



Glory to Glory

Kicking It Off

Who is someone you know personally that you would describe as genuinely wise, not just smart or knowledgeable? What's one quality about them that stands out?

Read

James 3:13-18

Summary

You know how we usually think being wise means knowing a lot of stuff? I've been thinking about how there are actually two completely different kinds of wisdom, and they lead to totally different places. There's the kind of wisdom the world celebrates. It's all about human achievement and being smart enough to figure things out on your own. And honestly, it works to some degree. People who follow this path get recognition and success. But here's the catch, it also produces jealousy and comparison and this constant need to prove yourself. It's all about getting glory for yourself.

Then there's this other kind of wisdom that looks completely backwards to what we'd expect. It's about peace and gentleness and surrender. Instead of climbing up, it's actually about going down. Instead of grasping for control, it's about letting go.

Think back to the Garden of Eden. The whole temptation was basically, "You can be like God. You can be in charge." And Adam went for it. He wanted autonomy, the right to run his own life. But that led to chaos, not freedom.

Now think of Jesus. He did the exact opposite. At the cross, he showed us what real wisdom looks like through complete submission. And somehow, that's what brought actual glory, real transformation.

We think spiritual growth is about learning more, becoming smarter about religious things. But it's actually the reverse. It's about surrendering more. It's recognizing that when we try to run our own lives, we make a mess of things. We're terrible at being in charge.

True wisdom isn't about knowing more, it's about trusting more. It's about saying, "I can't do this alone. I need God to walk with me." And then actually living that way when it counts.

Discussion Questions

1. Was there anything from the sermon or the passage that stuck out to you?
2. Earthly wisdom often leads us to pursue recognition and personal glory. In what areas of your life are you most tempted to seek glory for yourself rather than pointing to God?
3. True wisdom shows itself through humility and good conduct rather than impressive knowledge. Can you think of someone in your life who embodies this kind of wisdom, and what makes them different from people who simply know a lot?
4. Adam chose autonomy in the garden, wanting to be in charge of his own life, while Jesus demonstrated glory through submission at the cross. Where are you currently holding onto autonomy instead of surrendering to God's ways?
5. Sanctification requires submitting to God's logic and rules rather than our own. What specific area of your life feels hardest to submit to God, and what do you think is making that surrender difficult?

Significant Quotes from Sermon

"Wisdom leads to glory. Earthly wisdom leads to man's glory. Godly wisdom leads to God's glory."

"True glory leads to humility. Because when we experience the glory of God, we don't point to ourselves. We point to Him."

"In the garden, Adam grasped for glory through autonomy. He wanted glory by being the one who is in charge. At the cross, Christ demonstrated glory through submission. The path from glory to glory isn't ascent, but descent."

"Wisdom isn't about knowing more. Wisdom is about submitting more. When I meet people who are truly wise, they're not wise because they know a lot. They're wise because they've surrendered their life. They are sensitive to the Holy Spirit."

Sermon Notes

James 3:13-18

13 Who is wise and understanding among you? By his good conduct let him show his works in the meekness of wisdom. 14 But if you have bitter jealousy and selfish ambition in your hearts, do not boast and be false to the truth. 15 This is not the wisdom that comes down from above, but is earthly, unspiritual, demonic. 16 For where jealousy and selfish ambition exist, there will be disorder and every vile practice. 17 But the wisdom from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, open to reason, full of mercy and good fruits, impartial and sincere. 18 And a harvest of righteousness is sown in peace by those who make peace.

