

From IQ to WQ

James 3:13-18

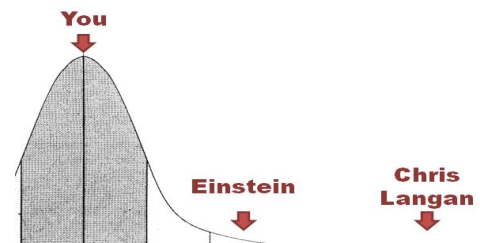
Purpose of series: The purpose of this series is to assist you in taking off the limits of God's expression through you and in your life and His blessing on your life. The book of James reveals many practical duties and activities of Christian, that if not heeded will hinder God's expression through them and blessings on them, especially during difficult seasons of our life. This series will provide us with a practical view of how to live a life of spiritual impact and personal fullness in a difficult world under pressure.

Purpose of this message: In this message, James is addressing the issue of living an authentic Christian life. He is addressing people who had at one time served God passionately, openly and sacrificially. But things have changed. They are not the church, the body of Christ they used to be. Instead of maximizing their walk in Christ through a sacrificial life of Christ in love, they had learned to minimize it to it's simplest common denominator, salvation. In one way, they had become too smart for their spiritual britches! In some weird way they held on to a true understanding of their salvation without yielding to the submitted life of service. In his attempt to rally them back on a correct course, James challenges their "wisdom" as a means of shaking them back to the mind of Christ. This rally cry is important for us to hear and imperative for the day in which we live. The only difference between those who received James' writing then and us now is that their distractions were from painful conflict and a struggle for life and ours is the opportunity to escape almost all pain and have extreme freedom in life.

Are You Smarter Than A Fifth Grader? I was watching a clip of the game show, are you smarter than a fifth grader. A woman contestant had reach as high as any other woman in the contest. She had \$500,000 and had the option to go for \$1,000,000. They put up the category of the next question, it was music. She said, "I did play the violin for ten years as a child, but I'll go ahead and quit, I don't want another question." After it was all said and done, the question that she was going to be asked was a question about a well know violin composer...an easy answer for her, but she only received half of that \$1,000,000.

Test: Mary's father has five daughters: 1. Nana, 2. Nene, 3. Nini, 4. Nono. What is the name of the fifth daughter?

Chris Langan is considered the World's Smartest Man. That's not an opinion, it's a statement of fact. Mr. Langan's IQ is nearly 200. Oh, something else important to know, he's spent the last 20 years being a bouncer at a bar.



There are two books of wisdom in the Bible. James is the New Testament book and Proverbs is the Old Testament book. They both talk about wisdom so let me first introduce you to a lady in the Old Testament book who must become our friend.

God is not impressed by your intelligence but your wisdom! People with wisdom are vastly outnumbered by average people and because of that there will be difficulty. A lot of smart people are not too wise. They may be educated but they don't have wisdom. They may have all kinds of degrees but they're a washout with relationships.

I want you to open your Bibles up to James 3 and hold your place there and then I want you to take a left and turn in your Bibles to Proverbs 8. We are going to talk about moving your IQ to WQ, your wisdom quotient. Wisdom is really far more important to God because it is the working of what you know in a way that brings life and purpose.

I want you to picture with me someone standing with me on the stage. It is a lady and she is very expressive. She is confident and very bold because she is not just standing there, she is yelling out to you and me. Her name is Wisdom.

Check Out The Loud Lady

“Does not wisdom call out? Does not understanding raise her voice?”

Proverbs 8:1

It is important to notice that this woman is loud and in obvious places. According to the writer here, she is not hard to find or to hear. Look where she is found,

“On the heights along the way, where the paths meet, she takes her stand; beside the gates leading into the city, at the entrances, she cries aloud...”

