

James Chapter 3 Lesson 2

James 3: 13-18

James describes two very different kinds of wisdom—one of the world, the other of God. Jealousy and selfish ambition are not of God's wisdom.

Wisdom that comes from God is pure, genuine, and leads to peace and righteousness.

We reap what we sow and what we sow becomes the evidence of where our wisdom comes from.

Genesis 13: 1-7

God's blessings mean greater responsibilities.

Riches bring about burdens. Some burdens that come with riches are conflicts between family members.

When a problem arises, we are to also like Abram call on God for help.

If you need wisdom, ask our generous God, and he will give it to you. He will not rebuke you for asking.—James 1:5

Point #1: If our wisdom is to come from God, we have to call on Him for it.

In humility and in faith, we need to show God that it is He who is wise, and apart from Him we can do nothing.

When we receive His wisdom, it will be pure like James says, because God is holy and righteous. His wisdom will usher our lives into purity and righteousness.

Abram called on God and his life became evident of it.

Genesis 13: 8-13

Lot and Abram traveled together. It's a shame that Lot took to Abram, but never took to His God.

Abram being wiser wanted to quickly settle this dispute. Even though Abram, being the eldest, had every right to go first and pick his choice of land, he yielded to his nephew instead—not only giving him first choice, but also equal division of the land that God promised to Abram's seed.

The only reason Abram was able to let **Lot** go first in his pick of the land, was because Abram had put God first in life.

Point #2: If our wisdom is to come from God, He has to come first in our lives.

When God is first, everything and everyone else falls into the right place. We are able to love others more and better than ourselves, when God is our first and greatest love.

James says in verse 17 of chapter 3 that wisdom that comes from God is first of all pure and is also peace loving, gentle at all times, and willing to yield to others. Abram wanting peace instead of contention, and putting his nephew above himself, is proof that Abram's wisdom came from God.

When God comes first in our lives, our eyes are on His desires not ours. We live in a place of contentment, not contention and covetousness.

Point #3: If our wisdom is to come from God, we are content to let Him have control.

We want what God wants, because we trust His care and provision.

There is nothing wrong with wanting things and having ambition. We are to use our gifts and talents to the fullest. God desires and esteems that.

But Lot's ambition centered from a place of selfishness. His aim was to get, not give. He didn't own his possessions, they owned him. His ambition was to gain earthly wealth, not eternal wealth.

James says in verse 16 of chapter 3 that wherever there is jealousy and selfish ambition, there you will find disorder and evil of every kind. That's exactly where Lot ended up. It wasn't long, before more of the wicked city moved into Lot. Then Lot moved into Sodom.

Genesis 13: 14-18

Abram lifted his eyes and gazed at what God had to offer from heaven.

Often we miss what God has to offer us, for two reasons.

1. We become distracted by our difficulties.
2. We become distracted by conflicting voices.

Abram lifted his eyes and then lifted his feet in obedience to God.

Point #4: If our wisdom is to come from God, we comply with His commands.

It's walking by faith and walking in His ways that leads us to God's wisdom and abundant blessings.

Resources: Swindoll's Living Insights New Testament Commentary James 1 & 2 Peter; Matthew Henry's Commentary ; The Wiersbe Bible Commentary, Genesis by James Montgomery Boice; NLT Parallel Study Bible; The Gospel of Mark by William Barclay www.biblegateway.com; www.biblehub.com; www.ministry127.com;

We are to obey God, delighting in Him and His instruction, and when we do we will see the fruits of His wisdom in our lives.

We have spiritual ground that God wants us to take possession of, but we have to do it one step at a time. Like Abram, we are to pick up our tents and walk through this world, planting seeds of peace that speak of the Prince of Peace.

The harvest of righteousness doesn't miraculously happen, it takes effort and time.

We are a work in progress and the work we have to do is a process. But we will reap a harvest of blessing, if we don't give up.

Also like Abram, we are to lift our hearts in worship of God, thanking Him for enabling us to share in the rich and glorious inheritance that now belongs to us.

Abram and Lot are proof that we reap what we sow.

Homework Questions

1. When it comes to seeking wisdom, where are you prone to look?
2. Explain why the things we pursue and give our lives to are the things that we truly value the most. What are the things you truly value most in your life?
3. Is your life evident of God's wisdom? Why or why not?
4. How easy is it for you to yield to others?
5. Describe a time you did or didn't seek God's wisdom to settle a dispute. What was the outcome?

6. Explain why if our wisdom is to come from God, He has to come first in our lives.

7. Why are we able to love others more and better than ourselves, when God is our first and greatest love?

8. In what ways do you struggle being content to let God have control in your life?

9. Do you live in a place of contentment, or is it a place you visit from time to time?

10. Do you truly believe God has no favorites when it comes to His children? Why or why not?

11. What are some practical ways to plant seeds of peace in our lives?

12. Is your aim to gain earthly wealth or eternal wealth? What evidence is there in your life that reflects your answer?

13. Do you tend to view things with eyes of faith or with eyes of sense? Why or why not?

14. What are some practical ways we can keep from missing what God has to offer us?

15. When it comes to your possessions, do you own them or do they own you?

16. Does your life reflect your love and gratitude for God? Why or why not?

17. Is your life marked more by getting or giving? Why or why not?