

Aug 30, 2020



Oaks Early Risers Bible Class

The Oaks Baptist Church
Grand Prairie, Texas

◆
Lesson Leaders:
James Haymon

Class Leaders:
Inreach: Pat Hester
Deacon: C M Hester

Two Kinds of Wisdom James 3:13-18; 5:7-12

Lesson Background and Introduction

In James, there are a few themes that run throughout the letter. These themes unite the disparate topics that James addresses. Wisdom is one such theme. For example, at the outset of his letter James encouraged his readers to have perseverance in the midst of temptations or trials (James 1:2-4). This they could do by actively seeking God's wisdom (1:5). In today's text, James brings two disparate passages together under one unifying theme: the supremacy of the wisdom from above, and the need for it in a variety of situations. First, teachers, then as now, can wreak great spiritual damage through the spoken word among those they teach. Secondly, ordinary believers, suffering greatly under economic oppression, negate the gospel and its power by harboring bitterness against fellow Christians. Both circumstances damage Christian witness to others. The solution is for Christians to seek "the wisdom that comes from heaven" (James 3:17). When armed with it, we can put suffering into a larger perspective and be empowered with perseverance to endure until Jesus returns. We all face challenges over the course of our lives. The real question is how we will react when those times come. Will we pause to seek wisdom from above? Or will we rely on earthly wisdom in our response? The need for wisdom from above and perseverance go hand in hand as our discipline and resolve are tested. All this has a very real bearing on our spiritual well-being in this life; continual rejection of God's wisdom has eternal implications. As we heed James's call to seek wisdom from above, we will experience a harvest of righteousness. Guaranteed.

(Adapted from the NIV Standard Lesson Commentary)

Earthly Wisdom - James warned against following worldly wisdom and pointed out its destructive results. The person with worldly wisdom is violent, critical, and constantly provoking negativity. This person's spirit is bitter and self-seeking, causes divisions, and is boastful, sensual, and deceptive. This person's mind works against the things of God and possesses no true wisdom at all. He or she is self-centered and working against God.

Wisdom from Heaven - Wisdom is an invisible inner quality. However, wisdom's characteristics manifest themselves in the daily activity of the believer, for all to see. James added the word meekness to the definition of this virtue, possessing humility and gentleness. Godly wisdom results in pure motives and attitudes. Like the Father, His children should be patient and kind. One scholar called it "sweet reasonableness," extending graciousness and treating others the way you would want to be addressed. It is a decision to willingly look at people and issues from different sides rather than being inflexible. In this wisdom is no sign of harsh, unfair judging. It has no hidden agendas, avoids conflict, and honestly desires the best for others.

Hold On: Jesus Will Return - James encouraged his fellow Christian brothers and sisters to exercise perseverance, especially in light of their present difficulties. When facing persecution and unjust treatment, he said to keep in mind that Jesus is coming back. He will eventually put everything in order. It is like a farmer who plants seeds, knows they are coming up, but cannot see any immediate results. We keep meditating on the sure reality—Jesus is coming back to take His children home. In the meantime, we are loving toward each other. When we are going through a hard time, it is easy to take out frustrations on whoever is standing in our way. However, we must be gentle, patient, and friendly. God shows His love and sustains us throughout hard times. Even in our pain, the Lord will accomplish His plans and purposes. We don't depend on our own reasoning—we know that He will guide us better than we can ourselves.

(Adapted from the Echoes Commentary)

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

THOUGHT FOR THE WEEK:

To find your way through life, follow Jesus

POEM FOR THE WEEK:

As I walk along life's pathway,
Though the way I cannot see,
I shall follow in Christ's foot-
steps, For He has a plan for me.
—Thiesen

SCRIPTURE FOR THE WEEK:

If anyone serves Me, let him follow Me; and where I am, there My servant will be also. If anyone serves Me, him My Father will honor

(John 12:26 NKJV)

(from "Our Daily Bread", Aug 07, 2009)

Series: Love For One Another

UNIT: Struggles with Love

NEXT WEEK

Biased Love
(Gen 37:2-11,23-24,28)

NOTES AND CROSS-REFERENCES

Types of Wisdom (James 3:13-18)

Wisdom that leads to good conduct and works (13)

- Conduct that is worthy of the gospel of Jesus (Phil 1:27)
- Conduct that is an example (1 Tim 4:12)
- Conduct that is without covetousness (Heb 13:5)
- Conduct that is honorable (1 Peter 2:12)
- Conduct that makes evildoers ashamed and turn to God (1 Peter 3:15-16)
- Conduct that shows we know God (Jer 9:23-24)
- Conduct that displays we are obedient to God's Word (Matt 7:24)

Earthly wisdom (14-16)

- Earthly wisdom does not glorify God (Rom 1:20-23)
- Earthly wisdom does not understand spiritual things (1 Cor 2:14)
- Earthly wisdom can be of the devil (John 8:44)
- Earthly wisdom can pervert us away from God (Acts 13:10)
- Earthly wisdom is sensual, comes from ungodly lusts, and causes divisions (Jude 17-19)

Godly wisdom (17-18)

- Godly wisdom comes from God (Prov 2:6)
- Godly wisdom comes through the Holy Spirit (1 Cor 12:8)
- Godly wisdom is pure (Titus 1:15)
- Godly wisdom is beyond human understanding (Rom 11:33)
- Godly wisdom is salvation to those who believe (1 Cor 1:21)
- Godly wisdom is in Jesus (1 Cor 1:30)
- Godly wisdom brings understanding and hope (Eph 1:17-18)
- Godly wisdom teaches to redeem the time (Eph 5:15-17)

Two Characteristics of Godly Wisdom (James 5:7-12)

Patience (7-10)

- Patient while seeking God (Lam 3:25-26)
- Patient while standing firm (Luke 21:19)
- Patient while doing work produced by faith (1 Thess 1:3)
- Patient while imitating those who will inherit God's promises (Heb 6:12)
- Patient and being still before God (Ps 37:7-9)

Endurance (11-12)

- Endurance that displays that one is living worthy (2 Thess 1:3-5)
- Endurance of hardships (2 Tim 2:3)
- Endurance that is rewarded by reigning with Jesus (2 Tim 2:12)
- Endurance that proves one is a child of God (Heb 12:7-9)
- Endurance by standing firm (Matt 24:13)