

Joyful Life Bible Studies

JAMES 3:13-18

Lesson 13

FIRST DAY: Review James 3:1-12 and Psalm 19:14

1. *Let the words of my mouth, and the meditation of my heart, be acceptable in Thy sight, O Lord, my Strength and my Redeemer.* Psalm 19:14 As a result of what you have learned about the tongue, how have you been applying this prayer?
 - a. What tools have you found to be useful in not only *bridling your tongue*, but using it to *edify and bless* others?
2. James 3:13-18 is one paragraph. Record the words or phrases from each verse of this week's study that are especially significant to you:
 - a. James 3:13
 - b. James 3:14
 - c. James 3:15
 - d. James 3:16
 - e. James 3:17
 - f. James 3:18
3. James moves from addressing the power and use of the tongue to another subject that reflects the walk of a mature Christian. James 3:6b states that the tongue *is set on fire of hell*. This next portion describes *wisdom that is not from above* and contrasts it with *wisdom that is from above*. Begin your homework with a prayer asking the Lord to give you a fresh revelation of *wisdom that is from above* and express your desire to walk in a way that reflects His *wisdom* in your life.

*The law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul:
the testimony of the Lord is sure, making wise the simple.*

-Psalm 19:7

SECOND DAY: Read James 3:13

1. James begins verse 13 with a question. Write the question below in your own words.

a. Define *wisdom*.

2. How valuable is godly *wisdom*? Proverbs 8:11 Selah!

a. How valuable is godly *wisdom* to you?

b. If ever there has been a time when we as Christian women needed to be women of *wisdom*, it is now. What do we learn from Proverbs 14:1 about this?

3. What do the following verses teach us about the requirements for godly *wisdom*:

a. Proverbs 2:4,5 (*her* refers to *wisdom*)

b. Proverbs 4:5,7

c. Proverbs 9:10

(1.) *Fear of the Lord* is not being frightened of Him. It is to have a deep reverence for Him, an awe of Who He is and What He is. It is an awesome dread of displeasing Him. According to Proverbs 8:13a and 16:6b what will result from reverencing the Lord?

d. Ecclesiastes 2:26a (see other versions)

e. James 1:5

Challenge: Read Matthew 25:1-13 and contrast the *wise* and *foolish virgins*.

4. How do we show we are *wise and endowed with knowledge*? (*Conversation* refers to our behavior or conduct.) James 3:13

a. *Wisdom* is shown not only through what we do but also in our behavior towards others. As faith and works are entwined, so are *wisdom* and behavior. Godly behavior is the proof of godly *wisdom*. How do you see this from this verse?

5. Let's look at how the principle of James 3:13 relates to women of all ages and stages:

a. What *wisdom* does I Peter 3:1-4 give as a pattern of behavior for a *wise* Christian wife?

(1.) What does verse 1 say that a husband who does not obey the Word will be won by?

(2.) What adorning or ornament is of great value in the sight of God?

b. Read Titus 2:3-5. How will the *wise* older woman behave?

(1.) How should the *wise* younger woman behave?

(2.) What characteristics/behavior of the older or younger woman impresses you the most and why?

c. What does I Corinthians 7:32-34 say about the *wise* single woman's way of living?

d. What does I Timothy 5:(9)10 reveal about the *wise* widow's behavior?

e. Among others, these verses define God's intention for the *conversation* (behavior) of a *wise woman*. Knowing this, why do we, even as Christians choose to behave contrarily?

6. Our *wisdom* is to be exhibited through *meekness*. *Meekness* is often thought of as weakness. However, *true meekness is strength or power under control*. *Meek* is the internal quality of the external virtue of gentleness, not harsh or abrasive; humble; not retaliatory; teachable. It is that temper of spirit in which we accept God's dealings with us as good, and therefore without disputing or resisting. From this explanation, define *meekness* in your own words.

a. Read Numbers 12:3, Matthew 11:29 and II Corinthians 10:1 and identify those described as *meek*. Selah

(1.) Think of a current example of someone powerful and strong who exhibits this virtue.

b. Find a verse that addresses the subject of *meekness* and share how it speaks to you about the importance of *meekness*.

*Meekness and majesty,
manhood and Diety, in perfect harmony,
The Man Who is God.*

-G.Kendrick

THIRD DAY: Read James 3:14-16

1. James 3:13 describes how godly *wisdom* is exhibited. Now in the next three verses, James takes those to task who claim to be *wise*, but their behavior reveals that their *wisdom* is from a source other than God. What can be in our hearts that would inspire ungodly *wisdom*? verse 14

- a. Using a dictionary or other Bible versions define:

bitter envying

strife

- (1.) How can harboring *bitter envying* and *strife* in our hearts result in a *wisdom that descendeth not from above*?

- (2.) According to the following scriptures what are we to do with feelings of *envy* and *strife* and what is the antidote for those feelings:

- (a.) Philippians 2:3

- (b.) I Peter 2:1,2

2. If *bitter envying* and *strife* are in our hearts, what two things are we not to do? James 3:14b

- a. *Envying* and *strife* can cause one to *glory* which is rendered in the Greek to *promote ourselves at the expense of others*. They can cause one to be self-deceived. Verify this by writing Romans 1:22.

- (1.) Those who harbor *bitter envy* and *strife* should *glory not and lie not against the truth*. Explain why they shouldn't.

- (a.) *Envy* and *strife* not only reveal us to be unwise but they are a reproach to our Christian witness. Why?

- (b.) How does *envy* and *strife* affect the unity of the body?

- (c.) In **meekness** how might you minister to someone who was entrapped in these feelings and attitudes?

