

# Wisdom from Above

Sermon by Andy Sochor

Text: James 3:13-18

This lesson is the sixth in a series on the book of James. In this passage, we see a comparison between earthly wisdom and heavenly wisdom. Whichever one we choose will be clear by our actions.

## Wisdom Is Seen in Our Deeds (v. 13-14)

- Many may claim to have wisdom – but merely claiming it does not prove it; James already demonstrated this principle in connection with faith (2:17-18)
- Wisdom is shown in doing good deeds in a spirit of gentleness – a commitment and disposition to do right; this means we consistently do what is right simply because it is right (no ulterior motive)
- Our claim of wisdom is disproved if our heart is not right – we discussed this in the previous lesson (3:9-12); this comes from an attitude of arrogance, thinking we are above God’s law

## Characteristics of Earthly Wisdom (v. 14-16)

- Bitter jealousy – cannot rejoice with others (Romans 12:15)
- Selfish ambition – seeking after our own interests (Philippians 2:3-4)
- Arrogance – thinking more highly of ourselves than we ought to think (Romans 12:3)
- Disorder – rejecting God’s standard; therefore, confusion (1 Corinthians 15:33) and division (1 Corinthians 1:10)
- Every evil thing – contrast with God being the giver of every good thing (1:17)

## Characteristics of Heavenly Wisdom (v. 17)

- Pure – necessarily first; we cannot tamper with God’s word and still be following the wisdom from above; when we change His message, we are no longer following His truth (Galatians 1:6-9)
- Peaceable – strive to be “peacemakers” (Matthew 5:9) as much as possible (Romans 12:18)
- Gentle – word means to be fair and to seek unity (cf. 1 Timothy 3:3)
- Reasonable – “easy to be intreated” (KJV); eager to obey or comply with God’s law (cf. Titus 2:14)
- Full of mercy – show mercy to others as God has shown mercy to us (Matthew 5:7; 6:14-15)
- Full of good fruits – “bearing fruit in every good work” (Colossians 1:10); as we abide in Christ (John 15:4)

- Unwavering – without compromise; willing to boldly take a stand (2 Thessalonians 2:15) because we know what is right
- Without hypocrisy – practice what we preach (cf. Matthew 23:2-3); prove to be wise (v. 13)

### **How We Can Promote This Wisdom (v. 18)**

- There is a clear difference between earthly and heavenly wisdom – we want to cultivate the latter; how can we do that?
- Sow the right seed – the seed is God’s word (cf. 1 Peter 1:23); its fruit is righteousness (2 Timothy 3:16)
- Sow it in peace – there are times to take up the sword of the Spirit and do battle (Ephesians 6:17; 2 Corinthians 10:5); but if possible, be at peace with others (Romans 12:18); we take the message of peace (Ephesians 6:15)
- Strive to make peace – again, strive to be at peace with others (Romans 12:18); work toward unity (Ephesians 4:3); help others to have peace with God (cf. 2 Corinthians 5:20)

### **Conclusion**

- We must choose which type of wisdom we will pursue – the wisdom of the world or wisdom from above
- Whichever choice we make will be clear in our actions
- If we want to do those things that please God, we need to follow the wisdom that comes from Him