

“Wisdom!”

I. **INTRO:**

A. If you did a cross section of Solomon’s life it would reveal he was: *an author, poet, songwriter, artist, king, diplomat, theologian, teacher, zoologist, psychologist, philosopher, financier, engineer, & architect.*

1. How could Solomon’s success grow to such unparalleled heights?
 - a) **Read 1 Chron.1:6-10**
 - b) Solomon asked for 2 things: **wisdom & knowledge.**
 - (1) Not the *theoretical* kind of knowledge that could grasp *abstract matters*, but the ability to apply divine truth to **daily life!**
 - (2) **Although Solomon was an intelligent well-educated king, he recognized that he lacked the wisdom which only God could provide.** (11,12)
2. A 1000 years later **James** is writing on this same subject. He counseled his listeners, follow Solomon’s lead...**Ask for it!** (1:5)

B. Remember from vs.1 there are 2 basic tools all “**teachers**” use to communicate...their **tongue & their lives!**

1. **Last week** we dealt with the tongue **see Slides #2-5.**
2. **This week** we deal with **Wisdom Slide #6.**
 - a) **Wisdom in the life of the teacher: not human but divine** wisdom.

II. **WISDOM!**

A. As is true of all valuable possessions, wisdom has its *counterfeits*.

1. **Genuine** vs.13; **Counterfeit** vs.14a

B. **GENUINE - DIVINE WISDOM!** (13)

C. **2 specific tests** to see if someone is wise:

1. **Good Conduct/Behavior - to return or turn back.** (root idea to change, return to the truth)
 - a) A wise person is someone whose life is **changing** in accordance with the truth of God’s word.
2. **Works done in meekness/Gentle deeds - Gentleness, not like some see that word today** (i.e. jellyfish, spineless, spiritless).
 - a) In James day it meant “**bringing a high-spirited horse under control. The spirit & strength of the horse weren’t lost, simply harnessed.**”

- b) Gentleness also referred to a **brilliant teacher** who could debate others w/o getting angry. It also referred to a **soothing medicine** that brought comfort to a painful wound.
3. Wisdom so far then **doesn't** mean a high I.Q.; **or** your ability to pack away facts; **or** your impressive eloquence.
- a) **The test of wisdom is a life** that is patterned after the truth & is under control!¹
- D. The story often goes w/new believers...that they immediately try to *set the world straight*.
1. Often 1st stop is home - where they declare *spiritual martial law* & **billy-club** family members w/Bible verses whenever they step out of line.
 2. Then they wonder why they are standing in line to *get saved* like you!
 - a) **What's lacking? Wisdom** (i.e. A balance of **gentleness** & **control** that Paul described to Timothy, **and a servant of the Lord must not quarrel but be gentle to all, able to teach, patient, in humility correcting those who are in opposition**)
- E. **COUNTERFEIT - HUMAN WISDOM!** (14a)
- F. **2 specific tests** to see if someone is **unwise**: **bitter envy** & **self-seeking**/selfish ambition.
- G. **Note**: **In your heart** - 2 motives *deeply embedded* in the unwise heart.
1. **Envy** - most confuse w/jealousy.
 - a) **Envy** begins w/**empty** hands & mourns for what it does not have; **Jealousy** begins w/**full** hands but is threatened by the thought of losing what it possesses.
 - b) So James is saying an unwise person is one who tends to be *suspicious, resistant, & given to rivalry*.
 2. **Self-seeking**(selfish ambition) - is the desire to be seen, quoted, & respected.
- H. **CHARACTERISTICS OF FALSE WISDOM!** (14b-15)
1. So if these things are deep inside your heart, root em out, don't just act like they're not.
 1. **Boast/arrogant** - The 1st ugly face of false wisdom is *arrogance*.
 - a) Rationalizing or even boasting that the end justifies the means; or the bad done wasn't that bad; or everybody's doin it!
 2. **Lie against the truth** - **How do we as Christians justify our arrogance?** By lying against the truth, or dodging it, or trying to ignore it.
 - a) The result self-deception! **It's like** if you built something, & your measurements were off. But instead of **admitting the mistake**, you design a **new ruler** to fit the inaccurate measurements. Then the whole thing ends up a crooked disaster.

¹ Charles Swindoll; James.

3. **Earthly** - false wisdom has an **earthly origin**.
 - a) It views everything from a strictly horizontal perspective: *earthly success, earthly standards, earthly motives, earthly attitudes, earthly methods, earthly everything!*
4. **Sensual/natural** - “soulless, fleshly, not related to the Spirit of God”.
 - a) A wisdom whose vision is limited to things *temporal*, not eternal.
5. **Demonic** - the mindset is characteristic of demons.
 - a) Demons are *brilliant* by the way. They know a great deal, even about God! But there is *no change, no obedience, & no yielding of self* to God.
 - b) That's how it is demonic - *& yours is the same if it fits in this category.*

J. **RESULTS OF FALSE WISDOM!** (16)

- K. Here the **roots** of false wisdom (already mentioned in vs.14) leads to the **fruit** here.
1. **Confusion/disorder** - So not just *confusion* but “disorder, disharmony, antagonism, the absence of unity & stability.”
 2. **Every evil thing** - when human wisdom is taught it **lifts the lid** on all sorts of worthless, petty, evil things.
 - a) *Like Pandora's Box* the human heart is home to a haunting array of sinful thoughts.
 - (1) Pandora was according to Greek mythology the 1st woman on earth. She was given a jar/box that she was ordered **not to open** under any circumstances. Despite this warning, overcome by curiosity Pandora *opened the jar*. Upon doing so, the **evils** contained within escaped into the world. Scared, Pandora immediately closed the jar, only to trap **Hope** inside, as was Zeus' will.
- L. **Inventory:** What are the fruits of your life? Do people see **good behavior & gentleness**, or **disorder & every evil thing**?
- M. After reading about Solomon's request & how God reacted to what he chose...**What do you think is God's main purpose for you?** (touching others? generosity?)
1. Remember He gives wisdom to all who ask & He gives it liberally!