Proverbs 8:2-3

Look At The Three Places She Positions Herself

- 1. On The Heights Along The Way-** This is while you are on your journey. Do you ever get to wondering, is the is direction I should be going? Maybe this Lady is talking...do you hear her?
- 2. Where The Paths Meet-** This is the fork in the road! This is where a decision has to be made and a direction taken, where there was one way, now there is two. This is one of the most difficult places to hear her talk. But she is there, loud, calling out.
- 3. Beside The Gates-** As you probably already know, all government officials did all of their business at the gates of the city. This was where all leadership took place. What does that have to do with what we are talking about? It means that this Lady is crying out, calling to everyone to give wisdom to them if they will listen. I believe this is a special point that the Holy Spirit was wanting to make through the writer here, “I am always talking, will you listen and take note?” I don't believe God ever left the White House. I don't believe He ever left our schools. We are just not a tune to hearing Him, and not accustom to allowing Him to speak. I will tell you why as we read a few more scriptures down the way.

The Two Kinds of People She Addresses

“To you, O men, I call out; I raise my voice to all mankind. You who are simple, gain prudence; you who are foolish, gain understanding.”

Proverbs 8:4-5 (NIV)

“O ye simple, understand wisdom: and, ye fools, be ye of an understanding heart.”

Proverbs 8:5 (KJV)

This woman is no respecter of persons. She equally calls out to everyone, all mankind. She addresses two particular kind of people who need her, and gives two solutions to

their problems. The two kinds of people she addresses:

1. **Simple**- Heb. *Pěthiy*- simplicity, naivety, for those who don't know better
2. **Foolish**- Heb. *Kěciyl*- fool, stupid fellow, arrogant one. This is not in reflection of intelligence, it is in response to knowing and not responding correctly.

Her Solution

1. To the Simple, gain (understand), prudence. The simple just don't know.

- **Prudence** (*ormah*) shrewdness, craftiness, prudence
- You are to “**understand**,” (H995- *biyn*) to discern, understand, consider. In other words you need a little voice inside of you that says, “That ain't right!” And when that voice goes off, it is determining...

...what is being wasted, (shrewdness)

...what is deceiving, (craftiness)

...what is without purpose or delayed purpose, (prudence)

2. To the Foolish, gain (understand), understanding. The fool just doesn't care to know.

- To “**understand**,” (H995- *biyn*) to discern, understand, consider.
- **In The Heart**- inner man, mind, will, heart, understanding

I believe we are all either simple or a fool in many areas of our life:

- **The simple just don't know.**
- **The fool just doesn't care to know.**
- The simple needs to understand principles of concepts, applications and consequences.
- The fool needs to recognize that they are not open in their heart for practical application and correction.

Her Speech:

*“Listen, for I have **worthy things to say**; I open my lips to speak what is **right**. My mouth speaks what is **true**, for my lips **detest wickedness**. All the words of my mouth are **just**; **none of them is crooked or perverse.**”*

Proverbs 8:6-8

She is saying six things, “Let me tell you what is coming out of my mouth...”

- **Worthy things...**
- **Right things...**
- **True things...**
- **Pure things...** (detest wickedness)
- **Just things...**
- **Accurate things...** (none crooked or perverse)

The question here is, “Is this the kind of person you would listen too?” Really, is this an attractive person to you or not. Are you interested in things that are worthy of God's approval, things that are right and true. Do you have a heart for things that are pure, just and accurate? It has a lot to do with your attraction to this type of conversation.

Her Stance:

"To the discerning all of them are right; they are faultless to those who have knowledge. Choose my instruction instead of silver, knowledge rather than choice gold, for wisdom is more precious than rubies, and nothing you desire can compare with her."

Proverbs 8:9-11

Listen to this Lady. I've come to realize that there is another Lady in my life. I was taught at a young age about this woman. And if my life was going to have the opportunity that only others dream about, this woman had to be a part of it. It's not my wife, it's this woman described in Proverbs.

Discerning: It makes sense to discerning individuals. How can I know that I am discerning? Because when I hear her I know all that she says is right.

- **Right:** They are specific and appropriate

Knowledge: It sounds perfect to those who have knowledge, (perception with skill). How can I know that I have knowledge? Because when I hear her I know that there is no better plan to wisdom.

- **Faultless:** I know that there is no fault in her words. They are accurate.

Key Factor: This **DISCERNING** and **KNOWLEDGE** is a **CHOICE** not just a **REVELATION!** You don't respond because you "get" it, you grab a hold of it until you "get" it!

