

February 18, 2018
MOVE - Part 4

“Two Views of Living”

James tells us that it matters which perspective we work from.

James 3:13 (NIV): “Who is wise and understanding among you? Let him show it by his good life, by deeds done in the humility that comes from wisdom.”

True wisdom demonstrates itself by humbly living a “good life.”

James 3:14-16 (NIV): “¹⁴But if you harbor bitter envy and selfish ambition in your hearts, do not boast about it or deny the truth. ¹⁵Such ‘wisdom’ does not come down from heaven but is earthly, unspiritual, of the devil. ¹⁶For where you have envy and selfish ambition, there you find disorder and every evil practice.”

James 1:17 (NIV): “Every good and perfect gift is from above...”

James 1:5 (NIV): “If any of you lacks wisdom, he should ask God, who gives generously to all without finding fault, and it will be given to him.”

This second source of “wisdom” isn’t from “above,” from God, but has the very opposite source - “the devil.”

Jude 18-19 (CSB17): “¹⁸They told you, ‘In the end time there will be scoffers living according to their own ungodly desires.’ ¹⁹These people create divisions and are worldly, not having the Spirit.”

James 3:17-18 (NIV): “¹⁷But the wisdom that comes from heaven is first of all pure; then peace-loving, considerate, submissive, full of mercy and good fruit, impartial and sincere. ¹⁸Peacemakers who sow in peace raise a harvest of righteousness.”

The results of heavenly “wisdom” describe the kinds of relationships we all desire.

James realizes we often seem more in tune with worldly wisdom that is creating havoc in relationships.

James 4:1-5 (NIV): “¹What causes fights and quarrels among you? Don’t they come from your desires that battle within you? ²You want something but don’t get it. You kill and covet, but you cannot have what you want. You quarrel and fight. You do not have, because you do not ask God. ³When you ask, you do not receive, because you ask with wrong motives, that you may spend what you get on your pleasures. ⁴You adulterous people, don’t you know that friendship with the world is hatred toward God? Anyone who chooses to be a friend of the world becomes an enemy of God. ⁵Or do you think Scripture says without reason that the spirit he caused to live in us envies intensely?”

People are often seeking what they want, what they think will satisfy their “desires,” but the result is “fights and quarrels,” and they aren’t getting what they want.

Chasing after the things of this “world” makes a person “an enemy of God.”

When James talks about two kinds of wisdom, he’s, in effect, talking about two kinds of worldviews – biblical and worldly.

Pastor John Ortberg: A worldview is “a big picture orientation or mental map of reality, and it governs how you see things, what you do, what you say, and how you live.”

A biblical worldview is based on the teachings of the Bible.

A worldview that doesn’t seek to conform life to God’s ways is a worldly worldview, even if it believes in the existence of God.

James 2:19 (NIV): “You believe that there is one God. Good! Even the demons believe that – and shudder.”

A worldly worldview is centered in finding truth from some other source than God, and often that morphs into our own self-centered “desires.”

When we separate ourselves from a biblical worldview, we can justify any behavior.

Because of sin, we’re all immersed in unbiblical, worldly worldviews, to the point that they may even be invisible to us.

We need God’s Spirit and His Word to reveal to us the truth about ourselves and this world, and we must receive Jesus Christ as our Savior and Lord, submitting ourselves to him daily as his disciples.

Colossians 2:6-8 (NLT): “⁶And now, just as you accepted Christ Jesus as your Lord, you must continue to follow him. ⁷Let your roots grow down into him, and let your lives be built on him. Then your faith will grow strong in the truth you were taught, and you will overflow with thankfulness. ⁸Don’t let anyone capture you with empty philosophies and high-sounding nonsense that come from human thinking and from the spiritual powers of this world, rather than from Christ.”

James 4:6 (NIV): “But he gives us more grace. That is why Scripture says: ‘God opposes the proud but gives grace to the humble.’”

James 4:7 (NIV): “Submit yourselves, then, to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you.”

In God’s strength, we can “resist the devil” and this world’s values, and even put the devil on the run.

James 4:8 (NIV): “Come near to God and he will come near to you. Wash your hands, you sinners, and purify your hearts, you double-minded.”

James 4:9 (NIV): “Grieve, mourn and wail. Change your laughter to mourning and your joy to gloom.”

Until we accept that having a worldview that lives in “friendship with the world” leads to sin and, ultimately, destruction and death, we won’t see why this is so important.

James 4:10 (NIV): “Humble yourselves before the Lord, and he will lift you up.”

Humility is so counter-cultural today, for our world tells us to lift ourselves up, but God says when we “humble” ourselves and submit to Him, “he will lift you up.”

Disciples of Jesus Christ pray, and God uses that to drive us to work for real change in our world, including, above all, leading others to Christ himself and growing them to be his disciples, who themselves make disciples.

Week 4 Memory Verse

James 4:7 (NIV): “Submit yourselves, then, to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you.”

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