

## SERMON OUTLINE

**SERMON TITLE:** Wisdom: Wise or Otherwise

**SERMON REFERENCE:** James 3:13-18

**LWF SERMON NUMBER:** #0518

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1) INTRODUCTION

- a) James 3:13
  - i) James did not want a “say-so” salvation or a “say-so” wisdom.
    - (1) He wanted a “know-so” and a “show-so” salvation and a “know-so” and a “show-so” wisdom.
    - ii) The word “conversation” in this verse means “behavior.”
- b) James 3:14-18
- c) There are three specific things we’ll look at in this message regarding wisdom.

2) THE VALUE OF WISDOM (JAMES 3:13)

- a) James places a great value upon wisdom.
  - i) When looking for a leader in the church, James does not say to look for a rich or educated or ambitious or popular man; but for a wise man.
- b) Wisdom is greater than monetary power.
  - i) Proverbs 3:13-17
    - (1) Solomon states that wisdom is greater than riches, and wisdom power is greater than monetary power.
    - ii) We should ask for wisdom.
- c) Wisdom is greater than military power.
  - i) Ecclesiastes 9:16-18
    - (1) Wisdom is greater than strength and weapons of war.
    - (2) We need in our government wise men who walk in the ways of the Lord and who bow on their knees before Almighty God.
  - ii) 2 Chronicles 1:10-12
    - (1) The Lord said to Solomon that He would give Solomon anything he asked for, and Solomon asked for wisdom.
      - (a) This honored and pleased the Lord.
- d) Wisdom is greater than mental power.
  - i) Proverbs 4:4-8
    - (1) Wisdom is the principle thing.
    - (2) We are to get understanding and knowledge, but above all, we are to get wisdom.
  - ii) Wisdom is the most important thing that a leader or teacher can have.
- e) The Bible links wisdom and knowledge together.
  - i) James 3:13
  - ii) Wisdom and knowledge are always linked together, but wisdom always comes first.
    - (1) Knowledge without wisdom is a dangerous thing.
      - (a) If a person has knowledge without wisdom, he may be proud that he knows so much.
      - (b) Wisdom is humble that it knows so little.
    - (2) Knowledge always fails if it is not linked to wisdom.
      - (a) Wisdom gives us the ability to apply the knowledge we have.

- f) The Lord Jesus Christ is the heartbeat of wisdom.
    - i) Matthew 11:25
      - (1) God reveals the simple and wonderful things to those who know Him and love Him.
    - ii) 1 Corinthians 1:18-25
  - g) A wise person will study and gain knowledge.
    - i) If you have wisdom, you still need to study and learn.
      - (1) 2 Timothy 2:15
    - ii) There are many who are saved who may have a measure of wisdom, but they don't have understanding or knowledge.
      - (1) 1 Peter 1:13
        - (a) We should take up those long, flowing robes of indiscipline, laziness and carelessness and run for all our worth and apply our minds and love God with all of our mind and strength.
  - h) James 3:1
    - i) James is speaking especially to teachers.
    - ii) We shouldn't teach a Sunday School class at our church unless we are willing to be right with God and study His Word.
    - iii) Anyone who assumes to be a spiritual authority had better watch his words, be wise and have knowledge.
      - (1) He also needs to learn to study.
      - (2) It is laziness and an excuse for teachers and ministers of the Gospel to not study but to instead say that they will just depend upon inspiration and that God will put into their hearts what He wants them to say.
  - i) What is the difference between wisdom and knowledge?
    - i) Knowledge is learned, but wisdom is given.
      - (1) We get knowledge by looking around; we get wisdom by looking up.
      - (2) We get knowledge by studying; we get wisdom by prayer and meditation.
      - (3) James 1:5
        - (a) God will show us how to apply our hearts unto wisdom.
        - (b) The Bible never tells us to pray for knowledge.
          - (i) The Bible tells us to study for knowledge and to ask for wisdom.
    - ii) Wisdom commences that conversion.
      - (1) Psalm 111:10
        - (a) Until we come to an honest reverential fear of the Lord, we don't even have a modicum of wisdom.
      - (2) 1 Corinthians 1:30
        - (a) Christ is our wisdom.
    - iii) Wisdom deepens through discipleship.
  - j) It is more important that we have wisdom than money, health and strength.
- 3) THE VIRTUE OF WISDOM (JAMES 3:13)
  - a) There are two virtues of wisdom:

