

James - Living Out Your Faith
“The Wise, the Unwise, and Beyond Wise”

James 3: 13-18

¹³Who is wise and understanding among you? Let him show it by his good life, by deeds done in the humility that comes from wisdom.

¹⁴But if you harbor bitter envy and selfish ambition in your hearts, do not boast about it or deny the truth. ¹⁵Such wisdom does not come down from heaven but is earthly, unspiritual, of the devil. ¹⁶For where you have envy and selfish ambition, there you find disorder and every evil practice.

¹⁷But the wisdom that comes from heaven is first of all pure; then peace-loving, considerate, submissive, full of mercy and good fruit, impartial and sincere. ¹⁸Peacemakers who sow in peace raise a harvest of righteousness. James 3: 13-18 (NIV)

“Behind the hammer”

James asks: Who among you is wise and understanding?

I. The Wise Person (3:13)

a persons good life:

a persons works done in humility and skill:

II. The Unwise Person (3:14-16)

the persons hidden drives: (14)

this character and quality of his wisdom (14-15)

consequences of refusing True Wisdom (16)

III. Beyond Wise: the Person with True Wisdom (3:17-18)

pure

peace-loving

considerate

submissive

full of mercy and good fruit

impartial and sincere

Q: What results from a life skillfully lived?

Questions for personal or small group study & reflection

1. How do you develop and get good at a life skill? (Eg. Sewing, knitting, carpentry, cooking, management, administration etc.) What does James teach us as to how we can obtain, develop and get good at wisdom that comes from heaven? What do you learn about the importance of character here? How can you connect a learning in a life skill to learning for developing wisdom?
2. James 3:17 is a concise summary of truths spread throughout the entire Bible. List the seven characteristics of true wisdom from above. Then think of and record all Scripture you can remember connected to the characteristic. After that, look up each characteristic in a Bible concordance. Spend time pondering each verse and the jot down the nuance meaning it brings to that characteristic.
3. In what ways is it easy for us to slip into expressing the wisdom that does not come down from heaven? How does that happen? What is at the root of such slippage? And how can I guard my heart from that tendency? What would you do if a friend or someone close to you in your circle makes an unwise choice or leads an unwise lifestyle?