

JAMES

Lesson 16: The Wisdom of the World VS. the Wisdom of God (3:13-18)

6 March 2020

In our last lesson, we saw that a person who is truly a child of God is going to show it by their works. This lesson is going to build upon that and tell us how to make sure that our works are not the products of earthly wisdom, but are of the wisdom from above.

Vs 13 The subject of wisdom is introduced in this verse. Wisdom and knowledge go together and will enable you to show your works by your good conversation.

Endue: to take on or put on.

Conversation: manner of life.

Knowledge: the acquisition of and the accumulation of facts. You may have a lot of knowledge, but it must be under God's control, or it may be misused and result in envy, strife, confusion, and evil works. When knowledge is properly used, it will result in peace, mercy, gentleness, fairness, etc.

Wisdom: the use of knowledge. Wisdom is the principal thing (Prov. 4:7). Wisdom will enable you to know how to use your knowledge for God's honor and glory.

Vs 14 Envy and strife among the brethren occurs when you use your knowledge and wisdom to exalt yourself at the expense of others. It is nothing to be proud of. Don't lie and say you are living a life controlled by the Holy Spirit if you're always arguing with and envious of the brethren. Read the gospel accounts and observe how Jesus Christ handled people—without strife, without envy.

THE WISDOM OF THE WORLD

VS 15 There is a wisdom that does not come from God. Men get together and make decisions based on their own selfish desires. They have knowledge, they have wisdom, but God isn't in it.

Examples: Tower of Babel, Abraham going down to Egypt, Lot moving to Sodom, rich TV evangelists, King Saul putting his armor on young David, the apostle Paul deciding to go to Jerusalem.

1 Corinthians 3:18-23 Paul told the Corinthian church that they had worldly wisdom, but it was foolishness with God. They were giving glory to men instead of God.

1 Corinthians 2:1-5 Paul didn't preach to the Corinthians according to man's wisdom, but in the power of God. Many churches are looking to get big by operating their church the same way a big corporation does business. God is not in that.

You need to do things according to God's wisdom if you want the power of the Holy Spirit in your ministry.

Are you leading souls to Christ according to God's way, trusting His power? Or are you leading them through a "1,2,3, repeat after me" sinner's prayer that will leave them just as lost as they were when you started?

1 Corinthians 2:6-8 The wisdom of the world led to the crucifixion of Jesus Christ. The Chief Priests did it for envy (Mark 15:10).

1 Corinthians 1:19-30

To be saved, you must forsake your worldly wisdom. It's keeping you from knowing God (vs 21) because you think you know more than God. Humble yourself and admit that your knowledge and your wisdom is not sufficient to get you to Heaven. You need the wisdom from above.

Glory in the Lord, not in men (vs 30). Many ministries are built upon the name of a well-known preacher man. The man is given the glory that belongs to Jesus Christ. This is a business tactic that builds big churches using man's wisdom, but God is not in it.

Proverbs 26:12

Pride will get in the way of a man's salvation. God's wisdom makes it possible for people from every walk of life to trust Him for their soul's salvation. All they have to do is humble themselves and admit they've been a fool. Then God has something to work with.

Proverbs 9:10

"The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom."

Romans 3:10, 18

"As it is written, There is none righteous, no, not one." ¹⁸ "There is no fear of God before their eyes."

If you don't fear God, your Bible knowledge cannot produce a holy life.

Those who don't fear God will even use their Bible knowledge to justify the sin in their life.