N. **Intro to next section:**

1. **Explain:** Driving through the Negev, or the “wilderness” in Jordan. Dry, parched, arid, nothing but sand; then all of a sudden a little town **all green**. **How?** A commodity very **unnatural** to the desert had to be piped in...**water!**
2. For divine wisdom to take root in our lives something very **unnatural** to our hearts must be piped in by faith...the living water of the H.S.
 - a) Under the Holy Spirit's *supervision*, our lives can **blossom** w/a divine wisdom we could never produce on our own.

O. **CHARACTERISTICS OF DIVINE WISDOM!** (17)

P. When the **seeds** of **good conduct & works done in meekness**(13) are **sown** they produce a unnatural, even supernatural **bumper crop**.

Q. Check out at least **7 fruits** of divine wisdom on display: [Fruit Inspection time]

1. **Pure** - **First pure** (not just 1st in a list **but** 1st in **importance!**)

a) The primary fruit of divine wisdom is **purity**.

b) Which means *freedom from defilement, w/o contamination, clean*.

c) Not only **moral** cleanliness, **but** also purity of **motive**.

d) Jesus said, **Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God!**

(1) He meant, the pure in heart will **so intimately know God** that they will **see Him** come to their rescue when tempted or **see Him** come alongside as their closet friend when facing trials.

(2) **Purity then clears our vision to see him at work in everything we do!!!**

2. **Peaceable** - when wisdom from above fill sour hearts a peaceable nature blossoms, one that helps heal relationships rather than tear them apart.

a) Some will say, *I'm not by nature a calm & peaceable person! That's the point! None of us are by nature*. We are like that desert. But when God's wisdom rains gently upon that desert, a peaceable attitude springs to life!!!

3. **Gentle** - Tolerant would be a good word here.

a) **Slide 7:** William Barclay explained it, "The man who is *epieikes* is the man who knows when it is actually **wrong** to apply the strict letter of the law. He knows how to **forgive** when strict justice gives him a perfect right to condemn. He knows how to **make allowances**, when not to stand upon his rights, how to **temper injustice** with mercy, always **remembers** that there are greater things in the world than rules and regulations."

4. **Willing to yield/reasonable** - speaks to those who are under someone else's authority

a) **So Gentle & willing to yield go together like 2 puzzle pieces:** **Gentle** = for those in places of authority over others; **willing to yield** = for those under authority.

b) **It is someone who is open, conciliatory, easy to work with.**

c) **Abraham showed this with Lot** - Abraham took the initiative to create a compromise: *"the land can't sustain us both, you choose, I'll take the other."*

(1) **Now that's reasonable/willing to yield.**

d) **Does this describe you? Can you give a serious thought to an opinion that differs from yours w/o feeling threatened or getting angry?**

5. **Full of mercy & good fruits** - wisdom from above helps us show *mercy* which is a compassionate attitude & *good fruits* which are actions that naturally flow from mercy.
 - a) **Often Mercy** was used to be shown toward someone who had *suffered unjustly*; **in NT** often used to describe an attitude towards those who *suffer due to problems they have caused themselves*. (so even if you think someone who is homeless, or in prison, or down & out brought this on themselves...**so what!**)
 - b) Barclay, **We can never say that we have truly pitied anyone until we have helped him.**
6. **W/o Partiality/Unwavering** - a person of fixed principles.
 - a) They adhere to the principles in **God's Word** regardless of the circumstances.
 - b) Others might say, "**When in Rome, do as the Romans.**" **But** we live under the precept, "**When in Rome, do as the believer should do.**"
7. **W/o hypocrisy** - from the Greek theaters, those who played multiple roles by just switching masks for each character.
 - a) **Today** we use it, anyone who *wears masks*, who is a *pretender*, a *poser*.
 - b) True wisdom is not 2-faced.

R. We are finished w/our **fruit inspection**. We move to the **results**.

S. **RESULTS OF DIVINE WISDOM!** (18)

T. In James *peace* means *being rightly related to one another* (not *vertical* peace w/God; **but horizontal** peace between human beings)

1. Disturb this peace & you will not enjoy a righteous lifestyle before God.

U. As God brings life to the desert, so He can cultivate a garden of divine wisdom I us through the living water of His Holy Spirit.

1. *Francis Assisi* gave us this prayer maybe you grew up with: **Lord, make me an instrument of your peace; where there is hatred, let me sow love; where there is injury, pardon: where there is doubt, faith; where there is despair, hope where there is darkness, light where there is sadness, joy. O divine Master, grant that I may not so much seek to be consoled as to console; to be understood, as to understand; to be loved, as to love; for it is in giving that we receive, it is in pardoning that we are pardoned, and it is in dying that we are born to Eternal Life.**