Outline

1. The Test of True Glory (v. 13)

- a. James asks who is truly wise and understanding among us
 - i. True wisdom demonstrates itself through good conduct and works
 - ii. Manifested in meekness, not self-promotion or pride
- b. The nature of genuine wisdom
 - i. Controlled strength, not arrogant knowledge
 - ii. Produces humility rather than superiority
 - iii. Wisdom without humility misses the point entirely
- c. The connection between wisdom and glory
 - i. True glory comes with humility
 - ii. When we experience God's glory, we point to Him, not ourselves
 - iii. God's weightiness and reputation are deeply connected to wisdom

2. The Wisdom of the First Adam (vv. 14-16)

- a. Characteristics of earthly wisdom
 - i. Glorifies things of this world through human logic and systems
 - ii. Produces jealousy and selfish ambition as its fruits
 - iii. Described as earthly, unspiritual, and demonic
 - iv. Leads to disorder and vile practices
- b. The promise and trap of earthly wisdom
 - i. Promises fulfilled life, reputation, and weightiness
 - ii. Delivers man's glory rather than God's glory
 - iii. We take what was meant to show God's goodness and twist it for self-glorification
- c. The Garden of Eden pattern
 - i. Serpent's temptation: "You will be like God, knowing good and evil"
 - ii. Adam grasped for glory through autonomy, wanting to be in charge
 - iii. Sin is believing my way is better than His way
 - iv. Autonomy leads to chaos, bondage, and being trapped in our own kingdom

3. The Wisdom of the Second Adam (v. 17)

- a. Characteristics of godly wisdom
 - i. Comes from above, pure, peaceable, gentle, open to reason
 - ii. Full of mercy and good fruits, impartial and sincere
 - iii. Involves peace, surrender, submission, meekness, gentleness
 - iv. Opposite of earthly wisdom in every way
- b. Christ as the embodiment of godly wisdom
 - i. Personified and lived out by Jesus
 - ii. At the cross, Christ demonstrated glory through submission
 - iii. Leads us to experience and understand God's glory

- c. The path from glory to glory (2 Corinthians 3:17-18)
 - i. Old Testament: veil covered us from God's full presence
 - ii. Through Christ's death, the veil was torn, giving us full access to God
 - iii. Where the Spirit is, there is freedom
 - iv. We are transformed from one degree of glory to another
- d. The call to submission
 - i. The path from glory to glory is descent, not ascent
 - ii. True wisdom is found in submitting more, not knowing more
 - iii. Sanctification requires submission to God's ways
 - iv. We want God's glory but often resist the submission it requires
- e. The garden in our hearts
 - i. We are terrible gardeners when we tend our lives alone
 - ii. Must return to crying out: "God, I can't do this alone"
 - iii. Jesus tore the barrier; the Holy Spirit now lives in us
 - iv. Action required: respond when the Spirit leads us to love, forgive, be generous, show compassion
 - v. Not my will, but Your will

Notes

There's something fascinating about the way we think about wisdom. We often imagine wisdom as this vast accumulation of knowledge, a library of facts and insights stored up over years of study and experience. But what if we've been getting it backwards? What if true wisdom isn't primarily about knowing more at all, but about something entirely different?

I've been thinking a lot about two kinds of wisdom that exist in tension with each other. On one side, there's earthly wisdom, the kind that dominates our culture and shapes our ambitions. On the other, there's godly wisdom, which operates by a completely different logic. Understanding the difference between these two isn't just an academic exercise. It shapes how we live, what we pursue, and ultimately, what kind of glory we experience.

Let me start with earthly wisdom because it's what we encounter constantly. This is the wisdom that glorifies the things of this world. It puts human achievement, human logic, and human systems on a pedestal. And here's the thing, earthly wisdom isn't entirely ineffective. It produces results. It leads to certain kinds of success. The problem is what it produces alongside that success: jealousy and selfish ambition.

Think about the systems we've built, the elaborate frameworks of thought that promise us fulfilled lives. These systems tell us that if we just work hard enough, optimize efficiently enough, understand deeply enough, we'll achieve glory. And by glory, I mean reputation, respect, admiration, a sense of weightiness in the world. Earthly wisdom promises that kind of glory, and it can even deliver on that promise to some extent. That's what makes it so seductive.