Two Combative Forces of Discernment and Knowledge

1. **Outward Opportunities of Wealth:** She says that these three means of a discerning heart is distracted and challenged with financial opportunities, silver, choice gold, rubies. I know that I have chosen and will continue choose her words even if it cost me. I would not ignore these words for any financial opportunities elsewhere.
 1. **Instruction- instead of silver**
 2. **Knowledge- instead of choice gold**
 3. **Wisdom- instead of rubies**
2. **Inward Distractions of Desire:** This Lady offers us something so much more valuable than any amount of wealth that can be offered to you, but it is also worth more than anything you could desire within your own heart. Everything that could get in the way of hearing her voice, it is nothing compared to her voice. Nothing, Nothing is worth more!

Enter- Her Siamese Twin

"I, wisdom, dwell together with prudence; I possess knowledge and discretion."

Proverbs 8:12

If you are a fool, you need to become simple and turn to prudence...wisdom is always there. If you want to hang out with Wisdom you only have to look for her friend, Prudence. This is where she is all the time, she never hangs out with anyone else.

Verse 5 tells us that being with her friend is the difference between being simple and being wise. But you will never have wisdom without prudence. They are attached at the hip and do not come in a separate package.

Her Statement

If you could put all that she is and narrow it down in a small statement, this is what true discretion and knowledge looks like in her own terms. Now Wisdom turns and after introducing herself and making herself known she turns and makes a statement somewhat like this, "You know who I am now, let me show you who my God is."

"To fear the LORD is to hate evil; I hate pride and arrogance, evil behavior and perverse speech."

Proverbs 8:13

Because I understand this and because I agree with what God dislikes and likes I am allowed to have what this wisdom has to offer,

"Counsel and sound judgment are mine; I have understanding and power."

Proverbs 8:14

God's intent is that you would have incredible wise counsel and sound judgment, understanding and power in this life!

1. I have provision to be trained and guided in His counsel.
2. I have provision to make judgments correctly without prejudice or selfish motives.
3. I have provision to understand how things work and why things work.
4. I have the provision of power to operate in the other three, to carry out the mission through the empowerment from heaven throughout difficult seasons of my life and through demonic strongholds.

These four provisions give you the ability to navigate in this life where you should be headed and how you are going to handle each and every step. This is wisdom, what she does, who she talks to. It would be good to read the rest of the chapter very slowly reviewing each statement and connecting it with the rest of the verses realizing what is available to you. Look at the next three verses and notice that your possession of them is a matter of passion and attitude.

"I love those who love me, and those who seek me find me."

Proverbs 8:17

"For whoever finds me finds life and receives favor from the Lord. But who ever fails to find me harms himself; all who hate me love death."

Proverbs 8:35-36

Back To James 3:13-18

James does three things in this passage: **he defines real wisdom**, then **he shows how it differs from human wisdom**, then **he details how it operates**.

"Who is wise and understanding among you? Let him show it by his good life, by deeds done in the humility that comes from wisdom."

James 3:13

If you recall that James had to address someone in James 3:1 who presumed to be teachers because they believed they had special insight to life. But James asks here, who is wise and understanding among you? Who is it that should speak into your life...and without actually answering that question he says, "I've got a "wisdom detector," it detects people who actually are operating in wisdom. But there are two points on the meter, the "wisdom detector."

Wisdom has more to do with character in relationships than it has to do with education and intelligence. Wisdom creates humility. Knowledge causes pride, but wisdom causes humility.

Two Points On The Meter

1. **Good Life-** The needle on the meter points to the blue markings on the right side of the meter when it gets near someone who lives a "good life." This is an important point to understand. Many people who are asked, "How do you get the opportunity to go to heaven?" And the answer on most occasions is, "Live a good life." Wow, **that confusion has kept many people in the dark, they confuse the evidence of wisdom with the gift of eternity.**

James is not talking about the evidence of wisdom, living a good life, being evidence of salvation.

