

WISDOM FROM ABOVE **(James 3:13-18)**

I. Showing wisdom (vs. 13).

- A. James started this chapter off, talking about and to teachers.
 - 1. Those that want to teach better take heed to what and how they teach.
 - 2. The reason for this is that heavier judgment awaits those that teach the gospel.
- B. It is possible that some of James' readers looked at that warning and said, "Hey, I'm wise and I know how to handle things."
- C. James lets them know how to tell if they are wise or not.
- D. They will show their wisdom, or lack thereof, by the way they live their lives.
 - 1. It is not words that show one is wise the way the world thinks.
 - 2. It is the actions, or works, of a person that show whether or not he is wise.
- E. Is a person heavy handed with others or does he show meekness in dealing with others?
- F. I love the way br. Woods defined "meekness of wisdom" - wisdom stripped of all arrogance, pride and desire for worldly acclaim.
- G. Good works are shown to be a fruit of wisdom.
 - 1. One who is wise is full of good works.
 - 2. They don't go about telling everyone how wise they are, they simply show it by their actions.
- H. One simply shows his wisdom, he does not declare it to others.

II. Sinful wisdom (vs. 14-16).

- A. There is a false wisdom that does not come from God and it is born out in the actions of those that possess it.
- B. Bitter envying is an attribute of one who possesses sinful wisdom.
 - 1. This attitude is a jealousy of another's possessions.
 - 2. It is such vehement jealousy that it fills the heart with a terrible feeling towards the person it is aimed.
 - 3. In this setting, it is probably the acclaim another teacher has.
- C. Strife means selfishness.
 - 1. It came to define someone who would go to any measure to accomplish one's desires.
 - 2. It is a "Hey look at how great I am" attitude.
- D. If such is your heart, don't boast about how great you are because you don't possess greatness in any way.
 - 1. In fact you are lying because you don't represent the truth.
 - 2. You are no better than anyone else, in fact, spiritually speaking, you are beneath those who possess good hearts.
- E. Notice the origins of this type wisdom.
 - 1. It is of this world, which is opposite of anything heavenly.
 - 2. It is from the harmful desires that we allow to grow in us.

- 3. It is representative of things from Satan and not from God.
- F. The result of such wisdom is destruction.
 - 1. Tumult and commotion are found where such exists.
 - 2. Nothing but bad things surround this wisdom.
- G. We have seen the fruit of such wisdom in entities that have problems.
 - 1. Homes are destroyed where strife exists.
 - 2. Congregations fail to grow and are split where this devilish wisdom is at work.
 - 3. When people put themselves before the congregation, you can easily see this wisdom at work.

III. Saving wisdom (vs. 17-18).

- A. James reveals to us the attributes of wisdom that comes from God.
- B. It is pure, or uncontaminated.
 - 1. It will stand for truth and shrink from evil.
 - 2. It wants no part with factionism or false doctrine or being unloving even towards those that don't display saving wisdom.
 - 3. It allows one's heart to be pure.
- C. It is peaceable - a desire to have peace with God first and others second.
 - 1. If you remember your beatitudes, pure in heart comes before peacemakers.
 - 2. You can't have peace until there is purity.
 - 3. Then you can have peace with God, peace with circumstances and with others.
 - 4. Godly wisdom allows for all those things to take place.
- D. It is gentle, or fair in dealing with others.
 - 1. It does not seek advantage over others.
 - 2. It seeks for the welfare of others.
- E. It is easy to be entreated.
 - 1. This phrase is found nowhere else in scripture.
 - 2. It has to do with being open-minded.
 - 3. It will listen to others and is willing to give into whatever is right.
 - 4. It is not stubborn or hard-headed.
- F. It is full of mercy.
 - 1. James had been listing attributes of saving wisdom that are found on the inside.
 - 2. He now turns to outward actions.
 - 3. We show mercy to others when we have this wisdom.
 - 4. We want to help those who are hurting, whether spiritually, physically or wanting in knowledge.
- G. It is full of good fruits.
 - 1. The actions of the one with saving wisdom reaches out to help others.
 - 2. As one writer said, his life is like a tree that is always in full bloom.
- H. It is without partiality.
 - 1. Saving wisdom does not play favorites.
 - 2. He carries no prejudices but loves all men because they have a

soul in need of salvation.

- I. It is without hypocrisy.
 - 1. It is what it is.
 - 2. It does not claim to be something that it is not.
 - 3. This person is sincere in all he or she does.
- J. Where peace exists, this wisdom can grow.
 - 1. This wisdom is shown in right living, which is the definition of righteousness.
 - 2. Where there is peace, right living will result from the lives of those who are seeking peace with others.
 - 3. Right living does not flourish where there is sinful wisdom.
 - 4. The two cannot coexist.