



### 3.13.11/James 3:13-18

#### Two Kinds of Wisdom

##### Materials Needed

Paper and pencil to make a list

##### Read James 3:13-18

"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. But if you harbor bitter envy and selfish ambition in your hearts, do not boast about it or deny the truth. Such "wisdom" does not come down from heaven but is earthly, unspiritual, of the devil. For where you have envy and selfish ambition, there you find disorder and every evil practice. But 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. Peacemakers who sow in peace raise a harvest of righteousness."-NIV

##### Activity/Discussion:

In this passage, James contrasts earthly wisdom and wisdom from God. Fold a piece of paper in half to make a crease. Unfold it, and then at the top of one half write "Earthly Wisdom" and on the other side write "Godly Wisdom." List some of the characteristics of each kind of wisdom, according to James. *Signs of Earthly wisdom: selfishness, jealousy (envy), or pride.* List some of the ways that Godly wisdom is different. *Wisdom from God is pure, merciful, impartial, genuine, etc.* Keep this list. We'll use it later!

##### Discussion Questions:

1. In 2 Chronicles chapter 1, God appears to Solomon and tells him to ask Him for anything he wants. Solomon could have asked for ANYTHING in the whole world but we see in verse 10 that Solomon says "Give me wisdom and knowledge..." In our Scripture passage for today, James says that wisdom "comes from heaven." What does James mean by this? *He means that Godly wisdom is something you have to ask God to give to you. Wisdom is one of many gifts that the Lord wants to give to us, and we should ask for it. When we confess that Jesus is our Savior and ask Him to send His Holy Spirit to live and reign in us, He does it (Luke 11)! The same is true with wisdom from God. When we ask Him, He will give it to us (James 1:5-8)!*
2. Let's use the lists we made from before and apply them practically to our lives. Let's use our prayer life to understand wisdom better. Look at the characteristics of earthly wisdom. How do these things keep us from praying for the right things? *Selfishness or envy is a good example. When our wisdom is based in envy, we might pray for things that we want because we are jealous that other people have them (nicer clothes, a cool vacation, etc.)* Now look at the list of characteristics of wisdom granted to us by God. How could asking for God to give us His wisdom help us to pray for the right things? *"Full of mercy" is one good example. When we are full of mercy, we are motivated to pray with compassion for those that are needy or in trouble.*
3. Look again at the characteristics of Godly wisdom. Notice that all of these are characteristics of Jesus. Jesus was pure and without sin. He was peace-loving and full of mercy. He was always sincere. In verse 13, James says that people who make decisions based on God's wisdom and not earthly wisdom show it with deeds done in humility and meekness, like a servant. Like Jesus! Why do you think humble deeds are a good sign of Godly wisdom in our lives? *Because they show us who God is! When we are NOT humble, we are looking out only for ourselves, we take the credit for everything we do, and we are not reflecting the character of God in our actions. But when we ask God to give us His wisdom, we make decisions that will honor and glorify GOD, not us. We can't take credit for the Godly things that we do because we've only done them as a response to all that God has done for us, and we can only do them because His power is working through us, not ours!*

**Reflection/Prayer**

Read over the list you made during your prayer times this week, and let it help guide you and how you pray. Remember that wisdom is a gift from God, and that just like the gift of salvation, God does all the work. God tells us to ask for His wisdom, so let's do that! Close in prayer and ask for forgiveness for the decisions we make that are based in our own selfishness. Thank God that even though we constantly fall short of God's standard of perfection, He still provides a way for us to spend eternity with Him through Jesus. Thank Him for wanting to give us good gifts, such as wisdom! Pray for God to give you an abundance of His wisdom and for the Holy Spirit to help you apply it to all that you do. If any of the children would like to know more about what it means to follow Jesus, they should ask their parents for help and understanding, and if you sense that the parents are unsure about what to do next, please reach out to them.