But there's a trap here, one that's easy to miss. Earthly wisdom leads to man's glory. It's a system designed to elevate human beings, to showcase human capability, to demonstrate human brilliance. And because we are broken creatures, because we carry within us a fundamental brokenness, we take what was meant to display God's goodness and character, and we turn it into something else entirely. We twist it into a tool for self glorification.

Now, contrast this with godly wisdom. Godly wisdom looks completely different. Where earthly wisdom breeds jealousy and selfish ambition, godly wisdom brings peace. Where earthly wisdom demands assertion and self promotion, godly wisdom involves surrender, submission, meekness, and gentleness. In every way, godly wisdom puts earthly wisdom on its head. It's the opposite of what the world would call wise.

We see godly wisdom personified in Christ. We see it lived out in Jesus. And there's a reason we're called to follow the wisdom of Christ rather than the wisdom of the world. It's because godly wisdom leads us to experience and understand the glory of God. This

is crucial: both kinds of wisdom lead to glory. Earthly wisdom leads to man's glory. Godly wisdom leads to God's glory.

Here's a question worth pondering: who among us is truly wise? Who has deep understanding? The instinctive answer in our culture would be to point to knowledge, to education, to accomplishments. But that's not the measure being used here. True wisdom shows itself not in lectures or teachings, but in good conduct. It demonstrates itself through works, through the way a person lives. And here's the key detail: it shows itself in meekness.

Meekness isn't weakness. It's controlled strength. It's power held in humility. When someone possesses true wisdom, they don't use it to puff themselves up. They don't parade their knowledge or lord their understanding over others. There's a humility that comes with genuine wisdom, a recognition that what you know and understand isn't about making you look smart or superior. It's about something much larger.

The problem arises when wisdom becomes arrogant. It's possible to have deep knowledge of God, to understand how the world really works, to grasp the nature of humanity's condition, and yet to carry that wisdom with pride and arrogance. That's wisdom without humility, and it misses the entire point. True glory, the kind worth pursuing, comes with humility. When we experience the glory of God, we don't point to ourselves. We point to Him. When we experience true wisdom, the same principle applies.

Think about moments of genuine excellence, times when something truly amazing happens. Picture a stadium full of people erupting in cheers, the ground literally shaking from collective excitement. There's something powerful about witnessing greatness. But here's what true wisdom understands: it's not about me. It's about the Lord. That's how it was always meant to be. God's glory, His weightiness, His reputation, the heaviness of His presence, all of this is deeply connected to wisdom.

When we talk about wisdom in this way, we're not just discussing abstract concepts. We're talking about a fundamental orientation of life. Earthly wisdom promises that you can construct a system, a philosophy, a way of living that will bring you completeness. It says the answer lies in human effort, human ingenuity, human determination. And yes, it produces fruits. But those fruits are jealousy and selfish ambition, competitive striving, comparison, envy.

Godly wisdom offers something entirely different. It comes from above. It's pure, peaceable, gentle, open to reason. It's full of mercy and good fruits. It's impartial and sincere. These aren't just nice qualities. They're the characteristics of a completely different way of being in the world. Where earthly wisdom creates disorder and every vile practice, godly wisdom sows peace and reaps a harvest of righteousness.

Let me take you back to a crucial moment in history, a moment that helps us understand how all of this works. In the garden, at the very beginning, there was a temptation. The serpent approached with a question: "Did God really say you couldn't eat from any tree?" It was a clever question, designed to create doubt, to make God seem unreasonable, overly restrictive.

The response clarified: we can eat from any tree except one, the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. If we eat from that one, we'll die. Then came the lie, the reframing that changed everything: "You won't die. God knows that when you eat from it, your eyes will be opened and you'll be like God, knowing good and evil."

Here's what's striking about this exchange. The serpent was offering godlike wisdom. The promise was that you could be like God, that you could have the knowledge and power that comes with being divine. And honestly, if you could be God, that would be the ultimate achievement, right? That would be the pinnacle of earthly wisdom and human striving.

