

Who is wise and understanding among you? Let him show it by his good life, by deeds done in the humility that comes from wisdom. But if you harbor bitter envy and selfish ambition in your hearts, do not boast about it or deny the truth. Such "wisdom" does not come down from heaven but is earthly, unspiritual, of the devil. For where you have envy and selfish ambition, there you find disorder and every evil practice. But the wisdom that comes from heaven is first of all pure; then peace-loving, considerate, submissive, full of mercy and good fruit, impartial and sincere. Peacemakers who sow in peace raise a harvest of righteousness.
James 3:13-18 (NIV)

Demonstrating Wisdom

What does wisdom look like? How will you know if you are thinking and speaking and acting wisely? How will you gauge if you are truly wise? When can you be very sure that wisdom is lacking? What will be the result and end product of your life if you are living wisely? Those are all good questions. **Go ahead and answer them.** I will start by describing what wisdom is not. **That is a good place to start.** Wisdom does not harbor bitter envy. Wisdom is not fueled by selfish ambition. Wisdom is not boastful, nor will it deny what is true. Anything that looks or sounds or acts like this is not heavenly wisdom, it is worldly wisdom, that is unspiritual and comes from the devil. Out of this kind of evil springs disorder, discord, disunity, and a host of evil practices. I want none of this so-called wisdom in my life. **That's good.**

You have said enough about what is not. Describe what heavenly wisdom looks like. Heavenly wisdom is demonstrated by actions. It is not a lot of talk. A wise person's life demonstrates wisdom by humbly doing good deeds. They live a life for others. They love like you loved. They give like you gave. They serve like you served. Heavenly wisdom loves peace. It is considerate and submissive. Heavenly wisdom is filled with mercy. It is impartial and sincere. If I am truly wise, I will be known as a peacemaker. If I am truly wise, my life will bear an abundance of fruit for your kingdom. If I am truly wise, I will raise a rich harvest that will bring glory to your name. **Yes, you will. Do you want to live a life filled with heavenly wisdom?** Yes, I do. That is the desire of my heart. That is how I will think and speak and act. **That will be very good.**

Lord, I know that I have often thought, or spoke, or acted unwisely. Forgive me. Help me to live a life of humbly doing good deeds for others. Develop in me all the character qualities that are part of being truly wise. For your glory, bear good fruit through my life. Amen

The Virtuous Life

Deeds Done In Humility

Who is wise and understanding among you? Let him show it by his good life, by deeds done in the humility that comes from wisdom. But if you harbor bitter envy and selfish ambition in your hearts, do not boast about it or deny the truth. Such "wisdom" does not come down from heaven but is earthly, unspiritual, of the devil. For where you have envy and selfish ambition, there you find disorder and every evil practice. But the wisdom that comes from heaven is first of all pure; then peace-loving, considerate, submissive, full of mercy and good fruit, impartial and sincere. Peacemakers who sow in peace raise a harvest of righteousness.

NIV

James 3:13-18

The Virtuous Life

Good Works With The Humility

If you are wise and understand God's ways, prove it by living an honorable life, doing good works with the humility that comes from wisdom. But if you are bitterly jealous and there is selfish ambition in your heart, don't cover up the truth with boasting and lying. For jealousy and selfishness are not God's kind of wisdom. Such things are earthly, unspiritual, and demonic. For wherever there is jealousy and selfish ambition, there you will find disorder and evil of every kind. But the wisdom from above is first of all pure. It is also peace loving, gentle at all times, and willing to yield to others. It is full of mercy and good deeds. It shows no favoritism and is always sincere. And those who are peacemakers will plant seeds of peace and reap a harvest of righteousness.

NLT

James 3:13-18

The Virtuous Life

Works Are Done With Gentleness

Who is wise and understanding among you? Show by your good life that your works are done with gentleness born of wisdom. But if you have bitter envy and selfish ambition in your hearts, do not be boastful and false to the truth. Such wisdom does not come down from above, but is earthly, unspiritual, devilish. For where there is envy and selfish ambition, there will also be disorder and wickedness of every kind. But the wisdom from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, willing to yield, full of mercy and good fruits, without a trace of partiality or hypocrisy. And a harvest of righteousness is sown in peace for those who make peace.

