

# FAITH WORKS

LIVING THE FAITH WE CLAIM - JAMES

## Faith Adds Wisdom

James 3:13-18







- What is wisdom?
  - It starts with God; with Christ specifically
- Wisdom is NOT:
  - Knowing more
  - Not relying on your own understanding (Prov. 3)
  - Not a posture of success but of continual growth (Stengele)
  - Not perfect but accepting correction



- Wisdom is:
  - in every of life acknowledging God (trusting God, seeking His heart, submitting to Him)
- Being opinionated isn't wisdom
- Being fully convinced of something isn't wisdom

## James 3:13-14

**13** Who among you is wise and understanding? Let him show by his good behavior his deeds in the gentleness of wisdom. **14** But if you have bitter jealousy and selfish ambition in your heart, do not be arrogant and so lie against the truth.

- Why is it so hard to gain wisdom?
  - We are all born:
    - Stupid
    - With an inflated view of self
    - An inability to discern
    - Into a culture that says be yourself- but we are broken!



- God warns us about being wise in our own eyes:
  - Proverbs 3:7
  - Proverbs 26:12



## James 3:14-16

**14** But if you have bitter jealousy and selfish ambition in your heart, do not be arrogant and so lie against the truth. **15** This wisdom is not that which comes down from above, but is earthly, natural, demonic. **16** For where jealousy and selfish ambition exist, there is disorder and every evil thing.

- How do you know if you are wise?
- It's in your actions-
  - Not perfection, but consistent
  - Mourned when it is missing
- Self honest; decentralized; others-focused
- Heavy emphasis on how your actions affect relationships



- Unwise people are self-absorbed, insecure, selfish
  - Why we don't ask "What does this church/ministry do for me?"
  - Why we encourage Faith Works- me in the background
- Biblical wisdom is intimately tied to how I treat others

- v. 15- demonic wisdom:
  - Arrogant
  - Deceitful
  - Stirs up evil



## James 3:17-18

**17** But the wisdom from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, reasonable, full of mercy and good fruits, unwavering, without hypocrisy. **18** And the seed whose fruit is righteousness is sown in peace by those who make peace.

- OT says beginning of wisdom is fear; some say “All fear is bad”
  - If you fear the Lord, how can you fear man?
  - God is anxious to give wisdom
  - God loves me and will not hurt me (Psalm 130:5)



- There's wisdom from above:
  - 8 characteristics
- Not perfection- a new heart from Christ that allows me to be wise

- Where does it come from?
  - Outside- implanted seed of righteousness
  - Pray for it!
- We want God to show up with His Bag o' Wisdom for each specific instance
  - Is that more valuable than the long, hard road of cultivating wisdom?
  - Get to the point where God says, "You choose; I'll bless"



- Wisdom informs your use of knowledge- do I act rightly?  
am I changed?
- Are your relationships marked with wisdom? (external  
and internal)
- There is freedom here!
- God is not impressed with the intellectual pursuit of  
freedom
- James says, “Inspect yourself; don’t lie to yourself and  
others about your wisdom status.”
- Tired of being a fool?
  - Pray for changed heart/saved heart; pray for  
maturing faith that leads to wise actions

# Proverbs 2:6-11 (NIV)

**6** For the LORD gives wisdom; from his mouth come knowledge and understanding.

**7** He holds success in store for the upright, he is a shield to those whose walk is blameless,

**8** for he guards the course of the just and protects the way of his faithful ones.

**9** Then you will understand what is right and just and fair—every good path.

**10** For wisdom will enter your heart, and knowledge will be pleasant to your soul.