signs and Greeks seek wisdom, ²³ but we preach Christ crucified, a stumbling block to Jews and folly to Gentiles, ²⁴ but to those who are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God. ²⁵ For the foolishness of God is wiser than men, and the weakness of God is stronger than men.²⁶ For consider your calling, brothers: not many of you were wise according to worldly standards, not many were powerful, not many were of noble birth. ²⁷ But God chose what is foolish in the world to shame the wise; God chose what is weak in the world to shame the strong; ²⁸ God chose what is low and despised in the world, even things that are not, to bring to nothing things that are, ²⁹ so that no human being might boast in the presence of God. ³⁰ And because of him you are in Christ Jesus, who became to us wisdom from God, righteousness and sanctification and redemption, ³¹ so that, as it is written, “Let the one who boasts, boast in the Lord.”*

2. What wisdom is not (v. 16):
 - a. Jealousy
 - b. Selfish ambition
3. What is the result of the lack of wisdom?
 - a. v. 14 – Bitter jealousy, selfish ambition, boasting and falsehood
 - b. v. 15 – emphasis on earthly, unspiritual things
 - c. Demonic influence –
 - i. 1 Kings 22:21-23 *“Then a spirit came forward and stood before the Lord, saying, ‘I will entice him.’²² And the Lord said to him, ‘By what means?’ And he said, ‘I will go out, and will be a lying spirit in the mouth of all his prophets.’ And he said, ‘You are to entice him, and you shall succeed; go out and do so.’²³ Now therefore behold, the Lord has put a lying spirit in the mouth of all these your prophets; the Lord has declared disaster for you.”*
 - ii. 2 Thessalonians 2:1-12 – *“Now concerning the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ and our being gathered together to him, we ask you, brothers,² not to be quickly shaken in mind or alarmed, either by a spirit or a spoken word, or a letter seeming to be from us, to the effect that the day of the Lord has come.³ Let no one deceive you in any way. For that day will not come, unless the rebellion comes first, and the man of lawlessness^[b] is revealed, the son of destruction,⁴ who opposes and exalts himself against every so-called god or object of worship, so that he takes his seat in the temple of God, proclaiming himself to be God.⁵ Do you not remember that when I was still with you I told you these things?⁶ And you know what is restraining him now so that he may be revealed in his time.⁷ For the mystery of lawlessness is already at work. Only he who now restrains it will do so until he is out of the way.⁸ And then the lawless one will be revealed, whom the Lord Jesus will kill with the breath of his mouth and bring to nothing by the appearance of his coming.⁹ The coming of the lawless one is by the activity of Satan with all power and false signs and wonders,¹⁰ and with all wicked deception for those who are perishing, because they refused to love the truth and so be saved.¹¹ Therefore God sends them a strong delusion, so that they may believe what is false,¹² in order that all may be condemned who did not believe the truth but had pleasure in unrighteousness.”*
 - d. The façade of wisdom: Romans 1:22-23 – *“²² Claiming to be wise, they became fools,²³ and exchanged the glory of the immortal God for images resembling mortal man and birds and animals and creeping things.”*
4. What is the result of wisdom?
 - a. v. 13 – good conduct and meekness
 - b. v. 17 – purity, peace, reasonableness, mercy, good fruits, impartiality and sincerity
 - c. v. 18 – harvest of righteousness

5. Beatitudes: Matthew 5:3-12 –

³ *“Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.*

⁴ *“Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted.*

⁵ *“Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth.*

⁶ *“Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall be satisfied.*

⁷ *“Blessed are the merciful, for they shall receive mercy.*

⁸ *“Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God.*

⁹ *“Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called sons of God.*

¹⁰ *“Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.*

¹¹ *“Blessed are you when others revile you and persecute you and utter all kinds of evil against you falsely on my account. ¹² Rejoice and be glad, for your reward is great in heaven, for so they persecuted the prophets who were before you.”*