



11/12/25

Okay... just a heads up... We're going to be talking about registering for our Women's Christmas event this week!!! It's called The Beginning. So... before registration is up, please feel free to be the first to put December 6th at 10:00 am on your calendar. More info to come!!! (And maybe a request, too. 🙏)

*Blessings,
Jonna*

James 3:13-18

When I used to think of wisdom, I didn't think of it in terms of how God defines biblical wisdom. I thought of wisdom as having great insight, which it does... but that having wisdom made someone kind of untouchable and lofty because they were so much "above" the rest of us. That's not biblical wisdom. In fact, I wonder if Cain thought of himself as wise and therefore justified his actions against both God and Abel. I mean, he didn't just stop at killing Abel. He also disregarded God's words that told him he would be a wanderer... he built a city and named it after his son. That's not wandering. His bloodline carried the wrong kind of wisdom through their veins... earthly wisdom.

As I look at James 3:13-18, I need to ask You, Lord, please expose any earthly wisdom in me and help me to repent of it and "bear fruit in keeping with repentance" (Matthew 3:8). Please help me to grow in the wisdom that comes only from You. Let me not forget what Your word says in James 1:5, "If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask God, who gives generously to all without reproach, and it will be given him." You are the one and only God, the generous, faithful, wise God.

Vs. 13 ~ "Who is wise and understanding among you?"

Who is wise? This might as well say, "Who is like God?" Romans 16:27 says He is the "only wise God." To be wise like God starts with worship. Proverbs 9:10 says, "The fear (worship, awe) of God is the beginning of wisdom. He is the source of wisdom, so I will be an utter fool if I'm not surrendered fully to Him.

Who is understanding? Who is skilled in knowledge? The Greek word for understanding means "thoroughly knowledgeable from gaining understanding over long-term, personal acquaintance." It is a building up of intimate knowledge through previous knowledge. So the more I grow in faith and worship, the deeper understanding of God I will have. This is HUGE. No matter how much I know right now... there's MORE! God is infinite!!!

What do I do with true wisdom and knowledge? "By his good conduct let him show his works in the meekness of wisdom." Actions speak louder than words. This is telling me that wisdom is not just how I think. It's also how I behave. It's choosing to act upon my awe and understanding of God by doing what pleases Him... because I understand more and more what pleases Him the more I know Him. I'm called to let my behavior and manner of life be displayed "in the meekness of wisdom." Whoa! The Greek word for meekness here means gentleness and humility. God's wisdom has no place for arrogance!!!

O Lord, please help my words to be gentle and meek... as they flow from a gentle and peaceful spirit. Truly, if I'm only trying to be gentle with my words, but my spirit is bitter or jealous, the truth will come out eventually. Please, Lord... remove anything from my heart that doesn't please You. I know You have a lot of work to do!

Vs. 14-16 ~ "But if you have bitter jealousy and selfish ambition in your hearts, do not boast and be false to the truth. This is not the wisdom that comes down from above, but is earthly, unspiritual, demonic. For where jealousy and selfish ambition exist, there will be disorder and every vile practice."

First, I look at Cain's example. He was bitterly jealous that God took pleasure in Abel's offering and not his. He was not really trying to please God. He was trying to leverage himself to GET from God. When it didn't work out in his favor (because God knows our true intentions), instead of repenting and turning to God, he did what was earthly, unspiritual, and demonic. Yikes! Nothing good will ever come from motives of jealousy and selfish ambition.

This is a serious problem! How many things have I done because I wanted for mySELF? Let me never justify it or rationalize it!!! I know before I even blink how I used to view music as though God owed me a thriving career in Christian music. I mean, I was willing to SHARE the glory with Him! I struggled for so long... first, accusing God of not loving me because He wouldn't give me what I wanted... and then, struggling with Him as He gently pried my selfish desires from my grip, one clenched finger at a time. I'm shocked at His mercy... He was kind and forgiving... and now I am so thankful to be able to sing for Him freely... without bitter jealousy over those who have better voices than me or get more opportunities than I do. I still have to hand it to Him, because those thoughts sometimes still rear their ugly heads... but now I'm appalled by them and I immediately confess them to the Lord and ask Him to give me the privilege of worshiping Him wholeheartedly... with an undivided heart.

I wish I could say that is the only struggle I've ever had with bitter jealousy or selfish

ambition. I know God is still transforming my heart... but I truly pray, Father, please expose any wisdom in my heart that's not from You and help me to be repulsed by it, completely and humbly surrendering it to You.

Let me have no...

- *Bitter jealousy... no poisonous burning of emotion that is all about SELF*
- *Selfish ambition... no rivalry, trying to make myself superior to others*

To have these in my heart is to be arrogant and to hate the truth. O Lord, please take these completely away from my heart!!! These things are not from You, but are...

- *Earthly... stuck in the here and now and missing what matters for eternity. This is saying, "I don't care if it's wrong. It feels good now."*
- *Unspiritual... fighting for my natural self... and not considering that I'm a spiritual being made in the image of God... for HIS glory.*
- *Demonic... acting the way the devil does... as a liar and deceiver and saying, "I will be like the Most High." He's wrong. He doesn't even WANT to be like the Most High... He just wants His power.*

With bitter jealousy and selfish ambition comes disorder and every vile or evil practice. Every motivation, whether the act seems good or not, is totally against God when there's jealousy or selfishness.

Vs. 17-18 ~ So what is true wisdom??? Genuine wisdom comes from above, "from the Father of lights, with whom there is NO variation or shadow due to change" (James 1:17). God does not change, so His wisdom does not change. He is the Father of lights... His presence removes every shadow of a doubt as to what is truly wise. If I'm looking to Him, I can trust that He will reveal true wisdom to me... and He will grow true wisdom IN me! Praise His name!!!

Wisdom from above is NOT like what Cain did... It is the antithesis of Cain's behavior. Godly wisdom is...

- *Pure... holy... not a speck of sin is found in His wisdom. Clearly, I will not reach this purity and holiness fully until heaven, but I can trust that as I put my hope in Him, He will remove the dross from my heart, and my purity will become more and more refined.*
- *Peaceable... peaceful, fully content in the Lord.*
- *Gentle... not harsh or overly strict... O Lord, please grow gentleness in me!!!*
- *Open to reason... seeking first to understand before trying to be understood... not just waiting for someone to take a breath so that I can get my words in... being quick to listen, slow to speak, and slow to anger*
- *Full of mercy... not looking to how I can punish, but to how I can restore*

- *Full of good fruits... beneficial fruit that honors God and serves others as I abide in Him*
- *Impartial... not choosing one person over another... caring for ALL people. When I'm partial, I'm not in it for them... I'm in it for me. That's selfish and vile.*
- *Sincere... genuine, without hypocrisy. This has been my theme for the year, asking the Lord to grow my sincerity.*

What I see in this is that Jesus exemplifies every single aspect of wisdom. So the more I fix my eyes on Him and cooperate with the Holy Spirit who is transforming me one degree of glory to the next, the more I become like Jesus.

"And a harvest of righteousness is sown in peace by those who make peace." The good fruit of what comes as I grow in wisdom, is that I become a peace maker, not a peace faker (people pleasing to avoid conflict), and not a peace faker (attacking others to get them to bow under the pressure). The more I grow in wisdom, the more I grow in peace... because my God is the God of peace. O Lord, please help me to be so close to You that only Your wisdom CAN grow in me.