



What's the difference between 'worldly wisdom' and Godly wisdom? While worldly wisdom is founded on BITTER ENVY and SELFISH AMBITION, Godly wisdom is evidenced by PURITY & HUMILITY. Today we discover what that looks like in real life.

BIG TRUTH: *Godly Wisdom is evidenced by PURITY & HUMILITY.*

James 3:13 (NIV) ¹³ Who is wise and understanding among you? Let them show it by their **good life, by deeds done in the humility** that comes from wisdom.

The Jewish Audience might have thought about what the Scriptures said about Moses.

Numbers 12:3 (NIV) (Now Moses was a very humble man, more humble than anyone else on the face of the earth.)

Of course, Jesus is the greatest model of Godly wisdom evidenced by good deeds and humility.

Matthew 11:28-29 (NIV) ²⁸ "Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. ²⁹ Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for **I am gentle and humble** in heart, and you will find rest for your souls.

'Worldly Wisdom'

James 3:14-16 (NIV) ¹⁴ But if you harbor bitter envy and selfish ambition in your hearts, do not boast about it or deny the truth. ¹⁵ Such "wisdom" does not come down from heaven but is earthly, unspiritual, demonic. ¹⁶ For where you have envy and selfish ambition, there you find disorder and every evil practice.

Godly Wisdom

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

Our desire & decision to live **pure** before God & people is linked to being **peace-loving**. We LOVE to see others walk closely with God and each other!!!

Hebrews 12:14 (NIV) Make every effort to **live in peace with everyone** and to **be holy** [pure]; without holiness no one will see the Lord.

People who have the wisdom that comes from heaven should further be **considerate & submissive** with others. Believers care about other people and are willing to submit to one another and be open to reason. Further, believers are to be **full of mercy** and **good fruit, impartial** and **sincere**. **Followers of Jesus should be the most merciful people on the planet!!!** We should be known for lives that are full of **good fruit**, where we treat ALL PEOPLE WITH VALUE (**impartial**) with **sincerity**, not hypocrisy.

Godly Wisdom is evidenced by PURITY & HUMILITY.

When those who claim Christ don't walk in Godly wisdom...

James 4:1-4 (NIV) ¹ What causes fights and quarrels among you? Don't they come from your desires that battle within you? ² You desire but do not have, so you kill. You covet but you cannot get what you want, so you quarrel and fight. You do not have because you do not ask God. ³ When you ask, you do not receive, because you ask with wrong motives, that you may spend what you get on your pleasures. ⁴ You **adulterous people**, don't you know that friendship with the world means enmity [NET *hostility*] against God? Therefore, anyone who chooses to be a **friend of the world** becomes an **enemy of God**.

When those who CLAIM CHRIST have conflict with each other, it's likely because at least one side is in conflict with JESUS Himself.

Jacob & the ONE who has inspired this writing is not wanting believers to be UNFRIENDLY to people of the world. Rather, we should be more concerned about pleasing our CREATOR rather than pleasing our CULTURE - and we CANNOT do BOTH!!!

Jacob calls those who try to please the CULTURE instead of the CREATOR, **adulterous people**. Jacob is writing to Jews scattered in the dispersion (James 1:1). They are aware of the frequent use of the phrase - **adulterous people** - in the OT. One of the most vivid examples of this is found in Ezekiel, where God calls the people of Israel this:

Ezekiel 16:32 (NIV) You **adulterous wife!** You prefer strangers to your own husband!

The story is told of a female child who has been left at God's doorstep, bloody, naked, hungry, & helpless. God takes her in, bathes her, provides for her for years and years. When she is full grown, he marries her. But Israel takes the gifts she has been given and seduces other lovers. She is an adulterous wife.

Jesus spoke of unbelieving Israel of His day as "an evil and adulterous generation" (Matt. 12:39; cf. 16:4; Mark 8:38).¹ God wouldn't put up with it THEN, and He won't put up with it NOW.

Godly Wisdom is evidenced by PURITY & HUMILITY.

..pledging allegiance to the Creator instead of Culture.

Test Your Faith - REAL DEAL or EMPTY SHELL?

James 4:5-7 (NIV) ⁵ Or do you think Scripture says without reason that he jealously longs for the spirit he has caused to dwell in us? ⁶ But he gives us more grace. That is why Scripture says: "God opposes the proud but shows favor to the humble." ⁷ **Submit** yourselves, then, to **God**. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you. ⁸ **Come near to God and he will come near to you.**

☞ Just as Niagara Falls continues to spill billions of gallons per year for thousands of years, so **God gives us more grace!** When we realize that inner turmoil is God's Spirit dealing with us, we have a choice, to stay in our pride, or **humble ourselves**. **Come near to God and he will come near to you.** What a GREAT PROMISE!!!! Remember the words of Jesus, "Come to me you who are weak and have heavy burdens, and I will give you rest!"

¹ John F. MacArthur Jr., James, MacArthur New Testament Commentary (Chicago: Moody Press, 1998), 192.

TURN FROM SIN

James 4:7-8b-10 (NIV) Wash your hands, you sinners, and purify your hearts, you double-minded. ⁹ Grieve, mourn and wail. Change your laughter to mourning and your joy to gloom.

¹⁰ **Humble yourselves before the Lord, and he will lift you up.**

Submission to God means bowing our knee in humility. In this way we **resist the devil** and his desires as we **submit** to what God wants. The rest of this language speaks of REPENTANCE, TURNING FROM our sin and TURNING TO Jesus. This is how we begin to live in Godly wisdom.

Godly Wisdom is evidenced by PURITY & HUMILITY.

So what's it gonna be for US???? Let's turn from our pride and humble ourselves before God. Here's a great way to start:

FEET2FAITH

- 1) Start the day on your face - Seek God first.
- 2) Find a way to SERVE another believer.

Discussion Questions

1. How did today's teaching challenge you, encourage you, or stir up questions you need to have answered?
2. **Read James 3:17-18.** Spend some time talking about these characteristics that demonstrate Godly wisdom. Which characteristics most intrigue or challenge you and why?
3. **Read James 4:1-5.** After hearing the background of **Ezekiel 16**, how would being called **adulterous people** strike the Jewish people? What are some warning signs that WE are cheating on God?
4. **Read James 4:7-10** What is it about this passage that demonstrates genuine repentance & what is the promise attached?
5. Tell about a time when another believer humbled him/herself and God lifted up.
6. PRAY for one another & share any struggles you can help each other with.