"This righteousness from God comes through faith in Jesus Christ to all who believe...for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God and are justified freely by his grace through the redemption that came by Christ Jesus."

Romans 3:22-24

"For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord."

Romans 6:23

So a good life is evidence of wisdom, not the means of salvation.

2. **Good Deeds-** When you move the switch on the "wisdom detector" to pick up different frequencies, the needle goes wild when it detects people's deeds. Again, this is the second most descriptive term how a person gets the opportunity to go to heaven. But again **they have confused the evidence of wisdom with the gift of eternity.**

Your good life and deeds are not going to help you enter heaven any more than Chris Langan's IQ is going to change the perception of what a bouncer is. He is a bouncer and he will never be confused with that of a banker, a real estate tycoon or a military strategist. They are not the same and no matter what you think, it will not change that true definition.

"Just as man is destined to die once, and after that to face judgment, so Christ is sacrificed once to take away the sins of many people; and he will appear a second time, not to bear sin, but to bring salvation to those who are waiting for him."

Hebrews 9:27-28

So, lets get back to James-

“Who is wise and understanding among you? Let him show it by his good life, by deeds done in the humility that comes from wisdom.”

James 3:13

Humility: The good life and deeds are done in an attitude of humility. You might say that when you see someone who is living in the results of their simplicity or foolishness, “That could have been me.” This is humility, understanding the grace of God being extended to you. You are never far from the reality of when you see someone stumbling along the way of their life. You might say today, “That used to be me, but by the grace of God, I've seen the hand of God in my life and His love has began a restoring process in me. I'm not what I used to be, and I continue to grow and change.”

I no longer apply to my life what looks right in my own eyes, but I apply, I choose what God's Word has to say about life and I stand upon it. The wisdom that I have is not the rituals of religion by behaving accordingly, but they are accompanied by the life actions that God calls me to, how I should handle my money, how I should spend it, how I should treat someone, how I should respond to someone. How I should raise my kids and talk to my spouse. How I should treat my neighbor. But the evidence that wisdom is working in your life is a good life and deeds.

Two Enemies of Real Wisdom

I have come to understand that the believer's James is writing to here were becoming just like the believers today who had learn how to get their ticket for heaven without allowing it to make a difference in their life. He was confronting them on it. They were believers without a relationship with Lady wisdom, with true wisdom. He was having to reconnect them back with their relationship to Christ and what that looks like.

Again, this is the difference in James' and Paul's writing, James is dealing with believer's without wisdom, deeds and reflective lives and Paul is dealing with deeds and action without believing. James is trying to tell those he is writing to, and us today, that our “good life” and “deeds” makes our salvation story believable. Do you really want Christ to be shared with the world? Then give yourself a platform by living a good life and performing deeds. You will look wise to the world because you are not selfish and self serving, that's what everyone else looks like. This is what makes you different.

The church that James was addressing was quickly becoming different than what it used to look like. It was quickly changing from the Acts church it was birthed in and disruption became more frequent and division occurred more often. Look how James states it,

“But if you harbor bitter envy and selfish ambition in your hearts, do not boast about it or deny the truth.”

James 3:14

It is said by some of the best teachers that I know that if you are going to deal with a

problem, you can't dance around it, you must deal with it head on, call it what it is. James is telling us that these believer's were not serving or living a life that made it evident that they had received Christ, they looked like everybody else, but mostly in two actions that he mentions here in verse 14 exposed this,

1. **Bitter Envy-** (*pikros zēlos*)- bitter envying/zeal- excitement of mind, ardour, fervour of spirit
2. **Selfish Ambition-** (*eritheia kardia*) electioneering or intriguing for office in the heart.

Deal With It! Do not boast like you have a right or deny it...confront it, this is getting in the way of what God wants to do. Stop it before it blinds you and ruins what God has for you and those you are around.

“Such 'wisdom' does not come down from heaven but is earthly, unspiritual, of the devil.

