

# James | Godly versus Worldly Wisdom (James 3:13-18)

## Outline

Main Idea: The wisdom you have will be known by the life that you live.

1. Wisdom Seen (v. 13)
  - a. In general, wisdom is more than knowledge; it is knowledge applied well.
    - i. If you don't have the wisdom to apply what you know the right way, it is useless.
  - b. Godly wisdom is the application of God's truth to our lives under the guidance and power of the Holy Spirit.
  - c. Godly wisdom produces meekness.
    - i. Meekness is not weakness, but is righteousness, humility, teachability, and a patience that stems from a deep trust in God.
2. Worldly Wisdom (vv. 14-16)
  - a. James highlights three sources of ungodly wisdom:
    - i. Earthly: This is secular wisdom from secular society
    - ii. Unspiritual: This is a wisdom based on our fleshly desires
    - iii. Demonic: This a wisdom that comes from Satan
  - b. This wisdom produces disorder and death
    - i. It isolates you
    - ii. It feeds your ego
    - iii. It turns you into the idols that you serve
3. Godly Wisdom (vv. 17-18)
  - a. Godly wisdom is in direct opposition to the wisdom of the world
    - i. It rejects the things of the world
    - ii. God puts to death the things of the flesh
    - iii. Godly wisdom stands against the schemes of the devil
  - b. Godly wisdom produces righteousness
4. How do we receive this wisdom?
  - a. By being in Christ
  - b. From the Spirit
  - c. From the Word of God
  - d. From the body of believers

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## Discussion Questions

1. The theme of wisdom keeps coming up in this book?
  - a. What's the difference between knowledge and wisdom?
  - b. What's the difference between Godly wisdom and worldly wisdom?
  - c. How is Jesus the "wisdom of God" (1 Cor 1:24)?
2. James leads off with the idea that our lives reveal the kind of wisdom we are living by.
  - a. It can be difficult to really discern what values and principles we are living by. What has God used in the past to help you more accurately see what you are living for?
  - b. What are some of the key principles that others would say you live by and what is the source of that wisdom?
3. James opens up by saying that one of the distinguishing marks of godly wisdom is meekness.
  - a. What is meekness? What does it look like? (If you get stuck, see outline above).
  - b. Why does James say that this is one of the distinguishing characteristics of a wise person? In other words, how does godly wisdom lead us to becoming a meek person?
4. James highlights different sources of worldly wisdom: our desires, our society, or even Satan.
  - a. Can you think of some examples of these different types of wisdom in our culture and what they teach?
  - b. How do you see some of these ideas creeping into your life?
  - c. How do you see it creeping into the church?
5. One of the key differences between wisdom from above and from below is what it produces: the former produces peace and righteousness while the latter disorder and every vile practice.
  - a. How have you seen this to be true in your own experience?
6. Becoming wise is a difficult and long process.
  - a. In what ways have you had to grow in wisdom in the past?
  - b. What is a wise biblical principle that God is teaching you to live by right now?
  - c. What is an example of godly wisdom that you have taken to heart? What kind of fruit has this produced in your life?
  - d. Where do you still need to grow in wisdom?