But here's the devastating truth: we would make terrible gods. If we were in charge, there would be chaos and brokenness across the land. The idea that my way is better than His way, that I can do a better job at running things, that's the essence of sin. It's the core delusion that drives us away from peace and toward disorder.

Yet that's exactly what the temptation offered. Adam and Eve were essentially told, "You can be powerful. You can be strong. You can bring about world peace and goodness. You can do a better job than Him." And they believed it. They chose autonomy, the right to determine their own path, to be the rulers of their own lives. The result wasn't glory. It was catastrophe.

Now look at what God's way offers instead. When you surrender, when you submit to His wisdom rather than asserting your own, something remarkable happens. Instead of making war, you declare victory in Christ. You become a peacemaker. You live as Christ lived, peaceable, gentle, meek, and kind. You bear the characteristics of Christ. And in submitting under God, you actually experience growth. You're redeemed. You're transformed.

There's a beautiful passage that captures this idea. It speaks of the Lord being the Spirit, and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom. We behold the glory of the Lord with unveiled faces, and we're being transformed into the same image from one degree of glory to another. This comes from the Lord who is the Spirit.

In the old system, there had to be a veil. You couldn't experience the full weight of God directly. You had to cover yourself from the full wisdom of God, from the full presence of God, because it would overwhelm you. His ways are so much higher than our

ways. His understanding is so much greater that we can't even begin to fathom the magnitude, the gravitas of the Lord.

But through Christ, through His victory, something changed. When Jesus died, that veil was torn. Now we have full access to God. Complete access. This is by the blood of Jesus. And because of this access, we have freedom. We don't have to live in fear, constantly wondering if we're doing the right thing, if we're measuring up. The battle between good and evil has already been won. We've already been justified, already made right with God.

Now we can live knowing that the Spirit of God is in us, and there is freedom in that knowledge. We're going from one aspect of glory to another, from one degree to the next. This progression, this movement from glory to glory, has everything to do with understanding the depth of God's wisdom.

We often think of spiritual growth as becoming a better person, acquiring more knowledge, mastering more disciplines. But sanctification, the process of being made holy, is actually more about being closer with God, about surrendering more deeply to Him. And here's something crucial to understand: we want the glory of God, but we often don't want the submission that comes with it.

Sanctification will not happen without submission. This isn't meant to be troubling or restrictive. It's simply logical. If you want to be sanctified by God, you have to submit to His sanctification. You have to submit to His ways, His logic, His rules. If you don't, you'll be trapped in your own glory, in your own ways, living that cycle where everything revolves around your will and your desires.

God essentially says, "I thought I dealt with this. They nailed me to a cross because your ways don't work. They nailed me to a cross because your systems fail. Because humanity has failed. Don't you want me?" And the answer, for those who follow Christ, should be a resounding yes. We want Jesus in our lives. But here's the thing: Jesus isn't just a savior. He's a king. And when we call Him our king, we're saying, "I surrender all to you."

Let me put this as clearly as I can. In the garden, Adam grasped for glory through autonomy. He wanted glory by being the one in charge. At the cross, Christ demonstrated glory through submission. The path from glory to glory isn't ascent. It's descent. True wisdom isn't found in knowing more. It's found in submitting more.

Autonomy, being the ruler of your own life, will lead to chaos. It will lead to bondage. You'll be tied up in your own realm, in your own kingdom, trapped by things outside your control. But following Christ means He has broken those chains. He's calling you to surrender your autonomy.

This is really the heart of the matter. We have to come to the end of ourselves. We have to say, "Lord, it's not my way, it's not my will, it's not my life. I surrender. I submit to you. Whatever you want me to do, I'll do that." This isn't about becoming more knowledgeable about spiritual things. It's actually the opposite. It's about descending, submitting, falling on our knees.

I'll be honest, I'm not particularly impressed when I meet people who know a lot. Knowledge has its place, but it's secondary to something higher. When I meet people who are truly wise, they're not wise because they've accumulated vast amounts of information. They're wise because they've surrendered their lives. They're sensitive to the Spirit. There's more wisdom in hearing from God internally, in reading Scripture and submitting and obeying even when it doesn't make logical sense, than in all the philosophical systems and optimization strategies in the world.

