Who Is Wise Among You?

Brent Moody · James 3:13–18

INTRODUCTION

- It seems fitting in the time we're in now, as we're heading into some political issues in our future and our country, to think about this idea, about what is wisdom.
- What he's actually dealing with primarily in the letter is the internal difficulties, the way they treat each other, the way they interact with each other, the attitudes they have about one another.

1 There Is No Such Thing as Earthly Wisdom

James 3:15

- When we're asking who is wise, that there is no such thing as earthly wisdom.
- The way James presents it here is there's either wisdom from above or foolishness. Those are the options.
- The earthly thinking and earthly philosophy is never, ever wise. It's foolish.

2 What Wisdom Is Not

- It is not the one who always has an answer. Or is the most confident.
- It's not the one who is the smartest, because they could be arrogant.
- It's not the one who's zealous. Zealous to find flaws and imperfections in someone else or a group. This person actually might just be jealous.
- These items in and of themselves do not summate what it is to be wise.

3 Good Conduct Mixed With Meekness

James 3:13

- What really matters in terms of what James is talking about here is good conduct that is mixed with meekness.
- You combine good behavior or good conduct with humility, with meekness.
- It is easy for people in positions of leadership to begin to think they're a little bit more important than they actually are.
- Doing the good works that we do not for our own benefit, not so others look at us and see how great we are.

4 First Pure, Then Peaceable

1 Corinthians 8:1; 1 Timothy 5:22; Hebrews 12:11

- He says, first, that you're pure, that you're innocent.
- You don't need that to become wise, because the first step of wisdom is purity, innocence.
- This is not about being a peacekeeper, trying to keep everybody happy.

- A peacemaker does what needs to be done to bring harmony and unity, even if it's difficult.

5 Gentle, Open to Reason, Full of Mercy, Sincere

Galatians 6:1

- Gentle is just the idea of being kind, not demanding.
- We're not out trying to bully people and force them into our way of thinking.
- If I've already decided what I think and how I feel about something, that is not what wisdom is.
- We are compassionate, that we want what's best for the other person, even if we disagree with them.
- Even when there are times when there needs to be some kind of correction, it'll be done a certain way. In a way that's gentle and loving and careful and full of compassion.

6 Peacemakers Sow in Peace and Reap Righteousness

James 3:18

- A harvest of righteousness is sown in peace by those who make peace.
- Peacemakers sow in peace and they reap righteousness.
- If you sow in a way that's not gentle and loving and full of mercy, if this is the way that you sow, then you're going to reap disorder and division, which is something that God hates.
- Righteousness is shown through a loyalty to God and to one another. Those two things are not at odds.

THE CHALLENGE

If I'm wondering, am I someone who is wise and has understanding? Here's the question I have to ask myself. Am I surrounded by a harvest of righteousness?

MY NOTES