

## Sermon Notes: Follow Lady Wisdom

James 3:13-18

**Text: James 3:13-18** — *13 Who is wise and understanding among you? Let him show by good conduct that his works are done in the meekness of wisdom. 14 But if you have bitter envy and self-seeking in your hearts, do not boast and lie against the truth. 15 This wisdom does not descend from above, but is earthly, sensual, demonic. 16 For where envy and self-seeking exist, confusion and every evil thing are there. 17 But the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, willing to yield, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality and without hypocrisy. 18 Now the fruit of righteousness is sown in peace by those who make peace.*

**Review:** *See back*

## Take Away:

- I. Point 1:** (*References: Proverbs 1:20-22; Colossians 2:2-3; Proverbs 1:7, 53:1; Orthodoxy by G. K. Chesterton*)
- II. Point 2:** (*References: Mark 12:18-27; Acts 23:6-10; Romans 16:17-18; 1st Corinthians 2:1-5;*)
- III. Point 3:** (*References: Romans 1:22-25; 1st Corinthians 1:20-25; John 18:37-38*)

## Review of James 3:1-12

1. Last time we looked at James' thesis statement of his letter, following his use of the Hebrew rhetorical device called a chiasm. This puts the main point in the center of the letter and not at the beginning as we would assume as Westerners. For James, it is the evidence of the tongue that is the important indicator of living faith and dead faith, of good fruit and bad fruit, and the blessed man or the unstable man. James is pulling this straight from Jesus' teaching that out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks. If one is not able to tame his tongue, he also will not be able to tame his body and thus his actions.

2. This truth is multiplied for teachers. In particular those who teach and preach the Word of God. Here James warned his readers that not all should become teachers for they will receive a stricter judgement at the end of all things. Why? Because teachers multiply the fruit that is present within their hearts as they shape those who sit under their teaching. This is a principle that *works*. It works for good teachers and for bad teachers. As Jesus taught, a student when he is fully formed will be like his teacher, regardless of where that teacher is leading.

3. Lastly, we saw the great danger of the tongue. It is a small member of the body but it has great power. Great power to build up, if disciplined, or great power to destroy if left untrained. An untrained tongue sets those around it on fire, like a flamethrower from hell. That fire destroys and divides the unity and fellowship of the church. In particular the fire of gossip, complaining, and slander can burn a church to the ground. As James says, these things ought not to be so. Such sin cannot be named among us if we at KCC have any shot of current blessing and a legacy of blessing from the Lord. Such taming of the tongue within the body cannot be done by us on our own. It is easier to tame a lion or an Orca than it is to tame the human tongue. It is only by God's mercy shown to us by being united to Christ that we can have any hope at all. Our hard sinful hearts, the roots of our sinful tongues, must be removed and a heart of flesh placed in. In abiding in Christ and Christ abiding in us, our tongues can bear good fruit along with the rest of our bodies.

### Questions for the Table:

1. What are the "works" of wisdom? Many people can claim to have wisdom, but how do you know it when you see it?
2. How is wisdom available to non-believers through common grace? Where does wisdom always lead?
3. Why is right belief necessary for right reasoning? What does reason do on its own?
4. Where should we go when it seems like everything in the world is upside down? When we feel like we don't know what to think, where is our foundation?
5. Read Puddleglum's speech to the witch at the end of chapter 12 of the *Chronicles of Narnia: The Silver Chair*. How does his speech show belief before reason? Also, for Jill and Eustace, when they are lost, confused, or don't know what is going on, what was Aslan's command that they must remember? How does that command connect to our need to go to God's Word?