Think of it this way. There's a garden in your heart. You're allowed to tend it however you want. You can make your own rules, construct your own philosophical system for living. You have the keys to autonomy. You can do whatever you want with your life.

But the longer you live, the more experience you accumulate, the more you should recognize a humbling truth: you're a terrible gardener. Look at the broken relationships. Look at the brokenness in everything you've tried to tend to on your own. There needs to be a return to the garden, a crying out to your Father, saying, "God, I can't do this alone. I need you to walk with me. I don't want to do this work without you."

The beauty of the gospel is that Jesus tore the veil, broke down the barrier between us and God. Now the Spirit lives in us. But now comes the practical part. We need to actually live this way. When the Spirit says you need to love someone, forgive someone, let go of bitterness, be more generous, show compassion in a particular way, we need to respond. Not my will, because my will wants to keep everything for myself. But your will, where everything is directed toward you.

This is what it means to live a life of faith in action. It's all about responding, about following through. And the wisdom that guides this action isn't the wisdom the world offers. It's the wisdom that comes from above, the wisdom that looks like foolishness to earthly eyes but leads to true glory, to God's glory, from one degree to the next.

Blog

The first question ever asked in human history was about wisdom. "Has God really said?" the serpent asked Eve in the Garden. That question wasn't really about information. It was about authority. Who gets to decide what's wise? Who determines what's best? In that moment, humanity made a choice that we're still making today. We chose our wisdom over God's.

James understood this ancient struggle. When he penned his letter to scattered believers facing real trials, he didn't write abstract theology. He wrote about the practical reality of two competing wisdoms that wage war in our hearts every single day. His words in James 3:13-18 reveal a truth we desperately need to grasp: the wisdom we choose determines the glory we experience. We either move from glory to glory through submission to God's wisdom, or we descend into chaos through grasping for our own.

"Who is wise and understanding among you?" James begins with this piercing question. Notice he doesn't ask what you know. He asks who you are. Real wisdom isn't measured by the information in your head but by the gentleness in your life. The Greek word for gentleness here, *prautēs*, describes strength under control. It's power that chooses submission. It's capability that chooses restraint. This is the exact opposite of what the serpent offered Eve, and it's the opposite of what our culture calls wisdom today.

We live in a world that glorifies the opposite of gentleness. Get ahead. Fight for your rights. Never let anyone disrespect you. Make sure everyone knows how smart you are. Build your platform. Establish your brand. These messages bombard us daily, and they all flow from the same source, what James calls earthly wisdom. But here's what we need to understand: this earthly wisdom isn't just a different philosophy. It's a completely different kingdom with a completely different king.

James exposes the true nature of earthly wisdom with brutal honesty. If you have bitter jealousy and selfish ambition in your hearts, he says, stop boasting about your wisdom. You're lying against the truth. Those are strong words, but James knows something we often forget. Wisdom always reveals itself through its fruit. You can claim to be wise all day long, but if your life is marked by jealousy, competition, and self-promotion, your wisdom comes from below, not above.

The characteristics James lists aren't random. Bitter jealousy and selfish ambition are the twin engines of earthly wisdom. They're what drove Adam and Eve to take the fruit. They saw that the tree was desirable to make one wise, and jealousy was born. Why should God alone have this knowledge? Selfish ambition followed immediately. We'll be

like God, knowing good and evil. Every sin since then has flowed from these same poisoned wells.

Think about your own struggles. When conflict erupts in your marriage, what's really behind it? Often it's jealousy (why don't I get the respect they get?) mixed with selfish ambition (I need to win this argument). When tension builds at work, what's the source? Usually it's the same toxic combination. Someone else got the promotion, the recognition, the opportunity you wanted. Your earthly wisdom tells you to fight back, to promote yourself, to make sure everyone knows your worth.

