

2 Kinds of Wisdom Are Contrasted
(James 3:13-18)

Introduction:

1. We learn from Luke 2:52 that Jesus grew in wisdom.
2. The Scriptures teach that He wants His followers to grow in wisdom as well.
3. In James 3:13-18, two kinds of wisdom are contrasted.
4. As we study these verses, let us keep in mind that peace and unity are very important in the church (John 17:20-21; 1 Thessalonians 5:13b).
 - a. Peace and unity do not exist by accident.
 - b. Certain things must be done, and certain things must be avoided.
 - c. The kind of wisdom we possess will affect peace and unity.
5. The first point we need to make is that . . .

Discussion:

- I. (vs.13-14) OUR ACTIONS DEMONSTRATE THE KIND OF WISDOM WE POSSESS
 - A. (Matthew 7:20) Jesus said, *"By their fruits ye shall know them."*
 1. Jesus indicated that false teachers can be detected by the fruit that they bear.
 2. In a similar way we show by our actions the kind of wisdom we possess.
 - B. (vs.13) A child of God who is wise and endowed with knowledge will *"show out of a good conversation his works with meekness of wisdom."*
 1. His "conversation" [manner of life, behavior] will be in harmony with God's will.
 2. His works will demonstrate his wisdom.
 - C. (vs.14) However, the heart may be filled with bitter envying [jealousy] and strife.
 1. A person like this should not glory because he possesses these traits.
 2. Also, he should not lie against the truth by pretending to be a follower of Christ -- he is nothing more than a hypocrite.
 - D. To help us understand James' lesson, let us examine the disciples before Jesus was crucified.
 1. They were often concerned about who was the greatest (Matthew 18:1; 20:25-28).
 2. They even discussed this when Jesus ate His final meal with them and gave instructions for eating His Supper (Luke 22:24).
 3. Their real problem was that they possessed the wrong kind of wisdom.
- II. (vs.15-16) THE WRONG KIND OF WISDOM
 - A. This is the kind of wisdom mentioned in vs.14.
 - B. Its source is identified.
 1. It does not descend from above.
 2. It is "earthly" [worldly].
 - C. It is described as being "sensual" and "devilish."
 - D. This kind of wisdom produces confusion and every evil work instead of peace and unity.
 - E. The church in Corinth was plagued by this kind of wisdom.
 1. The Lord wanted this church to be united (1 Corinthians 1:10).
 2. However, it was divided (vs.11-12).
 3. The problem is identified in 1 Corinthians 3:3 -- its members were "carnal" [worldly].
 4. Pursuing the right kind of wisdom will eliminate this problem.
- III. (vs.17-18) THE RIGHT KIND OF WISDOM
 - A. This is the kind of wisdom mentioned in vs.13.
 - B. Its source is identified -- it comes from above (1:5).
 - C. The wisdom that comes from God is described as being pure, peaceable, gentle, easy to be entreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality, and without hypocrisy.
 - D. This kind of wisdom produces the fruit of righteousness.

Conclusion:

1. The Lord wants us to pursue and practice the right kind of wisdom.
2. As we do so we are imitating Him.