

Finding God's Wisdom in the Trials

James 3:13-18

Who is wise and understanding among you? By his good conduct let him show his works in the meekness of wisdom. But if you have bitter jealousy and selfish ambition in your hearts, do not boast and be false to the truth. This is not the wisdom that comes down from above, but is earthly, unspiritual, demonic.

For where jealousy and selfish ambition exist, there will be disorder and every vile practice. But the wisdom from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, open to reason, full of mercy and good fruits, impartial and sincere. And a harvest of righteousness is sown in peace by those who make peace.

Look carefully then how you walk not as unwise but as wise.

Eph. 5:15

Fools despise wisdom.

Prov. 1:7b

O.T. “wisdom” – 300 times
Proverbs “wisdom – 100 times

God’s wisdom – moral insight and discernment of God’s heart in every situation.

Who is wise and understanding among you? (13)

The Lord is ready to give wisdom – His wisdom
Prov. 2:6

If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask God who gives generously to all without reproach and it will be given him. James 1:5

Practical evidence of living by man’s wisdom

This is not the wisdom that comes down from above but is.. James 3:15

Claiming to be wise, they became fools.
Rom. 1:22

Man’s wisdom is foolishness to God – 1 Cor. 1:20

God’s wisdom is foolishness to man – 1 Cor. 2:14

Earthly – earthbound; man-made; natural, without God’s perspective; not relying on God’s Word

“For those who live according to the flesh set their minds of the things of the flesh...”

Romans 8:5

“for the wisdom of this world is folly with God.” 1 Cor. 3:19

Unspiritual – not from the Holy Spirit; not reflecting God’s heart; not relying on God’s Word

Demonic – source – Satan and the kingdom of darkness

Bears the image of the devil –

God’s adversary

The world – earthly

The flesh – unspiritual

The Devil - demonic

1. Unhealthy relationships

“bitter jealousy” – harsh; divisive; Lit. - to boil up

- defensive; comparison addiction

2 Cor. 12:20 – “quarreling”

Gal. 5:20 – “enmity, strife, jealousy, fits of anger, rivalries, dissensions, divisions, envy”

2. Selfish attitudes

Selfish ambition in your hearts
(14) (16a)

Do not boast...

3. Wrong choices

Be false to the truth (14)
living a lie; not based on truth

There will be disorder – chaotic; confused; disruptive;
destructive; anarchy

For God is not a God of confusion but of peace.
1 Cor. 14:33

And every vile practice (16)
- without spiritual value
- without God’s goodness

Practical evidence of God’s wisdom

1. Healthy relationships

But the wisdom from above is -

“Peaceable” – full of God’s peace – ready to share His peace with others; the opposite of divisive

Blessed are the peacemakers for they shall be called sons of God.

Matt. 5:9

A Peacemaker?

- . More interested in the kingdom of Jesus than my hurts
- . More interested in the unity of the body than winning
- . More interested in having difficult conversations than superficial talk
- . More interested in serving others than getting my way
- “open to reason” – reasonable; willing to listen; learn
- ready to change; opposite of stubborn
- seeking solutions and unity

“full of mercy” – abundant; generous; overflowing;
- compassionate; in contrast to selfishness and the judgmental spirit of the world

2. Humble attitude

“the meekness of wisdom”
(13)

“gentle” – considerate; thoughtful;
kind; careful with the feelings of others (17)

“Meekness is the mark of a man who has been mastered
by God”
Geoffrey Wilson

I am gentle and humble in heart
Matt. 11:29

“impartial” – respect for everyone; without prejudging;
not partial; not wavering – know where they stand

“sincere” – without hypocrisy;
not phony;
- genuine; nothing to hide
- real!

When pride comes, then comes disgrace but with the
humble is wisdom. Prov. 11:2

3. Holy choices

By his good conduct let him show his works... (13)

Look carefully then how you walk,
not as unwise but as wise.

Eph. 5:15

That they may see your good deeds and glorify God on
the day of visitation.

1 Peter 2:12

But the wisdom from above is first pure (17)

Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God.

Matt. 5:8

Purifies himself as He is pure

1 John 3:3

Be holy as I am holy.

1 Pet. 1:16

Create in me a pure heart, O God...

Psalm 51:10

God's wisdom has not been contaminated with the
values and ideas of the world.

- . Full of good fruits (17)
- abundant evidence of God at work
- great value to God's kingdom
- useful

When we are Jesus strong, God's wisdom will produce a harvest of...

1. Righteousness – "...and a harvest of righteousness" (18)

2. Peace – "peaceable" (17)

"Is sown in peace by those who make peace."
(18)

"Eager to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace."

Eph. 4:3

Preaching good news of peace through Jesus Christ – He is Lord of all.

Acts 10:36

How to increase in God's wisdom

- . Jesus – Col. 2:3
- . God's Word – Deut. 4:6
- . Prayer – James 1:5

- . Rely on the Spirit – Eph. 1:17
- . Wise counselors – Prov. 24:16