

***TO LIVE IS CHRIST*****True Wisdom****James 3:13–18**

*“But the wisdom that comes from above is first of all pure....”* James 3:17

**Day 1: Read James 3:13.**

1. Since wisdom—like air or thoughts—cannot be observed with the naked eye, what are the manifestations of it that verify its presence? (vs. 13)
2. According to Scripture, does wisdom always go hand in hand with a good life, or is it possible to have a wise mind and a morally shameful lifestyle? (vs. 13b)
3. When you think of the “good life,” what comes to your mind? How does that differ from the biblical view?

**Day 2: Read James 3:13–14.**

4. James says humility comes from wisdom (vs. 13b). Why do you think this is so?
5. Why is true wisdom incompatible with humility’s opposite—pride? (Consider 1 Pet. 1:24.) What does the truly wise woman understand about herself? (Rom. 12:3–6a)
6. It would seem odd that people “boast” of a sin as shameful as “harbor(ing) envy and selfish ambition” (vs. 14), but what do we learn from the following verses about human speech and posturing where wisdom is absent? (Prov. 1:10–18; Rom. 1:28–32; Phil. 3:18–19; 2 Pet. 2:17–19)

**Day 3: Read James 3:14–17.**

7. Verse 15 informs us that earthly wisdom is worse than just slightly inferior. Find the phrase in this verse that tells where this kind of wisdom really comes from.

8. What does “earthly” or “the devil’s” wisdom lead to in the end? (vs. 16)

**Day 4: Read James 3:17–18.**

9. List from verse 17 the hallmarks of true wisdom.

10. James says that the wisdom from above is “first of all pure.” Perhaps that speaks to the question of motives. What would a “pure” motive look like? (You may consult all dictionary definitions of “pure.”)

11. Regarding purity, how is the ministry of a godly evangelist like Paul (2 Cor. 4:1–2; 10:11) different from the ministry of an ungodly one (Phil. 1:15–17)?

12. The second attribute of heavenly wisdom in the list is “peace-loving.” If you are presently trying to decide a course of action in a difficult situation in your life, how would this desire for peace influence the course you take? (Gal. 6:1; 1 Tim. 2:24–26)

13. Third on the list of wisdom’s qualities is “considerate.” What does true wisdom, then, always take into account besides the sterile “facts” of a case?

**Day 5: Read James 3:17–18.**

14. Next, true wisdom is “submissive.” How does that strike you? Does submitting to another person (even if you are right!) sound like wisdom to you?

15. Finally, true wisdom is “full of mercy and good fruit, impartial, and sincere.” All the descriptions of wisdom in verse 17 conceive of wisdom as not a mere mental exercise but a concern for other people’s welfare. Think of a particular problem you’re having with some person in your life. Write down the problem and all the attributes of wisdom in verse 17 and see if you can make a start on a direction for handling it in a wise way.

16. What is the fruit of the life of a wise peacemaker? (vs. 18) Share a time when you exercised wisdom and a desire for peace and the outcome was blessed.