James 3:15

What makes you think that you have a right to possess these two enemies within your heart? It's because you believe you have a “revelation”, some “wisdom” that no one else is getting. Some “wisdom” that tells you that you have the right answers and everyone else is simple or foolish. This “wisdom” you are entertaining and often encouraged to act in and boast in is not from heaven, but it is something far more dangerous. It is not of God's spirit, that's what “unspiritual” means, well let's get it out in the open...it's of the devil! It causes you to excuse yourself from relationship with other believer's. It encourages you to make snap judgments and wild observations all for the benefit of protecting your own bitter envy and selfish ambition. Wake up! Don't go down that road, the Lady is not there. Listen to her, she is calling out looking for prudence so she can invest her mighty blessing!

Here's What These Two Enemies Do

“For where you have envy and selfish ambition, there you find disorder and every evil practice.”

James 3:16

Disorder- **KJV** calls it “confusion.” It comes from the Greek word “*akatastasia*” meaning instability, a state of disorder, disturbance and confusion. It means that things began to fall apart and there is no unity or flow of work in relationships or purpose. This disorder is birthed by envy (bitter) and selfish ambition.

Evil Practice- These two words, **Evil**, “*phaulos*,” mean, worthless, of no account, bad and wicked and **Practice**, “*pragma*,” that which has been done, a deed, an accomplished fact are combined together to make one bad day. They are harnessed together to portray “effort to damage,” to “badly serve.” Though individuals do not realize the “wisdom” that drives their actions is from the devil himself, they set plans to demolish the strongholds of God. What a sad, sad event that takes place in the body of Christ and families when they do not question the motive of their hearts. This should not be. Oh people, we've got to recognize our weaknesses in this area...no, our failure in this area. This is not to be hoped to change, this must be confronted to change.

Here's What Real Wisdom Looks Like

“But the wisdom that comes from heaven is first of all **pure**; then **peace-loving, considerate, submissive, full of mercy and good fruit, impartial and sincere.**”

James 3:17

The lack of wisdom causes all kinds of disorder and problems, chaos and confusion. Do you have confusion in your home? Do you have chaos at work? Is your life a mess? If you can't get it all together you lack wisdom. It causes all kinds of problems in our lives. How can I know if I'm wise in how I relate toward people? Today, we're going to take a wisdom test. We're going to test your wisdom -- see how wise you really are.

Seven Marks of Godly Wisdom

1. If I am wise I will not compromise **PURITY-** (Pure)

James begins as a foundation of wisdom with being pure. Nothing can stand as firm or consistent than those things placed steady on the foundation of purity.

The Greek word means to be unmixed, unalloyed, or untainted by any impurity. It is moral purity, but it is more than that, it is being free from the two enemy's of wisdom, especially has the sense of being free from **bitter envy and selfish ambition.**

If I'm really genuine, if I'm wise, I'm not going to lie to you, I'm not going to cheat you, I'm not going to manipulate you, I'm not going to be deceitful. I'll be a person of integrity. Any doctrinal dispute can turn into a contest to see who will win the argument, but winning can be more important than truth. I want to keep in mind what Paul's word about not quarreling, being kind, patient and gentle. You must be pure or you are not being wise.

2. If I Am Wise I Will Not Antagonize Your **ANGER-** (Peace-loving)

Purity is first, but next, wisdom is peaceable. **Seeking peace in relationships is not a minor theme in the Bible, it's huge!** Just after the apostle Paul counsels wives and husbands (1 Pet. 3:1-7), he then quotes from Psalm 34,

“He must turn away from evil and do good; he must seek peace and pursue it”
1 Pet. 3:11

These words apply to all relationships. In **Ephesians 4:3**, he says that we are to be **“diligent to preserve the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.”** Seek peace and pursue it with diligence! Wise people work at maintaining harmony. They're not always looking for a fight. *“Wisdom is peace loving.”* Have you ever met someone who is always arguing, always looking for a fight?

