

Wisdom, God's wisdom is something I often want & even more, it is something I desperately, desperately need. At other times – God's wisdom seems to be the farthest thing from my mind. "I got it," - is my attitude. Sound familiar – can you relate? These words from God today are going to address His wisdom – but they do not address how we get God's wisdom when we need it or, why we are so prideful or lazy about asking. That truth was talked about in James 1:5 (ESV) If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask God, . . . That is a great and powerful passage. Here is my promise. We are starting a weekly blog this week as the Summit. One of our elders and or staff will be writing a short piece to encourage, equip, or challenge us as a body. This coming week I will write two short blogs. 1) How do I get God's wisdom? 2) Why do I often avoid God's wisdom? The blogs will be on our website beginning this Wednesday and the link will be blasted through Twitter, FB, the City, and is even in our Bulletin today.

How is God addressing wisdom in this passage?

James 3:13-15 (ESV) 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.
meekness - lit. power under control / allowing humility and love to lead and control

In this case what is God asking us to bring under control? **Vs 13 – truth. Why?** *Let's define a few things.*

Humanly speaking: truth – is knowledge wisdom - is how we apply truth

Godly truth – is the fullness of knowledge about everything: God, mankind, and the world in light of the person and work of Jesus.

meekness of wisdom or Godly wisdom - is truth under the reigns of humility & love.

In this passage, He gives us – His followers a warning and promise. These will focus our time this morning.

Warning: Truth without humility and love – grows in a heart being captured by self.

He is saying - Truth without meekness is not Godly wisdom - and it grows in a heart focused on self.

Promise: Truth with humility and love – grows in a heart being captured by the cross.

He is saying - Truth with meekness is Godly wisdom and it grows in a heart focused on the restoring work of the cross.

We will answer two questions to help us see the warning and be moved toward Christ to live in the promise.

01. Why does it matter how I speak and live truth?

02. How do I speak and live truth with humility and love?

01. Why does it matter how I speak and live truth?

James 3:14-15 (ESV) 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.

God is not pointing out demonic wisdom that causes people to commit child abuse, rape, or violent and senseless murders. Things we would all say are probably demonic in origin and outcome.

God is saying, we can know "truth" - truth from God's Word - and convey demonic wisdom even in our so called "godly actions and words".

1) We can convey demonic wisdom even as we speak and live truth.

- We do this when we speak truth without humility or love.

Note: 14 ... do not boast and be false to the truth.

*** We do this when we quote scripture to win an argument with no concern for how we are speaking to our wife or friend – that is it is minus humility or love – God says this is demonic wisdom.**

*** We do this when we post a truth on Twitter or Facebook to slam someone we don't care for – like a politician, someone with a lifestyle God says is sinful, or someone who hates Christians. When you and I use truth without humility or love, we use it as a weapon. God says this is demonic wisdom.**

1 Corinthians 13:2 (ESV) if I have prophetic powers, and understand all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have all faith, so as to remove mountains, but have not love, I am nothing.

Westboro Child with hate sign – What is true in her words? What is not? Is there any humility and love. We think we are innocent – but we are guilty of demonic wisdom.

Can I plead with all of us on social media – in light of this passage, in light of God's warning: please, stop using truth as a weapon on your posts. God says it is demonic.

- We do this when we live out the truth without humility and love.

*** We do this in parental and church discipline when we implement a truth without humility and love. Parents** – correcting your kids with the truth is needed – but when it is done with no humility and no love – we leave our kids just angry and fearing us and God. It says when you obey – you will be accepted – this is not the message of the cross. You were accepted – now obey.

Church – when we correct with humility and love – we just bring fear and anger. We have done this as elders and have had to repent – not for upholding the truth, but for not being humble and loving as we did. I did this earlier this week. Spoke truth – but minus humility and love it just hurt. Do tears and prayers and humble pleas accompany your truthful actions? These actions specifically may not reveal a humble and loving heart. But if we discipline without humility and love – God says this is living out demonic wisdom.

Warning: When we speak and live truth – without humility and love – we are a mouthpiece for the enemy – for demonic wisdom.

- 2) We fertilize and grow a harvest of unChrist-like fruit in us and others through demonic wisdom.

16 For where jealousy and selfish ambition exist, there will be disorder and every vile practice.

- disorder – chaos and or rebellion (This is the heart of sin – rebellion toward God's way and will.)
- every vile practice – every evil toward God that comes as we rebel.

Warning: This "wisdom", truth without humility and love, leads us and others to rebel against holy God in every way imaginable and in ways we cannot imagine.

02. How do I speak and live truth with humility and love?

Has God's Spirit brought conviction here – don't despair. Let it move us from this wisdom to Godly wisdom. That begins with confession. And confession includes what our sin is – we have seen that. But it also includes why? This will help us see the beauty and power of the cross that alone can capture our heart and produce Godly wisdom.

Why do I speak truth – without humility and love?

God opens up our heart at to why we do this in the beginning of vs 14.

James 3:14, 16 (ESV) But if you have bitter jealousy & selfish ambition in your hearts, ...