- i) It is good.
  - (1) If we have real wisdom, it will show in our lives in practical goodness.
    - (a) We will be like the Lord Jesus who went about doing good.
  - (2) It is not so much a matter of our minds (how clever we are), but it's a matter of our lives (how good we are).
  - (3) James is not interested in our words but in our works.
- ii) It is gentle.
  - (1) If we have wisdom, we will show it by a gentle life.
    - (a) James 3:13
      - (i) "With meekness of wisdom" means with a gentle spirit.
    - (b) If we are arrogant and we call that wisdom, then the wisdom we have is phony and fake.
    - (c) The Lord came to make you a wise man, not a wise guy.
  - (2) The word "meekness" in James 3:13 means "level."
    - (a) To be meek does not mean to think lowly of oneself.
    - (b) Meekness is a sweet evenness about life.
      - (i) When a person is meek, he knows that he does not have to look up to anyone because he knows that by the grace of God he has been made royalty.
      - (ii) He also doesn't have to look down on anyone.
      - (iii) He can look everyone straight in the eye.
- b) James 3:14-15
  - i) In contrast to the virtues of divine wisdom, James describes the vices of devilish wisdom.
    - (1) The revelation of devilish wisdom:
      - (a) It is revealed by bitter envying and strife in our hearts.
        - (i) The phrase in this Scripture, "bitter envying and strife," literally means jealousy and selfish ambition.
      - (b) If we have jealousy and selfish ambition, then we are not wise.
      - (c) If we are fighting to be first, then we are not wise.
    - (2) The roots of devilish wisdom:
      - (a) James 3:15
        - (i) This wisdom does not come from above.
      - (b) It is earthly.
        - (i) As Christians, our values and the way we look at things are vastly different than that of the world.
          - 1. Our values are heavenly and not earthly.
        - (ii) Our churches should not be run on worldly wisdom or earthly principles.
          - 1. Many people have wrecked and ruined churches with earthly wisdom.
      - (c) It is sensual.
        - (i) James 3:15

1. The word “sensual” here literally means “soulish” or “natural.”
  - (ii) 1 Corinthians 2:14
  - (iii) Jude 19
  - (iv) These passages are not speaking of someone who is sensuous but of a person who lives by his senses or natural instincts.
    1. This person thinks that his common sense is God-given wisdom, but he doesn’t know the difference between true wisdom and common sense.
  - (v) The soul is made up of the mind, emotion and will.
    1. The soulish or sensual man operates in the following way:
      - a. His mind says, “I think I ought to do this.”
      - b. His emotion says, “I feel like doing this.”
      - c. His will says, “I’ll do it.”
  - (d) It is devilish.
    - (i) It comes from the devil himself.
    - (ii) In James 3, James is warning church people; he isn’t talking to those outside of the church.
      1. This type of devilish wisdom is often paraded within the average church.
      2. 2 Corinthians 11:14
- (3) The results of devilish wisdom:
  - (a) James 3:16
  - (b) When we try to do the work of God in the energy of our flesh with this earthly, devilish wisdom, there will be no peace, no joy, no happiness, no victory, and no souls getting saved; but there will be confusion.
- 4) THE VICTORY OF WISDOM (JAMES 3:17-18)
  - a) Divine wisdom overcomes sin.
    - i) James 3:17
      - (1) Wisdom from above is pure.
    - ii) This type of wisdom will deal with sin.
      - (1) It will show you that sin is senseless, and you will want to be pure in the sight of Holy God.
      - (2) Impurity is not wise.
  - b) Wisdom also overcomes strife.
    - i) James 3:17
      - (1) Wisdom from above is peaceable.
    - ii) There are some who claim to be wise, but they use the Bible as a club rather than a sword.
      - (1) Some people are cantankerous while claiming to be defenders of the faith.
      - (2) But true wisdom is peaceable.

- iii) When we deal with someone we disagree with, we need to remember the following:
  - (1) If we are arguing with a lost man, why would we scold a blind man for not being able to see?
  - (2) If we are dealing with a saved man, we need to remember that he is our brother.
    - (a) If we wound him, we also wound ourselves.
  - (3) When we're in controversy with anybody, the unsaved world is listening and watching.
- c) Wisdom overcomes stubbornness.
  - i) James 3:17
    - (1) Wisdom is gentle and easy to be intreated.
  - ii) A wise man has convictions, but his convictions are about the Word of God.
    - (1) He is not rigid and inflexible about things that really don't matter.
  - iii) The word for "gentle" is a combination of two words which means "into" and "fitting."
    - (1) It means the ability to fit into, to adapt, to be gentle in things that don't really make a difference.
- d) Wisdom overcomes selfishness.
  - i) James 3:17
    - (1) Wisdom is full of mercy and good fruits.
  - ii) Wisdom is not always thinking of itself; it is thinking of others.
  - iii) It is merciful to other people.
  - iv) There is no life so empty as a self-centered life, and there is no life so centered as a self-emptied life.
- e) Wisdom overcomes snobbishness.
  - i) James 3:17
    - (1) Wisdom is without partiality.
  - ii) Real wisdom does not look down on some people while paying special deference to other people.
  - iii) A wise person understands that everyone is someone for whom Jesus died.
- f) Wisdom overcomes shame.
  - i) James 3:17
    - (1) Wisdom is without hypocrisy.
      - (a) With hypocrisy, people say but they don't show.
  - ii) James 2:18
    - (1) When others try to show wisdom by their words, we need to show wisdom by our lives.
- g) The result of the victory of wisdom is peace.
  - i) James 3:18
  - ii) A wise man is a peacemaker.
    - (1) The war is over, and wisdom has won the peace.

5) CONCLUSION

- a) We cannot know wisdom without knowing the Lord Jesus Christ personally.
- b) Do you have a personal relationship with the Lord Jesus Christ?
  - i) If not, you can pray to Him today and ask Him to come into your life.
- c) Call upon Jesus today. Repent (turn) from your sins, and turn to Jesus. Ask Him to forgive you of your sins, and acknowledge Him as Lord of your life.
  - i) Romans 3:23
  - ii) Romans 10:9-10
  - iii) Romans 10:13
  - iv) Acts 16:31
  - v) John 3:16