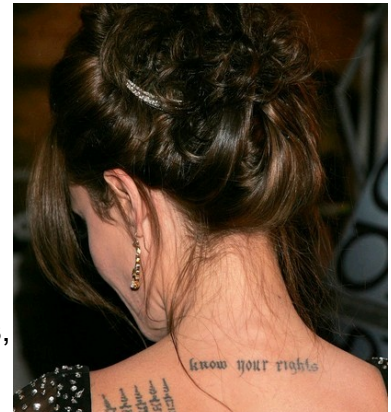
“Any fool can start arguments. The wise thing is to stay out of them.”
Proverbs 20:3

If you are always stirring up controversy over petty issues, you are not acting with godly wisdom. While we should never compromise doctrinal purity on essential truth, neither should we fight over minor matters where godly, Bible-believing people differ.

3. If I Am Wise I Will Not Minimize Your Value- (Considerate)

The NIV uses the word “considerate” for the Greek word *epieikēs*. William Barclay, who was an expert on the meaning of various Greek words, states, “**Of all Greek words in the New Testament this is the most untranslatable**” (*The Daily Study Bible: The Letters of James and Peter* [Westminster Press], Revised Edition, p. 95). He goes on to say (pp. 95-96) that the man with this quality “knows how to forgive when strict justice gives him a perfect right to condemn. He knows how to make allowances, when not to stand upon his rights, [and] how to temper justice with mercy....”

Rights- Not wanting to move too far from the path of thought, actress Angelina Jolie has loudly voiced her opinion in the media and has taken what she has considered a reactive response to injustice through adoption and attempting to be an ambassador of peace. It has been stated that The Universal Declaration of Human Rights are posted on one of her walls at her home and it inspired the tattooed on the base of her neck and top of her back which reads, “Know your rights.” This is a problem here, to be considerate, or consider others feelings comes in quite a contrast with “rights.” Who gets to say what is right? Her controversial view point demands human rights and freedoms while at the same time expects that there be no universal set of rules or truths...it's much like saying, “Just don't do something wrong according to me.” This is the complex problem we are dealing with. Angelina only represents a whole culture demanding rights while as strongly refusing “truth.” You cannot demand a behavior of rights without there being a standard of “right.” Anyways...back to our main thought.



Douglas Moo (*The Letter of James, Pillar New Testament Commentary* Eerdmans/Apollos], p. 176) says that this word *epieikēs*, “**indicates a willingness to yield to others and a corresponding unwillingness ‘to exact strict claims’.**”

- A quality that Jesus possessed (2 Corinthians 10:1)
- A requirement for elders in the local church (1 Timothy 3:3).

4. If I Am Wise I Will Not Resist In Serving You- (Submissive)

The word means, literally, “**easily persuaded.**” It does not mean being gullible or credulous, but rather **being willing to defer to others.** It knows when to yield for the sake of peace.

When I do pre-marriage counseling I always pull out a list called, “Understanding Personal Needs.” This list consist of thirty words with definitions and scriptural references for each one. The purpose of the list is to help identify healthy ways our needs were met growing up. In all my experience, the number one stumping word is,

- **Deference-** to yield or defer oneself to another for their benefit.

"Submit to one another out of reverence for Christ."

Ephesians 5:21

To be submissive is to defer my agenda and only have motives for the success of others. The Revised Standard Version says, *"It's open to reason."* The Living Bible says, *"It allows discussion."* It's easy to be entreated.

"A fool thinks he needs no advice. A wise man listens to others."

Proverbs 12:15

5. If I Am Wise I Will Not Judge Your Needs- (Mercy and Good Fruits)

You can see James telling hinting about of the beatitudes (gentleness, purity, peace), that Jesus taught about:

"Blessed are the merciful for they shall receive mercy"

Matthew 5:7

Jesus consistently talked about the importance of mercy (Matt. 18:21-35; 23:23; Luke 10:37).

"Be merciful, just as your Father is merciful."

Luke 6:36

Being merciful means not only having compassion for the person who is suffering apart from anything that he did, but also showing compassion to the one who is suffering *because of* his own fault (Barclay, p. 96). God is merciful to us in spite of the fact that our problems usually stem from our own sin and rebellion. But while we were yet sinners, He sent Christ to die for our sins (Rom. 5:8). We are to extend the mercy that we have received to other undeserving sinners.