3. *Wisdom* that is expressed through *bitter envying* and *strife* *descendeth not from above*. A good barometer to identify the kind of *wisdom* manifested would be to determine the source of it. What three types of *wisdom* does James identify in verse 15?

- a. Further your understanding of the three sources of *wisdom* that *descendeth not from above* by answering the following questions:

- (1.) *earthly* - worldly. The source and standards of this kind of *wisdom* are from the world and not God. Its teachers are self-centered and shallow. Read I Corinthians 1:20,21 and define in your own words *earthly* (worldly) *wisdom*.
- (2.) *sensual* - natural; unspiritual. This kind of *wisdom* is based on human feelings and human reasoning alone without seeking God as described in I Corinthians 2:14. What are the characteristics of the carnal or immature Christian according to I Corinthians 3:3?
- (3.) *devilish* - demonic. This kind of *wisdom* is inspired by evil forces, not by God, the Giver of *true wisdom*. From Genesis 3:1b what is one of the tactics of *devilish wisdom*?

4. What are the results of *earthly, sensual, devilish wisdom*? James 3:16 Selah.

- a. Who is *not* the author of confusion? I Corinthians 14:33
- b. What conclusion can you draw about a situation in which you perceive there is envy and strife?

5. What kind of *confusion* or frustration or disorder might be caused by jealousy and *selfish ambition* or rivalry among Christians?

- a. Share a time when *selfish ambition* has brought discord into your life.
- b. How would jealousy or envy affect the motive for your works?

- (1.) What kind of evil resulted from the envy of the religious men of Jesus' day? Mark 15:10

- c. Be alert. This can happen to any one of us. James 3:15 helps us recognize the source, but what safeguards do you use to prevent this from happening when *bitter envying* and *strife* begin to creep in?

FOURTH DAY: Read James 3:17

1. In James 3:17 the author describes a *wisdom* that is diametrically opposed to the *wisdom* defined in James 3:14-16. Where does this *wisdom* come from?
2. *Wisdom that is from above is first pure. First* indicates that this is a main characteristic and a key to the others, not just number one. Why do you think *pure* is listed first?

a. How does the contamination of *envy* and *strife* keep us from walking in godly *wisdom*?

3. List all eight traits of true *wisdom* and their opposites in the chart below:

True Wisdom	False Wisdom
1. pure	1. defiled
2.	2.
3.	3.
4.	4.
5.	5.
6.	6.
7.	7.
8.	8.

- a. Contemplate James 3:17 for a few moments. Examine your attitudes and behavior in the light of these aspects of *wisdom that is from above*. How will this verse be a guideline for you in determining whether or not you are walking in godly *wisdom*?

Challenge: Look up these eight facets of *wisdom* in the dictionary, then write your own definition of each. If you have time, find scriptures that deal with these qualities.

4. Read I Corinthians 13:4-7. How do these attributes of *love* compare to the virtues of *wisdom* described in James 3:17?
5. *Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things. Philippians 4:8* How will thinking on these things help us to walk in pure wisdom?

- a. Knowing the power of evil thoughts and the benefits of good thoughts, what are some ways that we can practically apply Philippians 4:8 to keep us walking in godly *wisdom*?

Knowledge is horizontal.
Wisdom is vertical -
it comes down from above.
-Billy Graham

FIFTH DAY: Read James 3:18

1. Compare the end result of true *wisdom* in James 3:18 to the end result of false *wisdom* in James 3:16.
2. *Peacemakers who sow in peace reap a harvest of righteousness.* James 3:18 NIV What happens when we sow in *peace* instead of anger, wrath, evil-speaking, envy, hatred, or other evil attitudes?
 - a. Who reaps this harvest?
 - b. What does James 1:20 say about this?
3. What did Jesus say about *peacemakers* in Matthew 5:9?
 - a. Who do you think will call them *children of God*?
4. Read Galatians 6:7-9. From the principle of verse 7 what kind of crop will you reap if you walk in ungodly *wisdom*?
 - a. What encouragement is offered for *well doing* in verse 9?

We choose the harvest when we plant the seed.
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5. What do the following verses say about *peace*:
 - a. Psalm 34:14b
 - b. Proverbs 12:20b

c. Colossians 3:15

d. Add your own scripture

6. According to Proverbs 3:17 what are all the ways and paths of *wisdom*? (*her* refers to *wisdom*)

SIXTH DAY: Review James 3:13-18

1. How would you describe the behavior of a truly *wise* woman?

2. Describe in your own words *wisdom that is not from above*.

3. Read the description of *wisdom* in Proverbs 8:8-14 and list some things about *wisdom* that you discovered.

a. Who does this seem to describe? See I Corinthians 1:30

4. How does ungodly *wisdom* provoke us to jealousy or self-seeking or rivalry?

a. What *earthly* (worldly) *wisdom* goes through our minds that causes these reactions?

5. Share an example of when you experienced the application of true, godly *wisdom* in a situation that could have been explosive.

a. What was the result?

6. We are only as *wise* as we are obedient. One of the greatest needs of Christians today is godly *wisdom*. Without it we will not have right attitudes or the judgment or discretion we need to make the right decisions or choices. Without it we will experience *confusion* rather than *peace*. We will become victims of the world's *wisdom* without even recognizing it. As you have walked in godly *wisdom* this week, what results did you observe in your attitudes, actions, choices and decisions?

*Through skillful and godly Wisdom is a house (a life, a home, a family) built,
and by understanding it is established (on a sound and good foundation).*

-Proverbs 24:3 Amp