

True Wisdom

Pastors Jeff Thompson, Tommy Creutz | James 3:13–18

NOTE: As a guide, use these questions to help with group discussion. Not all questions are needed. Select the ones that will best serve your group as you grow in Christ together through His Word. Soli Deo Gloria.

ICE BREAKER: Describe a moment, big or small, when someone you know made a wise choice? How would you describe a wise decision?

UNDERSTANDING THE TEXT IN CONTEXT:

James emphasizes here that wisdom is displayed by our works (3:13). According to James, what are the works produced from our selfish ambition? What are the works produced from heavenly wisdom?

How does this comparison give you a deeper understanding of wisdom itself?

CONNECTING TO JESUS AND HIS GOSPEL:

Looking at James 3:17-18, what does wisdom “from above” look like in action? How does it resemble Jesus?

Read Matthew 7:24-27 and Luke 7:35. Jesus often compared wisdom from the world to wisdom from above. James says that true wisdom shows up in a humble life and good deeds. What does it look like to build your life on Jesus in everyday situations? How does obedience to Him help you stay steady when life gets hard?

LIVING OUT THE TRUTH:

Do you feel that there are places in your heart where you harbor bitterness, envy, or selfishness? What is a way that you can practice selflessness and peacemaking in these areas, seeking “the wisdom that comes from heaven” (v. 17)?

Take some time to pray about the areas of your life that you are struggling to have peace in, offering them to God and asking him to give you his wisdom and strength.

PARENTING MOMENT AND FAMILY FOCUS:

Read James 3:13–18 together as spouses or as a family. Mention that worldly wisdom looks like jealousy or always trying to be right for selfish reasons, but wisdom from above looks like peace and is full of mercy. Ask them in what areas of their life they let worldly wisdom creep in the most. Pray together that you would live a life filled with wisdom from above.

FURTHER STUDY:

The Gospel In Life | Tim Keller Podcast: Keller recorded a sermon titled ‘A Community of Peace-Making,’ and it is an excellent dive into wisdom. Series “The Gospel in Community: The Book of James”. Scripture: James 3:1-18. Timothy Keller at Redeemer Presbyterian Church on January 3, 2010.



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THE BOOK OF JAMES

This page gets us into the text for the next sermon. The more familiarity we have with God's Word, the better we can see God and all that He has for us.

In the days leading up to next week, set aside a few minutes to read the text and reflect on these questions. A prayer to start: 'Open my eyes that I may behold wonderful things out of your law' - Psalm 119:18

- 1. Conflicts are bound to happen in any church community. When you read James 3:15-16 alongside James 4:1-4, what is ultimately the cause of our quarrels? What do they reveal about the kind of wisdom we are following?**
- 2. Read James 3:1. We see that competition and selfish ambition were influencing the way people in the church were talking to each other. How does understanding the connection between our inner desires and our outward conflicts help us with our words and actions?**
- 3. Read James 4:5. The footnote in the NLT explains the translation of this verse: "They say that the Holy Spirit, whom God has placed within us, opposes our envy." How does this shape our understanding of the Spirit, and how should we respond when we feel envious?**
- 4. Read James 4:6-10. What are seven commands given to combat pride? What commands are included in verses 11-12?**
- 5. What in this text confuses you?**
- 6. What in this text compels you?**
- 7. Take time to pray for wisdom in our words and actions. James 4:2-3 challenges us to look at our motives. Read Matthew 6:33 and pray for your hearts to be aligned to "Seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness..." before all things.**