



## Part 8: Relating to Those I Differ With

Text: James 3:13-18

1. How would you describe how you respond to people who disagree with you (in general)? \_\_\_\_\_

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2. There have been two themes throughout this series; 1) We should engage in politics as a way of loving our neighbor as ourself. Working at being politically informed and engaged are expressions of love. 2) We should agree on political goals (Biblical), but we can disagree on the political methods.

a. How have these themes helped you to process and discuss the topics in this series so far? \_\_\_\_\_

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b. Why is it important to not overestimate your own biblical knowledge when engaging in political discussions with people? \_\_\_\_\_

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3. Read **James 3:13**. This verse highlights the importance of showing “meekness of wisdom” in your conduct. This is a condition of the mind and heart which demonstrates gentleness, not in weakness, but in strength of character.

a. Why should Christians show their “meekness in wisdom” when discussing politics? \_\_\_\_\_

b. What does “slow to anger” (James 1:19-20) look like while in a political discussion? \_\_\_\_\_

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4. Read **James 3:14-15**. These verses describe earthly wisdom as being full of “bitter jealousy and selfish ambition,” which could cause you to promote your opinion at the expense of the truth.

a. What is the goal of earthly wisdom in conversations about politics? \_\_\_\_\_

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b. This earthly wisdom is “unspiritual” meaning you are speaking as if there is no God. It is also “demonic” meaning your thinking and actions align with Satan. What might this look like in a political discussion? \_\_\_\_\_

c. According to **James 3:16**, what is the result of applying earthly wisdom? \_\_\_\_\_

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d. How have your political discussions been ending (with intensifying or decreasing disorder/conflict)? \_\_\_\_\_

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5. God has a better way for us to engage others. Read **James 3:17**. Wisdom from above (Godly wisdom) is:

- **Pure** - it does not corrupt or pollute souls but, instead, refreshes human hearts.
- **Peaceable** – it loves to be at peace with others, fights for unity.
- **Gentle** – it is kind, courteous, and considerate (**Titus 3:2**).
- **Open to Reason** – it is open to both sides and willing to admit being wrong.
- **Full of Mercy** – it is quick to forgive others (**Colossians 3:13**).
- **(full of) Good Fruits** – it has positive outcomes.
- **Impartial** – it does not show favoritism (looks for truth on all sides).
- **Sincere** – it is completely honest in conflict.

a. From the list above, which of these best describe you? \_\_\_\_\_

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b. From the list above, which of these are the most challenging? \_\_\_\_\_

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c. What is the goal of Godly wisdom? \_\_\_\_\_

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d. What might this look like in a political discussion? \_\_\_\_\_

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6. According to **James 3:18**, what is the result of applying Godly wisdom? \_\_\_\_\_

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7. As this scripture and message has encouraged us to evaluate how we are engaging people with differing positions (politically), how might you use it to grow in Godly wisdom? \_\_\_\_\_

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8. What discussions have you been in or that you are currently in that you can apply Godly wisdom to today? What might that look like? \_\_\_\_\_

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