James doesn't mince words about where this wisdom comes from. He gives us three descriptors, each more sobering than the last. First, it's earthly, meaning it's limited to this world's perspective. It can only see what's in front of it. It can't see eternity. It can't see God's bigger picture. It makes decisions based on immediate gain rather than eternal value. This is the wisdom that says take care of number one because this life is all you've got.

Second, it's unspiritual or natural. The Greek word *psychikē* describes something that's merely human, operating without the Spirit's influence. This is human reasoning at its best, which means it's still fallen. It's still broken. It's still infected with the virus of sin. We can be brilliant by earthly standards and completely foolish by heaven's measure. The Pharisees knew Scripture better than anyone, but they crucified the Author of Scripture because their wisdom was natural, not spiritual.

Third, and most disturbing, earthly wisdom is demonic. James isn't being dramatic. He's being accurate. The same wisdom the serpent offered in the Garden is the wisdom being offered today. It comes from the same source and leads to the same destination. When we choose our wisdom over God's, we're not just making a philosophical choice. We're aligning ourselves with the kingdom of darkness whether we realize it or not.

The proof is in the results. Where jealousy and selfish ambition exist, James says, there will be disorder and every vile practice. The Greek word for disorder, *akatastasia*, describes chaos, instability, confusion. It's the opposite of the peace God intended for creation. Look at our world. Look at our families. Look at our churches. Where you find chaos, you'll find earthly wisdom at the root. Where you find "every vile practice," you'll discover that someone, somewhere, decided they knew better than God.

But James doesn't leave us in despair. He pivots with that beautiful word "but," introducing us to wisdom from above. This wisdom has a completely different character because it has a completely different source. It doesn't originate in human reasoning or cultural consensus. It comes from the throne room of heaven. It flows from the heart of God.

Notice the first characteristic James mentions: pure. Before wisdom from above is anything else, it's pure. The Greek word *hagnē* means holy, undefiled, unmixed with evil. This is crucial. Heavenly wisdom starts with moral purity, not intellectual prowess. It begins with holiness, not cleverness. This takes us right back to Proverbs 9:10, where we learn that the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom. True wisdom starts with recognizing who God is and who we aren't. It starts with submission.

After purity comes a beautiful list of qualities that read like a description of Jesus Himself. Peaceable, not contentious. Gentle, not harsh. Open to reason, literally "easily persuaded" in Greek. Think about that. Heavenly wisdom is teachable. It doesn't insist it already knows everything. It's willing to listen, willing to learn, willing to be corrected. This is the opposite of the know-it-all attitude that marked the Pharisees and marks so much of our discourse today.

Heavenly wisdom is full of mercy and good fruits. It doesn't just know truth; it extends grace. It doesn't just have right answers; it produces right actions. It's impartial, showing no favoritism based on status or advantage. It's sincere, without hypocrisy or pretense. Every one of these qualities stands in direct opposition to earthly wisdom's characteristics.

These aren't qualities you can fake. You can pretend to be smart. You can project confidence. You can manufacture an image. But you can't fake gentleness under pressure. You can't pretend mercy when someone's wronged you. You can't maintain false peaceableness when conflict threatens your interests. These qualities only flow from a heart that's been transformed by God's wisdom.

This brings us to the heart of the matter. We face the same choice Adam and Eve faced in the Garden. Will we trust God's wisdom or grasp for our own? Will we submit to His perspective or insist on ours? Will we follow the path of the first Adam or the second Adam, Jesus Christ?

Consider how Jesus demonstrated heavenly wisdom. In Philippians 2, Paul tells us that Jesus, though He was in the form of God, didn't consider equality with God something to be grasped. Instead, He emptied Himself. He became a servant. He humbled Himself to death on a cross. By every measure of earthly wisdom, this was foolishness. The Creator becoming creature? The Infinite becoming infant? The Immortal dying? It makes no earthly sense.

