

Book of James Study

Men of Grace

October 27, 2009

Ben Wilson

Defining Wisdom

What is a diamond?

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Defining Wisdom

Technical Definition: an extremely hard, highly refractive crystalline form of tetrahedrally bonded carbon atoms.

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Defining Wisdom

A Diamond



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Defining Wisdom

What is gasoline?

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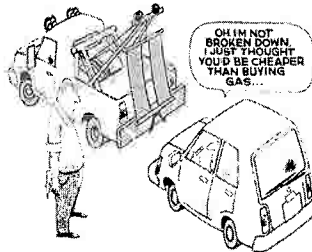
Defining Wisdom

Technical Definition: A highly volatile mixture of fluid hydrocarbons, obtained from petroleum, as also by the distillation of bituminous coal.

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Defining Wisdom

Gasoline: It makes the car go



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Defining Wisdom

What is wisdom?

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Defining Wisdom

Theoretical Definition of Wisdom: "the art of being successful, of forming the correct plan to gain the desired results."

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Defining Wisdom

James defines wisdom practically rather than theoretically. For James, wisdom is an active, relational concept.

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Defining Wisdom

"If you are wise and understand God's ways, prove it by living an honorable life, doing good works with the humility that comes from wisdom."

(v. 13)

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Defining Wisdom

The Test of Wisdom is Life

- ***The wise person shows his wisdom through good deeds.***
- ***The wise person shows his wisdom through an attitude of humility.***

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False "Wisdom" vs. True Wisdom

Comparison of Two Types of Wisdom:

- *What does it look like?*
- *Where does it come from?*
- *What is its ultimate result?*

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False "Wisdom" (v. 14-16)

"But if you are bitterly jealous and there is selfish ambition in your heart, don't cover up the truth with boasting and lying. ¹⁵ For jealousy and selfishness are not God's kind of wisdom. Such things are earthly, unspiritual, and demonic. ¹⁶ For wherever there is jealousy and selfish ambition, there you will find disorder and evil of every kind."

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False "Wisdom"

What does this wisdom look like?

- ***Bitter jealousy***
- ***Selfish Ambition***

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False "Wisdom"

Where does this wisdom come from?

- ***It is earthly.***
- ***It is unspiritual.***
- ***It is demonic.***

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False "Wisdom"

What is the ultimate result of this wisdom?

- ***Disorder***
- ***Every evil practice***

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True Wisdom (v. 17-18)

"But the wisdom from above is first of all pure. It is also peace loving, gentle at all times, and willing to yield to others. It is full of mercy and good deeds. It shows no favoritism and is always sincere. ¹⁸ And those who are peacemakers will plant seeds of peace and reap a harvest of righteousness."

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True Wisdom

Where does this wisdom come from?

- It comes from above.

James 1:5 – “If you need wisdom, ask our generous God, and he will give it to you. He will not rebuke you for asking.”

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True Wisdom

What does this wisdom look like?

- Pure
- peace loving
- gentle at all times
- willing to yield to others
- full of mercy and good deeds
- shows no favoritism
- always sincere

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True Wisdom

What does it look like?

- It's poetry!

Epeita Eirenike, Epieikes, Eupeithes, meste
Eleous kai karpon Agathon, Adiakritos,
Anupokritos

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True Wisdom

What is the ultimate result of this wisdom?

- Personal peace
- Peace with others
- Righteousness

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False “Wisdom” vs. True Wisdom

	<u>False Wisdom</u>	<u>True Wisdom</u>
Source	World, the flesh, the Devil	God
Description	Bitterly Jealous, Selfish	Pure, Peaceful, Fair
Result	Division and Evil Deeds	Peace and Righteousness

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Application

How are you doing?

- Give yourself a check-up.
 - Seek wisdom from the right places.
 - Choose your associates carefully.
- “He who walks with the wise grows wise, but a companion of fools suffers harm” (Proverbs 13:20)**

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Recap the Background

Author: James
-- the (half) brother of Jesus
-- the lead elder of the Jerusalem church

Recipients: Jewish Christians outside of Israel
-- Eastern Mediterranean basin
-- Probably Syria, Phoenecia and Cyprus
-- Scattered as a result of the "great persecution" after Stephen's stoning (See Acts 8:1-2 and 11:19)

Date: A.D. 45 - 46

Place of Writing: Jerusalem

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Discussion Questions

1. What are your most trusted sources of wisdom?
2. Are there areas of your life where you struggle with jealousy or selfish ambition?
3. What feature of godly wisdom (purity, gentleness, favoritism, etc.) do you want to work on this week?

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Thank You

James 3:13-18

Big Picture Statement

If you are wise and understand God's ways, prove it by living an honorable life, doing good works with the humility that comes from wisdom.

False "Wisdom"

¹⁴ But if you are bitterly jealous and there is selfish ambition in your heart, don't cover up the truth with boasting and lying. ¹⁵ For jealousy and selfishness are not God's kind of wisdom. Such things are earthly, unspiritual, and demonic. ¹⁶ For wherever there is jealousy and selfish ambition, there you will find disorder and evil of every kind.

True Wisdom

¹⁷ But the wisdom from above is first of all pure. It is also peace loving, gentle at all times, and willing to yield to others. It is full of mercy and good deeds. It shows no favoritism and is always sincere. ¹⁸ And those who are peacemakers will plant seeds of peace and reap a harvest of righteousness.