

1 THE CHARACTER OF GODLY WISDOM

JAMES 3:13-18

2 THE TONGUE: PETITE BUT POWERFUL

A REVIEW OF THE LAST MESSAGE

3 THE TONGUE IS ...

- Powerful
 - Power to Destroy
 - Power to Direct
 - Power to Delight
- Perverse
 - Set on fire of hell
- Polluted
 - Like polluted water – you cannot have a “little pollution” and still drink the water

4 THE CHARACTER OF GODLY WISDOM

JAMES 3:13-18

GODLY SPEECH COMES FROM A HEART OF WISDOM

5 JAMES 3:13-18

Who is wise and understanding among you? Let him show by his good behavior his works, with the humility of wisdom. But if you have bitter jealousy and selfish ambition in your hearts, do not boast and tell lies against the truth. This is not the wisdom that comes down from above, but is earthly, unspiritual, demonic. For where there is jealousy and selfish ambition, there is disorder and every evil practice. But the wisdom from above is first pure, then peaceful, gentle, obedient, full of mercy and good fruits, nonjudgmental, without hypocrisy, And the fruit of righteousness is sown in peace among those who make peace. (James 3:13–18, LEB)

6 DANGEROUS EVEN IN THE CAGE

- Just because a serpent is in a tank or deadly animal in a cage does not make it safe
- The tongue is contained in a cage of teeth and lips, but it still escapes.
 - It is not intelligence that keeps the lock on that cage; it is wisdom—a wisdom that is characterized by humility, grace, and peace.
 - A key to right talk is right thought.

7 UNGODLY WISDOM

- 1 Characteristic
 - 2 • Earthly – focused on this world and present circumstances
 - Sensual – Seeks self-gratification
 - Devilish – Fueled by devil and his temptations
- 3 Source
 - 4 • World
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 - Flesh
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 - Devil

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8 **HOW TO RECOGNIZE GODLY WISDOM**9 **WISDOM IS PRACTICAL**

- *Who is wise and understanding among you? Let him show by his good behavior his works, with the humility of wisdom.* (James 3:13, LEB)
- Τίς σοφός και ἐπιστήμων ἐν ὑμῖν;
 - *Sophos* (from noun *sophia*) – Moral insight and skill in the practical issues of life.
 - God's Word is meant to be practiced in daily life.
 - Wisdom is not philosophical high-mindedness, but practical truth.
 - *Epistemon* refers to truth, intellectual perception, and scientific acumen. A person like this knows what is really true.
- Answer: A wise person lives out God's truth in daily practical ways and bases decisions on God's Word – the source of true epistemology.

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10 **WISDOM IS ACTIVE**

- *Who is a wise man and endowed with knowledge among you? let him shew out of a good conversation his works with meekness of wisdom.* (James 3:13, KJV 1900)
 - Here is an original "show and tell."
 - Rather than seeing praise and preeminence, a truly wise person yield his/her own rights for the glory of God and the benefit of others.
- Wisdom is not measured by degrees but by deeds.
 - It is not a matter of acquiring truth in lectures but of applying truth to life.

11 **WISDOM IS HUMBLE**12 **WISDOM IS GRACIOUS**

- *But if you have bitter jealousy and selfish ambition in your hearts, do not boast and tell lies against the truth.* (James 3:14, LEB)
- Those who acquire learning without wisdom want human recognition and preeminence. This leads to:
 - Bitter envy ("zealous jealousy")
 - Selfish ambition ("factious rivalry," *erithian*, from *eritheuō*, "to spin wool," thus working for personal gain).
- To boast in yourself or your own intelligence – to "exult," *katakauchasthe*) -- is to deny, or "lie against," the truth. Truth demands that all glory belongs to God.

13 **WISDOM IS HEAVENLY AND HOLY**14 **WISDOM IS PEACEABLE**

- *But the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, and easy to be intreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality, and without hypocrisy. And the fruit of righteousness is sown in peace of them that make peace.* (James 3:17–18, KJV 1900)
- Many churches have suffered damage because someone sought preeminence, position, a title, and recognition and they campaigned to get what they wanted.
- But wisdom does not stir up strife, but seeks understanding and peace.

15 **WISDOM IS CONSIDERATE**

- *But the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, and easy to be intreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality, and without hypocrisy.* (James 3:17, KJV 1900)
- “Gentle” = considerate or forbearing (kindly patient)

16 **WISDOM IS OPEN TO REASON**

- “Easy to be intreated” = open to reason and dialogue
- Approachable; not instantly looking for a debate or confrontation
- Willing to yield to truth from someone else

17 **WISDOM IS MERCIFUL**

“FULL OF MERCY”

WISDOM KNOWS THAT WE HAVE 2 ULTIMATE GOALS FOR THIS LIFE AS CHRISTIANS:

18 **WISDOM IS FRUITFUL**

- “full of good fruits”
- Again, wisdom is not evidenced by degrees and certifications.
- Wisdom produces fruits of good works, mercy, acts of love, and gives evidence of God’s principles put into daily practice in life.
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19 **WISDOM RESPECTS OTHERS**

20 **WISDOM IS INTENTIONALLY DEVELOPED**

- Peace is the seed sown that yields a harvest (lit., “fruit”) of righteousness. The truly wise man is a man of peace.
 - A garden does not accidentally grow tomatoes and okra. Someone must plant, someone must water, and then God gives an increase.
- To achieve “righteousness,” spiritual maturity, practical holiness—the theme of this book—a believer must learn to speak with care.
 - Winsome speech comes from a wise spirit.
 - A controlled tongue is possible only with cultured thought.
 - A mouth filled with praise results from a mind filled with purity.
 - GIGO

21 **CONCLUSION OF JAMES 1-3**

- A believer should stand confidently (chap. 1)
- A believer should serve compassionately (chap. 2)
- A believer should speak carefully (chap. 3)
- He should:
 - be what God wants him to be
 - do what God wants him to do
 - and speak as God wants him to speak
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