

## **Sermon-20241020-James-Chapter-3-Heavenly-Wisdom**

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# A Brief Summary of James Chapter 3\*

## Taming the Tongue: Wisdom and Meekness in Action

James 3 provides an invaluable lesson on the power of the tongue and the significance of divine wisdom. It calls for introspection on how we use our words and challenges us to live a life that reflects true wisdom from above. It reaffirms that a peaceful, humble life, lived in sincere wisdom, yields righteousness. Our words and actions must align to reflect the divine wisdom that can only come from God.

### Section: The Power and Danger of the Tongue (James 3:1-6)

James begins by warning his readers that not many should become teachers because they will be judged more strictly. He admits that everyone stumbles in many ways, and those who can control their tongue can control their whole body. Likening the tongue to a small bit that controls a horse or a small rudder that steers a ship, James emphasizes its power. He also compares the tongue to a fire that can corrupt and set the whole course of one's life aflame.

### Section: The Challenge of Taming the Tongue (James 3:7-12)

The author continues by stating the human inability to tame the tongue. He mentions how humans can tame all kinds of animals but fail to control the tongue, which is full of deadly poison. He laments the inconsistency of using the tongue for both blessing God and cursing people who are made in God's likeness.

### Section: True Wisdom and Understanding (James 3:13-18)

James then moves on to discuss true wisdom and understanding, challenging his readers to show their wisdom by their good life and deeds done in humility. He contrasts the earthly wisdom, which is unspiritual and demonic, with the wisdom from above, characterized by being pure, peace-loving, considerate, submissive, full of mercy, impartial, and sincere. He ends by stating that peacemakers who sow in peace reap a harvest of righteousness.

James 3, a vital part of the New Testament, provides profound teachings about the power of the tongue and the importance of divine wisdom. In his unique style, James addresses Christian believers and specifically teachers, highlighting the immense responsibility they carry due to the influence of their words. He further delves into the difference between heavenly and earthly wisdom, emphasizing how the former leads to peace and righteousness.

## Worldly vs. Godly Wisdom (James 3:13-18)

In James 3:13-18, we are confronted with two kinds of wisdom—worldly and godly—and the stark differences between them. Worldly wisdom is self-centered, filled with envy, ambition, and disorder. It seeks personal gain, often at the expense of others, and leads to chaos and division. This wisdom is rooted in selfish desires, drawing us away from the humility and peace that God calls us to embody.

In contrast, godly wisdom is pure, peace-loving, considerate, and full of mercy. It reflects the very heart of God, calling us to live lives that build others up, rather than tear them down. Godly wisdom leads to harmony, fairness, and integrity. It's not about seeking our own advancement but about serving others, showing compassion, and pursuing justice.

James challenges us to examine our lives. Are we driven by the values of the world—pursuing success, recognition, or power at all costs? Or do we seek the wisdom from above, which leads us to love, peace, and righteousness? True wisdom is shown by how we live, not just what we know. Let us pray for the humility to embrace godly wisdom, and to reflect Christ in everything we do.

## Some Examples of Worldly vs. Godly Wisdom

### 1. Corporate Greed vs. Ethical Leadership:

Worldly wisdom often encourages profit at any cost, leading to unethical practices. In contrast, godly wisdom values fairness and care for employees. Patagonia demonstrates godly wisdom by prioritizing environmental care and fair labor practices over profit maximization.

[Read more here](<https://www.patagonia.com/our-footprint/>).

### 2. Social Media Conflict vs. Peacemaking:

On platforms like Twitter, many are drawn into heated debates, fueled by pride and a desire to be right. Godly wisdom encourages peaceable communication, even in disagreements. The Institute for Digital Civic Culture promotes respectful online dialogue and conflict resolution.

[Read more here](<https://www.idcc.org/>).

### 3. Political Power vs. Servant Leadership:

Worldly wisdom might drive leaders to pursue power through manipulation. Godly wisdom, however, is shown through servant leadership. Nelson Mandela exemplified this by prioritizing reconciliation and healing in post-apartheid South Africa.

[Read more here](<https://www.nelsonmandela.org/>).

## ***James 3:13-18 – Heavenly Wisdom***

### 4. Materialism vs. Generosity:

Worldly wisdom pushes people to accumulate wealth, but godly wisdom teaches generosity. Charity: Water is a great example of encouraging people to give generously to provide clean water globally.

[Read more here](<https://www.charitywater.org>).

### 5. Revenge vs. Forgiveness:

While the world often promotes revenge, godly wisdom calls for forgiveness. The story of Corrie ten Boom, a Holocaust survivor who forgave her captors, demonstrates the transformative power of godly forgiveness.

[Read more here](<https://www.guideposts.org/inspiration/inspiring-stories/stories-of-hope/the-incredible-story-of-corrie-ten-boom>).

These examples highlight the conflict between worldly and godly wisdom and show how godly wisdom leads to resolutions that align with justice, compassion, and peace.

## Sources

\*[source] Summary of James 3. <https://biblehub.com/chaptersummaries/james/3.htm>

Other sources noted in text, including URLs