

Lesson 6
GET GODLY WISDOM

“Who is wise and understanding among you?” (James 3:13)

Three things work together to pull us away from God and His service: the world, the flesh, and the Devil. So many people are following the wisdom of this world. Listen to their advice—“Eat, drink, and be merry, for tomorrow we die.” “Just do it.” “Enjoy yourself, it’s later than you think.” “Get while the getting is good.”

That’s not wisdom. That’s foolishness. The wisdom of the world appeals to the sensual part of man’s nature, and it’s devilish. Wordly wisdom is self-seeking and it boasts and lies against the truth of God.

Read James 3:13-18: God's Wisdom Versus Worldly Wisdom

God will give His people wisdom—godly wisdom. But in order to receive wisdom, you must choose God's way and not the world's ways. Having godly wisdom is essential when we are faced with trials and temptations.

1. How does one receive wisdom? (verse 13)

Wisdom takes meekness, which means accepting God’s dealings with us as good; and therefore, without disputing or resisting, wholly relying on God rather than on our own strength. Meekness is the opposite of self-assertiveness and self-interest. It stems from trust in God's goodness and control over the situation. The meek person is not occupied with self at all. Meekness is a work of the Holy Spirit, not of the human will.

In James 3:14-16, James lists the worldly characteristics of wisdom. Worldly wisdom is envious and self-seeking. “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” (James 3:14-15).

2. What do envy and self-seeking lead to? (verse 16)

The wisdom of the world will ultimately lead to confusion. It leads a person to be envious of what others have, causing them to feel bitter and empty, and pressures them to do evil. James 4:1 reminds us that wars and fights come from a selfish desire for pleasure.

One Step to Freedom
Chapter 4: Obedience to God's Word

3. Define the words "earthly" and "sensual."
4. Write out 1 Corinthians 3:3.

First Corinthians 3:3 uses the word "carnal." When we are carnal, we are controlled by our own desires. Mature believers are in tune with God's desires, and that should be our goal. Being controlled by our own desires will stunt our growth.

5. Write out 1 Corinthians 2:14.

James 3:17-18 contrasts the world's wisdom with God's wisdom. Godly wisdom leads to a life of purity, holiness and peace. The wisdom of the world leads to strife and wars and a life of sensuality and living after the lust of your flesh.

6. What are the attributes of godly wisdom and its end result? (vs. 17-18)
7. How does Jesus say we can get this godly wisdom? How will it help us in times of trials and temptations? See Matthew 7:24-25.
8. What does Jesus say about the person who does not listen and do His Word? See Matthew 7:26-28.

God wants us to live a life of peace, not be at war with Him. Before coming to Jesus, we were all enemies of God because we lived selfishly instead of obeying God's Word. We were controlled by the desires of our flesh. We were at war with God, and that put us at war with everybody else. But the wisdom that comes from God will bring peace—peace with God and peace with others.

When we know God's Word and do it, Jesus promises that when trials and temptations come, we will not fall. He will give us godly wisdom to help us through the storm.