NRSV

James 3:13-18

The Virtuous Life

Works With The Humility

Who is there among you who is wise and intelligent? Then let him by his noble living show forth his [good] works with the [unobtrusive] humility [which is the proper attribute] of true wisdom. But if you have bitter jealousy (envy) and contention (rivalry, selfish ambition) in your hearts, do not pride yourselves on it and thus be in defiance of and false to the Truth. This [superficial] wisdom is not such as comes down from above, but is earthly, unspiritual (animal), even devilish (demoniacal). For wherever there is jealousy (envy) and contention (rivalry and selfish ambition), there will also be confusion (unrest, disharmony, rebellion) and all sorts of evil and vile practices. But the wisdom from above is first of all pure (undefiled); then it is peace-loving, courteous (considerate, gentle), [It is willing to] yield to reason, full of compassion and good fruits; it is wholehearted and straightforward, impartial and unfeigned (free from doubts, wavering, and insincerity). And the harvest of righteousness (of conformity to God's will in thought and deed) is [the fruit of the seed] sown in peace by those who work for and make peace [in themselves and in others, that peace which means concord, agreement, and harmony between individuals, with undisturbedness, in a peaceful mind free from fears and agitating passions and moral conflicts].

AMP

James 3:13-18

The Virtuous Life

Deeds In The Gentleness

Who among you is wise and understanding? Let him show by his good behavior his deeds in the gentleness of wisdom. But if you have bitter jealousy and selfish ambition in your heart, do not be arrogant and so lie against the truth. This wisdom is not that which comes down from above, but is earthly, natural, demonic. For where jealousy and selfish ambition exist, there is disorder and every evil thing. But the wisdom from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, reasonable, full of mercy and good fruits, unwavering, without hypocrisy. And the seed whose fruit is righteousness is sown in peace by those who make peace.

NASB

James 3:13-18

The Virtuous Life

Works In The Meekness

Who is wise and understanding among you? By his good conduct let him show his works in the meekness of wisdom. But if you have bitter jealousy and selfish ambition in your hearts, do not boast and be false to the truth. This is not the wisdom that comes down from above, but is earthly, unspiritual, demonic. For where jealousy and selfish ambition exist, there will be disorder and every vile practice. But the wisdom from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, open to reason, full of mercy and good fruits, impartial and sincere. And a harvest of righteousness is sown in peace by those who make peace.

ESV

James 3:13-18

The Virtuous Life

Works Are Done In Meekness

Who is wise and understanding among you? Let him show by good conduct that his works are done in the meekness of wisdom. But if you have bitter envy and self-seeking in your hearts, do not boast and lie against the truth. This wisdom does not descend from above, but is earthly, sensual, demonic. For where envy and self-seeking exist, confusion and every evil thing are there. But the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, willing to yield, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality and without hypocrisy. Now the fruit of righteousness is sown in peace by those who make peace.

NKJV

James 3:13-18

The Virtuous Life

Live Wisely, Live Humbly

Do you want to be counted wise, to build a reputation for wisdom? Here's what you do: Live well, live wisely, live humbly. It's the way you live, not the way you talk, that counts. Mean-spirited ambition isn't wisdom. Boasting that you are wise isn't wisdom. Twisting the truth to make yourselves sound wise isn't wisdom. It's the furthest thing from wisdom—it's animal cunning, devilish conniving. Whenever you're trying to look better than others or get the better of others, things fall apart and everyone ends up at the others' throats. Real wisdom, God's wisdom, begins with a holy life and is characterized by getting along with others. It is gentle and reasonable, overflowing with mercy and blessings, not hot one day and cold the next, not two-faced. You can develop a healthy, robust community that lives right with God and enjoy its results *only* if you do the hard work of getting along with each other, treating each other with dignity and honor.

MSG

James 3:13-18

The Virtuous Life

Good Deeds Will Pour Forth

If you are wise, live a life of steady goodness so that only good deeds will pour forth. And if you don't brag about them, then you will be truly wise! And by all means don't brag about being wise and good if you are bitter and jealous and selfish; that is the worst sort of lie. For jealousy and selfishness are not God's kind of wisdom. Such things are earthly, unspiritual, inspired by the devil. For wherever there is jealousy or selfish ambition, there will be disorder and every other kind of evil. But the wisdom that comes from heaven is first of all pure and full of quiet gentleness. Then it is peace-loving and courteous. It allows discussion and is willing to yield to others; it is full of mercy and good deeds. It is wholehearted and straightforward and sincere. And those who are peacemakers will plant seeds of peace and reap a harvest of goodness.

