

# #ADULTING

THE BOOK OF JAMES

**REFLECTION- Adults seek wisdom from above**

**Passage: James 3:13-18**

01-30-26

**James 3:13-18** | 13 Who among you is wise and understanding? Let him show by his good behavior his deeds in the gentleness of wisdom. 14 But if you have bitter jealousy and selfish ambition in your heart, do not be arrogant and so lie against the truth. 15 This wisdom is not that which comes down from above, but is earthly, natural, demonic. 16 For where jealousy and selfish ambition exist, there is disorder and every evil thing. 17 But the wisdom from above is first pure, then peace-loving, gentle, reasonable, full of mercy and good fruits, impartial, free of hypocrisy. 18 And the fruit of righteousness is sown in peace by those who make peace.

What is wisdom, true wisdom? Misunderstanding wisdom is a temptation/error that attacks all people, and especially teachers. The leaders of this world—politicians, preachers, and teachers—are often guilty of twisting and adjusting “wisdom” to mean what they want - convenient morality. But what is true wisdom, the kind of Godly wisdom that brings about the good life—the kind of life that our Father wants us to have? Is there a wisdom that can give us a world in which all can live in love, joy, and peace? James provides details as to how we can be guided to achieve these lofty goals.

- James has been spending a substantial amount of scripture asserting the power—both constructive and destructive—of the human tongue. He now pivots from our use of words to a previous subject first mentioned in Chapter 1 - wisdom.
- James starts by posing a rhetorical question as to who among us wishes to be considered wise? James doesn't identify the wise members—it's left to the reader. Since being wise is a desirable and even enviable thing, he then moves to measures of wisdom and contrasts 2 types of wisdom.

## **Earthly Wisdom Vs Godly Wisdom**

Note a critical fact: in the eyes of Scripture, the truly wise and knowledgeable teacher is not a person who has all kinds of facts and theories, speculations and notions in his mind. Rather, he is a teacher who is a good person—a moral and just person, a loving

and caring person—a person who lives what he knows and teaches—who shows good behavior in all his works.

- **Earthly Wisdom (vs 14-16)**

- False wisdom arouse bitter envy and jealousy. It's sources are worldly and demonic in origin. It stirs up a terrible division and cleavage between the servants of God and churches and people.

- **Godly Wisdom (vs 17-18)**

- The source of true wisdom is God. True wisdom comes from above, not from this world. It comes from God, not from the princes and scholars of this earth. True wisdom does not come from seeking the knowledge and wisdom of men and of this world; it comes from seeking God—from seeking the knowledge and wisdom of God.

Begin your study time with prayer. Ask God to reveal Himself to you, help you understand what you are reading, and transform you with His Word (Ps 119:18).

1. Read James 3:13-18 in multiple translations (NASB, ESV & Amplified are all great options- you can easily compare in the Bible app or on [biblegateway.com](http://biblegateway.com)). Let the Scripture wash over you. Pick out words/phrases that stand out. If you don't know the meaning of any words, look them up.
2. Find other examples in the bible of individuals or types of people that are being referred to in verses 14-16 (Pharisees, Sodomites, Cain, Lucifer, etc.). What do these people(s) have in common? What is their motivation in their behaviors?
3. What are your best allies in equipping yourself with the ability to detect areas of worldly/false wisdom in your life?
4. Find other examples in the bible of individuals or types of people that are being referred to in verses 17-18 (Jesus, Paul, Abraham, etc.). What is their motivation for their behaviors??
5. How can you better equip yourself to develop and display Godly wisdom in your life?