

Wisdom from Above

[Jas 3:13-18 ESV] 13 Who is wise and understanding among you? By his good conduct let him show his works in the meekness of wisdom. 14 But if you have bitter jealousy and selfish ambition in your hearts, do not boast and be false to the truth. 15 This is not the wisdom that comes down from above, but is earthly, unspiritual, demonic. 16 For where jealousy and selfish ambition exist, there will be disorder and every vile practice. 17 But the wisdom from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, open to reason, full of mercy and good fruits, impartial and sincere. 18 And a harvest of righteousness is sown in peace by those who make peace.

I. Intro

- A. We need you involved in the life and ministry of this church!
- B. James 3 is a reminder of the evidence that WILL BE in your life when you are a believer.
- C. Chapter three starts with a reminder of the high standard of those in leadership
- D. Then moves quickly to a series of illustrations regarding the tongue that remind us why this is important.
 1. The tongue can be a blessing to the mission
 2. The tongue can be a hindrance to the mission
 3. But, the tongue is and always will be, part of the evidence of:
 - a) Our genuine faith in Christ
 - b) And our complete dependance on him
- E. The application continues today to a discussion of wisdom:
 1. Show your faith in Christ by action
 2. Actually, show your faith in Christ by actions that are only possible because the Spirit of God resides in you.

II. Text

- A. Verse 13
 1. A Question with a purpose:
 - a) Rhetorical Question: a question asked in order to create a dramatic effect or to make a point rather than to get an answer. (So its not this)
 - b) Not Rhetorical, leading, yes/no (dichotomous), multiple choice, or probing: There is a definite answer that is not up for options.
 - c) We will call this a clarifying question
 - (1) Used to check your understanding or to delve a bit deeper into a part of the discussion.
 - (2) CLEARLY this question is CLARIFYING
 2. The answer is seen in the good conduct of the follower of Christ.
- B. Verse 14
 1. Bitter jealousy, selfish ambition
 2. Lead us to boast and handle truth falsely
- C. Verse 15-16
 1. These verses explain sin nature, and in so doing explain the problems in our culture today.
 2. We have all the hubris that earthly, unspiritual, demonic influence can provide, and the well seems to be deep.
 3. Where jealousy and selfish ambition exist, we will see the natural man and the influences of the lost world.
- D. Verse 17
 1. The contrast of the beauty in the Spirit filled life
 - a) First pure (this is the starting point, being made pure by the power of God)
 - b) Then peaceable, gentle, and open to reason
 - (1) These results of Christ presence allow us to hold our tongue and speak truth
 - (2) Allow us to listen and reason
 - (3) Allow us to mature and proclaim, rather than argue and convince
 2. Full of mercy and good fruits: we have work to do

3. Impartial and sincere:
 - a) a great reminder from a powerful list
 - b) Impartiality is powerful, sincerity is mandatory

E. Verse 18

1. A harvest of righteousness is sown in peace
2. POWERFUL TRUTH: Sew peace, harvest righteousness
3. This is where we must be as blood bought saints: sewing peace, harvesting righteousness.

III. Points

A. Wisdom and Understanding

1. Wisdom and Understanding...IN CHRIST is the three fold foundation we build our faith walk on.
2. Wisdom from God, Understanding revealed by God, and the presence of Christ allow us to see all these other godly attributes come to LIFE in us:
 - a) Purity, peace, gentleness, reasonableness, mercy, impartiality, and sincerity are all GOOD FRUITS of wisdom and understand
 - b) Wisdom and Understand cannot be realized without Christ!
3. Evidence will be EVIDENT
 - a) You cant fake it forever
 - b) You will be able to mark growth
 - c) You can learn this:
 - (1) Though experience: the stove is hot...most of the times experience seems to be a negative example
 - (2) Through observation: watching other and learning from mistakes and failures
 - (3) Through Inspiration: The word and the relationship inspire us to grow in our faith
 - (4) Through Application: practice the elements of the faith, grow in the faith
4. Don't shy away, embrace.

B. Challenges and things to avoid

1. Why are their fights and quarrels? James 4:1 will go deeper into this point.
2. We get in our own way more times than someone gets in our way.
3. There is something in every person reminding them of their need for God, and it produces some form of response:
 - a) We try to man up
 - b) We try to justify sin
 - c) We try to explain away
 - d) Or we meet the challenges with the tools God has given.
4. When we get it wrong, the reaction is boasting: to cover up insecurities
 - a) Boasting is a cover for feelings of insecurity
 - b) If you are genuinely good at some task, you really never have to tell people, they will see it in you.
5. And Being False in the Truth: to mislead or misdirect
 - a) Example:
 - (1) False truth: due to my age, I cannot dunk a basketball
 - (2) Reality: I could never dunk a basketball because I'm short and cant jump.
 - b) Taking the scripture and sort of teaching it, yet leaving out the parts that you don't want to deal with...FALSE IN THE TRUTH
 - c) Teaching a scripture out of context is being false in the truth:
 - (1) Sometimes it seems harmless, but its never harmless
 - (2) Sometimes it will get the teacher a pat on the back, but we should not encourage the teaching of half truths
 - d) This was EXACTLY what Satan did in the garden with Adam and Eve.
6. The twisting and ripping of scripture out of context will NEVER build a household of genuine faith.

C. But How?

1. Sow PEACE, Harvest Righteousness
 - a) Fill your life with the things of God, and you will find peace with God through dependance and relationship with Him.
 - b) Through that dependance and relationship you will grow to become what Christ has called you to, righteousness
 - c) Righteousness comes through faith in Jesus death and resurrection
 - d) Harvesting Righteousness comes through living out this truth and producing fruit
 - e) Not because you are good enough to accomplish it, but because He already did.
2. Find PEACE with GOD through surrender
3. Find PEACE with GOD through meekness
4. Find PEACE with GOD through seeds sown into the fertile ground of relationship prepared and cultivated by proper relationship.
5. DIE to self, LIVE for Christ.

IV. Close