"Wisdom is full of mercy and good fruit." Do you jump on people every time they blunder, every time they make a fault and fumble it? Do you always use everybody in your family as the butt of your joke? Wisdom is full of mercy. I won't emphasize your mistakes. Do you ever let people go, or do you keep hounding them about their past mistakes? Do you hold them in leverage, and they never can be set free even if they have asked forgiveness? "Remember the time you did..." You're always holding on and bringing up the past for leverage. That's dumb. If I'm wise, I won't emphasize your mistake. I'll be full of mercy. I'll give you what you need, not what you deserve.

By adding "good fruits," our faith must show itself in practical good deeds. If we see someone in need and do nothing to help, "what good is that?" Our faith does not sit aside to have gossip coffee talk to make others the target of our mean hearts. Real faith pushes to have opportunity of changing lives and situations for the better of all.

"Love forgets mistakes. Nagging about them parts even the best of friends."

Proverbs 17:9

6. If I Am Wise I Will Not Take Sides- (Impartial)

Impartial- *adiakritos*, ä-dē-ä'-krē-tos: The word is used only here in the New Testament. It may mean "impartial" (NIV, ESV, KJV), in the sense of not taking sides based on a certain group of friends, family or favorites. Godly wisdom does not play politics with the truth, shading it according to personal advantage. Rather, it holds unswervingly to the truth in love.

7. Godly Wisdom is Without Hypocrisy

Hypocrisy- *anypokritos*, ä-nü-po'-krē-tos: It is unfeigned, undisguised, sincere. What you see is not a mask or cover-up. The word was used originally of Greek actors who played a part on stage that was not like what they were in person. Douglas Moo comments (p. 177), "The person characterized by wisdom from heaven will be stable, trustworthy, transparent—the kind of person consistently displaying the virtues of wisdom and on whom one can rely for advice and counsel."

The Greek word means "without hypocrisy" -- straightforward, right on. In the Greek theater they often would have just a couple or three actors playing an entire play. These people would change parts. They would hold masks in front of their face. One person would have five or six different masks and parts and that person, that actor, was called a hypocrite. They have all kinds of masks. James says if you're smart and wise, you're not phoney. You don't wear masks and try to be something you're not. If you're perfect this is not the church for you. If you're going to wear masks this isn't the church for you. This is for real people, with real sins, real hang ups, real faults, real emotional problems, real family problems. Real wise people are honest and open. They're not phoney.

Wisdom is a gift.

"If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask of God."

James 1:5

Wisdom is a gift from God. If I am going to be wise, I'm going to ask God often for wisdom, "Ask of God who gives generously, James 1 says.

*"The secret is Christ Himself. In Him lie hidden all God's treasures of wisdom."
Colossians 2:3*

All this wisdom is wrapped up the person of Jesus Christ. If you want God's wisdom get Jesus in your life. You invite Him into you life and say, "Christ, allow me to hear you speak into my heart and into my mind and help me speak your words out of my mouth. Help me help others. Help me love people as you do. Put Your wisdom into my life."

You get God's wisdom in your life, day by day, as you allow the Holy Spirit to move into your life and develop your character, you'll find your relationships getting better and better. Even if the person on the other end isn't making an improvement, they'll get better because you're getting better. You know how to relate wisely instead of stupidly to people.

Look At The Result of Wisdom

James sums up his teaching on this point in this verse in 3:18:

"Peacemakers who sow in peace raise a harvest of righteousness."

James 3:18

The English Standard Version translates the verse: "And a harvest of righteousness is sown in peace by those who make peace." His point is simple: You reap what you sow. If a farmer sows corn, he reaps corn, not beans. If you sow peace, you will reap peace.

How wise are you? Where do you need wisdom? Do you need wisdom in your marriage? Do you need wisdom with your kids? Do you need wisdom at work? How to relate to people? That cantankerous person who just ticks you off... a secretary... a boss... an associate -- you don't get along with them at all. Where do you get that kind of wisdom"? It's all wrapped up in Jesus Christ.

"Reverence for the Lord is the beginning of wisdom."

Psalm 111:10

It starts at salvation. Ask Him into your life. Then day-by-day you continually ask Him for wisdom and fellowship with other Christians.