

# HAVE YOU HAD A HEART CHECKUP?

(James 3:13-18)

## WHAT IS TRUE, AND WHAT SHOULD WE DO?

By their good conduct, Christians should demonstrate heavenly rather than worldly wisdom. Specifically, they will exhibit purity and peacefulness rather than jealousy and strife.<sup>1</sup>

### Two Different Pictures of Wisdom (from below and above):<sup>1</sup>

- 1.) Who is wise? Persons who show good **conduct** (v. 13).
- 2.) Worldly wisdom is **unspiritual**, **demonic**, and to be **avoided** (v. 14–6).
  - Don't boast or lie about bitter, jealous attitudes among believers.
  - This so-called "wisdom" is of the world, the flesh, and the devil.
  - Such attitudes typify rebellion and evil.
- 3.) Godly wisdom reflects moral **purity**, **good works**, **peacemaking**, and is to be **embraced** (v.17–18).
  - True wisdom must reflect moral purity.
  - True wisdom involves good works reflecting a balanced personality.
  - True wisdom places a special priority on peacemaking.

## APPLICATION:

The truly wise person demonstrates his or her understanding of Christ by how he or she lives. Therefore, you should avoid selfish motivations and ambitions and embrace the wisdom that springs from God and pertains to God. James says godly wisdom looks like this:

- It is 'pure' and free from all the things that characterize false wisdom.
- It is also 'peaceable.' It delights in peace and promotes peace.
- It is 'gentle,' not combative/abrasive. It is reasonable and courteous.
- It is 'willing to yield,' open to reason, and insists not on its own way.
- It is 'full of mercy,' and it shows compassion to those who are in need.
- It is 'full of good fruits,' meaning it is rich in good deeds/works.
- It is 'without partiality,' and does not show favoritism.
- It is 'without hypocrisy,' sincere and genuine. It doesn't put on a front.

Christians should guard against cultural values or esteems:

- Fame and fortune; greed, power, recognition, and status
- Materialism – we want things
- Fear of persecution by other people (being made fun of etc.)
- Avoiding the truth: selfish avoidance vice constructive engagement
- Pride, envy, aggression, temptation
- Loving others is not making assumptions about them in ignorance.

<sup>1</sup> Craig Blomberg and Mariam Kamell, *James*, vol. 16, Zondervan Exegetical Commentary on NT (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2008), 170.

<sup>2</sup> Roger Ellsworth, *Opening up James*, Opening Up Commentary (Leominster: Day One Publications, 2009), 119–120.