TLB

James 3:13-18

The Virtuous Life

Doing Good Things With A Gentleness

Are there those among you who are truly wise and understanding? Then they should show it by living right and doing good things with a gentleness that comes from wisdom. But if you are selfish and have bitter jealousy in your hearts, do not brag. Your bragging is a lie that hides the truth. That kind of "wisdom" does not come from God but from the world. It is not spiritual; it is from the devil. Where jealousy and selfishness are, there will be confusion and every kind of evil. But the wisdom that comes from God is first of all pure, then peaceful, gentle, and easy to please. This wisdom is always ready to help those who are troubled and to do good for others. It is always fair and honest. People who work for peace in a peaceful way plant a good crop of right-living.

NCV

James 3:13-18

Deeds Done In Humility

Year _____ Week _____ Day _____ Date _____

The Virtuous Life – James 3:13-18

In Context: *Read James 3*

Begin With Prayer:

Here I am Lord. I Am Listening.

Meditating On God's Word: ***(What is God speaking to your heart?)***

Who is wise and understanding among you? Let him show it by his good life, by deeds done in the humility that comes from wisdom. But if you harbor bitter envy and selfish ambition in your hearts, do not boast about it or deny the truth. Such "wisdom" does not come down from heaven but is earthly, unspiritual, of the devil. For where you have envy and selfish ambition, there you find disorder and every evil practice. But the wisdom that comes from heaven is first of all pure; then peace-loving, considerate, submissive, full of mercy and good fruit, impartial and sincere. Peacemakers who sow in peace raise a harvest of righteousness. James 3:13-18 (NIV)

Considering The Words: ***(What words speak to your heart?)***

Who is wise and understanding among you? | Let him show it by his good life, | by deeds done in the humility | that comes from wisdom. | But if you harbor bitter envy | and selfish ambition | in your hearts, | do not boast about it | or deny the truth. | Such "wisdom" | does not come down from heaven | but is earthly, | unspiritual, of the devil. | For where you have envy | and selfish ambition, | there you find disorder | and every evil practice. | But the wisdom | that comes from heaven | is first of all pure; | then peace-loving, | considerate, submissive, | full of mercy and good fruit, | impartial and sincere. | Peacemakers who sow in peace | raise a harvest | of righteousness. James 3:13-18 (NIV)

Praying The Scripture: ***(What prayer from your heart will you write?)***

Lord, I know that I have often thought, or spoke, or acted unwisely. Forgive me. Help me to live a life of humbly doing good deeds for others. Develop in me all the character qualities that are part of being truly wise. For your glory, bear good fruit through my life. Amen

What It Means: ***(What questions speak to your heart?)*** *(Suggested questions for small group discussion are in bold)*

When have you found yourself thinking and speaking and acting unwisely?

How are heavenly wisdom and worldly wisdom quite different from each other?

Why is wisdom better demonstrated by what you do rather than by what you say?

What character qualities are essential elements of living a life filled with wisdom?

How is getting along with others a good gauge of the level of wisdom in your life?

Why does getting along well with others often require a lot of hard work?

How is your life demonstrating wisdom by humbly doing good deeds for others?

Living It Out: ***(What action step is God guiding your heart to take?)***

Demonstrate wisdom by humbly doing good deeds for others.

Seeing It Happen: ***(What are you trusting God for in your heart?)***

Have faith that the Lord will help you to demonstrate wisdom by humbly doing good deeds for others.

Get Ready To Share: ***(What can you share with others from your heart?)***

Share with another person or your small group how you are humbly doing good deeds for others.

Close With Prayer:

Quiet Yourself Before The Lord

Pause And Offer Prayers Of...

With An Attitude Of Faith Listen To What The Lord Wants To Say To You

Adoration... _____

Thanksgiving... _____

Confession... _____

Intercession... _____

Petition... _____

Journal

As You Quiet Yourself Before The Lord

What Do You Want To Say To Me Lord?

What Prayers Are You Praying Today?

Prayer Of Blessing

(What Prayer Of Blessing Can You Pray For Another?)

May your life demonstrate wisdom by humbly doing good deeds for others.

Prayer To Carry

(What Prayer Would You Like To Carry Throughout Your Day?)

Lord, help me to demonstrate wisdom by doing good deeds for others.

What Do You Want To Remember About Today?

A Question To Ask God

(What Would You Like To Ask God?)

Lord, what good deeds will you help me to humbly do for others today?