But look at the result. Therefore, Paul continues, God highly exalted Him and gave Him the name above every name. Jesus gained everything by surrendering everything. He achieved ultimate glory through ultimate submission. He showed us that the path to true glory isn't up but down. We don't ascend by grasping; we ascend by releasing. We

don't become complete by asserting our wisdom; we become complete by submitting to God's wisdom.

This is what Paul means in 2 Corinthians 3:18 when he writes about being transformed from glory to glory. We don't jump from broken to perfect. We move progressively from one degree of glory to another as we increasingly submit to God's wisdom. Every time we choose gentleness over being right, we move from glory to glory. Every time we extend mercy instead of demanding justice, we advance in glory. Every time we surrender our wisdom for God's, even when it doesn't make earthly sense, we progress toward our true purpose.

James concludes this passage with an agricultural image that would have resonated with his original readers and should resonate with us. A harvest of righteousness is sown in peace by those who make peace. You reap what you sow. If you sow earthly wisdom (jealousy, ambition, competition), you'll reap chaos. If you sow heavenly wisdom (purity, peace, gentleness), you'll reap righteousness.

But notice how this righteousness comes. It's sown in peace, not in striving. It's cultivated by peacemakers, not by warriors. This completely overturns our worldly understanding of how change happens. We think we need to fight for what's right. We need to argue people into truth. We need to force change through strength. God's wisdom says the opposite. Real transformation comes through peaceful sowing, patient cultivation, gentle persuasion.

This doesn't mean we're passive. Making peace requires tremendous strength. Choosing gentleness when you could dominate takes more power than dominating. Extending mercy when you have every right to demand justice requires a strength that only comes from above. This is why James began by talking about gentleness as wisdom's calling card. It's not weakness; it's strength under God's control.

So where does this leave us? We stand at the same crossroads every day. In our marriages, our work, our churches, our interactions, we constantly choose between two wisdoms. When your spouse says something hurtful, earthly wisdom says strike back. Heavenly wisdom says respond with gentleness. When someone else gets the recognition you deserve, earthly wisdom says promote yourself. Heavenly wisdom says rejoice with those who rejoice. When you have the opportunity to get ahead through compromise, earthly wisdom says everyone does it. Heavenly wisdom says purity comes first.

These choices matter more than we realize. Each decision moves us either toward glory or toward chaos. We're either being transformed into Christ's image, moving from glory to glory, or we're descending into the disorder that earthly wisdom always produces. There's no neutral ground. We're always choosing, always moving, always becoming.

The good news is that God doesn't leave us to figure this out on our own. The same Spirit who raised Jesus from the dead lives in every believer. He's constantly working to transform us, to move us from glory to glory. Our job isn't to manufacture heavenly wisdom through self-effort. Our job is to submit to the Spirit's work, to choose God's wisdom even when ours seems more logical, to trust that the foolishness of God is wiser than human wisdom.

This is the path to the completeness we all seek. We won't find it by climbing higher in earthly wisdom's economy. We won't achieve it through competition, self-promotion, or jealous grasping. We'll find it the way Jesus found it, through submission. Through surrender. Through choosing the gentle wisdom from above over the harsh wisdom from below.

The harvest is certain for those who sow in peace. Righteousness will come. Transformation will happen. Glory will increase. Not because we've earned it but because we've submitted to the One who achieved it for us. In the end, we'll discover what Adam and Eve tragically missed: our glory was never meant to come from grasping for God's position but from submitting to God's wisdom. Our completeness was never found in knowing good and evil for ourselves but in trusting the One who defines good and evil.

This is the wisdom that leads from glory to glory. This is the wisdom that brings peace instead of chaos. This is the wisdom that produces a harvest of righteousness. The question James asked at the beginning remains: Who is wise and understanding among you? The answer isn't found in what you know but in how you submit. Not in your intelligence but in your gentleness. Not in winning arguments but in making peace. May we choose wisely. May we choose submission. May we move from glory to glory as we exchange our wisdom for His.