

# WORLDLY WISDOM AND GODLY WISDOM

**JAMES 3:13-18**

**CHURCH GROUP SERMON DISCUSSION GUIDE – NOVEMBER 12, 2023**

---

## SCRIPTURE READING

*James 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.*

## ICE BREAKER QUESTION

How does someone's behavior illustrate whether they are living foolishly or wisely?

## SERMON RECAP

One Fact About Wisdom

- Wisdom is not just something you know; it's something you show.

Two Kinds of Wisdom

- Worldly Wisdom:
  - Prideful: Focused on what we want in this world. It includes jealousy and selfish ambition.
  - It leads to disorder and evil.
- Godly Wisdom
  - Humble: Focused on what God wants in this world. It is pure, peaceable, gentle, open to reason, merciful, impartial, and sincere.
  - It leads to righteousness and peace.

Three Things to Remember

- Jesus is the wisdom of God.
- If you want godly wisdom, then you need Jesus.
- Ask Jesus for wisdom every day and show wisdom from Jesus in every moment.

## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

**Observation: What does the passage say?**

1. Read James 3:13-18 aloud as a group. Let group members share observations. Try not to move into interpretation of the passage or application of what you read quite yet. Simply share what you observe.
  - What do you notice about wisdom and behavior in James 3:13?
  - What are the hallmarks of worldly wisdom? (James 3:14-16)
  - What are the hallmarks of godly wisdom? (James 3:17-18)
  - How would you summarize James 3:13-18 in your own words?

**Interpretation: What does the passage mean?**

1. Read James 1:5, Proverbs 4:7, Proverbs 4:11-12, Proverbs 8:11.
  - What is wisdom?
  - Why does God's Word place such great value in wisdom?
  - What are some examples of biblical wisdom that you can find in the Word?
2. Worldly wisdom is in conflict with godly wisdom.



- What examples of worldly wisdom have you seen or experienced?
- What results did you see from worldly wisdom?
- What examples of godly wisdom have you seen or experienced?
- What results did you see from godly wisdom?
- Why is it more important to practice godly wisdom than worldly wisdom?

***Application: How can we apply this passage to our lives?***

1. Jesus is the wisdom of God.
  - How specifically does your life show that you turn to Jesus for wisdom? If not, why not?
  - How would someone watching you see your reliance upon and your adoration for Jesus and His wisdom? If not, why not?
2. If you want godly wisdom, then you need Jesus.
  - For someone watching your life, what evidence can they see of godly focus rather than jealousy, self-ambition, and pride?
  - What evidence can you personally cite that Jesus transformed you?
  - How are the components of wisdom (pure, peaceable, gentle, open to reason, merciful, impartial, and sincere) leading your life to righteousness and peace?
3. Ask Jesus for wisdom every day and show wisdom from Jesus in every moment.
  - How is your prayer life characterized by humble submission to Jesus to find wisdom?
  - How does your life demonstrate that you are living in the wisdom that comes from Jesus?

## **LEADER NOTES**

**COUNSELING CONVERSATIONS** | As we walk through the book of James, check out [mcleanbible.org/counseling-conversations](https://mcleanbible.org/counseling-conversations) For resources to help you process and pray the various topics covered in this book.

**PASTORAL INSTALLATION OF MIKE KELSEY** | Join the MBC church family across all locations on December 3 to celebrate and commission Mike in his new role as Lead Pastor. Details can be found at [mcleanbible.org/installation](https://mcleanbible.org/installation).