16 For where jealousy and selfish ambition exist,

- jealousy – I believe a lie that I need something you have
- bitter jealousy – Believing the first lie which leads me to believe lies about you and dislike / blame / hate / and even want to take away what you have if I can't have it.
So I when I speak truth without humility and love one of the reasons God says is bitter jealousy. I may think you need to be punished bc I believe you are running free of any consequences. So I hammer.
- selfish ambition- I believe a lie that says, "I am most important." It promotes self, protects self, & justifies self.
*1) So I boast about my knowledge of a subject to promote self.
2) Or, I smother another sinner with condemning truth – so I can protect myself from being exposed as a sinner. Like a magician – I distract. Get you and everyone looking at you to avoid eyes on me.
Truth without humility and love – grows in a heart being captured by self.*

Is this you? Do you find yourself speaking truth without humility and love?

Confession is agreeing – “this is me” – some, a little, or a lot. Confess this to God & turn from this!
Repentance is what we turn to – and good news – *the cross of Jesus can move us from this.*

Truth with humility and love – grows in a heart being captured by the cross.

Part of what captures our heart – is knowing the big picture of what God is about. *Godly wisdom is not just about solving a few problems or dilemmas. It has a much bigger purpose.*

1) **God's wisdom** in us produces a harvest of righteousness through us.

James 3:18 (ESV) And a harvest of righteousness is sown in peace by those who make peace.

2) We receive **God's wisdom** at the cross – *and it is a harvest of righteousness.*

• **God's wisdom** rescues us from His justice and frees us to His love.

What would God do? He had to punish us – His holy justice demanded this. Yet, he longed to have relationship with us – His holy love demanded this. So in the cross – God displayed His wisdom.

- Truth – rebels against holy God must be punished and die.

- Humility – Jesus, took our place of punishment.

- Love – God executed our punishment on Jesus.

1 Corinthians 1:18, 25 (NLT) 18 The message of the cross is foolish ... 25 This foolish plan of God is wiser than the wisest of human plans.

Have you been rescued from God's justice and freed to his love by the cross – the wisdom of God?

• **God's wisdom** (*truth, humility, love*) transforms us.

*What your mind and heart fix on – are captured by will be your wisdom. It will be how you view this world, how you view God, and how you view yourself. Might have some truth – but it is not the fullness of truth. Who is your source of wisdom? **Hannity, Robert Siegel and Linda Wertheimer at All Things Considered NPR Radio, Bernie Micklasz, your parents, JK Rowling, Bono from U2, Zac Brown, Megan Kelly.** This week – choose the cross. Read, pray, saturate your heart in it. T off the other.*

Will you be captured by the cross and the message of God's wisdom? It speaks a radical message of truth and love covered in humility that will overwhelm any other message if you will focus on it for more than a few minutes.

- At the cross – we get a radical message of truthfulness about what still resides in our heart – *sin.*

- At the cross – we get radical message of commitment to us because of Christ's humility and love.

This is Godly wisdom, God's wisdom – truth with humility and love being given to us.

God's loving and radical commitment to us strengthens us to see the truth about ourselves and repent.

***My wife has proven her commitment to me and her acceptance of me – and you better believe it allows me to hear truth when she speaks it. Never easy – but I listen bc I believe more than ever not only is she for me – she with me forever.** Let's get real practical. How does the cross help me repent?*

Why do I use truth as a weapon? (bitter jealousy)

- I believe lie that says, *"You are too free. You sin and get away with sin. You need to be punished."*

- The **truth of the cross** says – You deserved to be punished and so do I for my sin.

- The **humility of the cross** says Christ took your place and my place.

- The **love of the cross** says God poured out all his punishment on Jesus. It was enough to bring forgiveness to me and it is enough to offer forgiveness to you. I cannot demand more from you. If I do – I am saying Jesus you did not do enough.

* Confession says – I believed I needed to punish others and I'm even saying God you did not do enough. (Most confessions stop short of why – they just say what and we get stuck.)

* Repentance says – *I believe God you did enough punishment on Jesus. You are just and a better judge than I. Help me believe this truth – Christ humbly took our place in love and fully satisfied your justice. Help this truth transform my desire to punish – with a desire to speak truth wrapped in love and humility.*

The conviction and repentance that is declared to us in loving truth moves us to cling to and rest in God's commitment to me in Christ.

I want to move from demonic wisdom, I want you to move from this wisdom that brings death as well – being a truth blabber that conveys the wisdom of demons and helps their work.

But move to what? What will move you and what will you move to:

Jesus - who is truth with Humility and Love.

I'm not just being moved to speak wisdom with meekness. No! I'm being moved to Jesus or all I will do is back off the truth – I will end up being a hypocrite who is very loving, a sentimental fool.

Or, I will return to just truth – being the brutal and demonic whisperer I was before. I don't want either.

Wisdom is not just a solution or process. Jesus is Wisdom – truth, with humility and love.

James 3:17 (ESV) 17 But the wisdom from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, open to reason, full of mercy, and good fruits, impartial and sincere.

1 Corinthians 1:24 (ESV) ...Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God. *God echoes this all thru His word.*

Prov 2:6, Rom 11:33, 1 Cor 1:30; Col 2:3-4

These descriptions of Godly wisdom are simply a reflection of Jesus – **for Jesus is wisdom**