

B. James doesn't merely want us to recognize this wisdom, he wants us to pursue it (18).

3:18 *and the fruit of righteousness is sown peacefully for those who make peace.*

i. A “tell” for those who have **authentic spiritual wisdom**.

➤ Ephesians 4:2-4

ii. This fruit is not produced by man's anger (1:19-20) which is quick to speak and quick to wrath.

LIVE THE STORY

The Gospel is intended to be learned and lived in community. The following questions are designed for use in our Community Groups as an aid to growth in the Gospel and Community.

- What are figs, olives and grapes? Why do you think James introduces this topic of fruit just before asking, “Who is wise and understanding among you?” (James 3:13-14)
- What kind of fruit does the scripture call us to bear as believers? Why is it important to bear this fruit?
- How do the fruits of either authentic wisdom or its counterfeit help us discern who is wise and understanding among us? Why is it essential that we all discern our own motivations?
- Why do you think it can be difficult to discern the difference between authentic spiritual wisdom and a counterfeit? (Support your answer with Scripture if possible.)
- Do you think it is significant that James began his list which describes the Wisdom from heaven with “first of all pure...”? Explain.
- How high a priority do you think unity among God's people is in today's Christian culture? Explain why you think this. Does this differ from the perspective we see in scripture?
- Looking at the description given to the wisdom from above in James 3:17, how are you doing in each of these? Where can you grow?
- How might the James 3:17 kind of wisdom transform family relationships in your home?

Faith that Turns Your World Right Side Up (Part 10)

The Fruit that True Wisdom Bears

Jerry Cisar — July 17, 2016

Text: James 3:12-18

I. Wisdom Bears Fruit (3:12-13)

A. *Can a fig tree bear olives, or a grapevine bear figs?*

i. What are *figs, olives, and grapes*?

ii. v18 The fruit we must bear.

B. *Who is wise and understanding among you?*

i. James is teaching us how to recognize a tree by its fruit.

ii. James is still talking about spiritual maturity.

a) *“Wise and understanding”* (Deuteronomy 1:13, 15)

b) Deuteronomy 4:6

C. *Authentic faith* is shown by deeds of mercy. *Authentic wisdom* is shown by deeds done in the humility that comes from wisdom.

i. Matthew 7:15-20

ii. The truly wise “must show it” by good conduct worked in humility.

II. Discerning Counterfeit Wisdom (3:14-16)

A. James speaks clearly into the church today.

i. Act 20:29-30

ii. Bitter envy (see 3:11)

- a) These ambitious of leaders are quite prone to boasting about what they have done.
- b) Their supposed wisdom, whatever else it is, it is not from above. It is...
 - earthly—not divine; not from above; not heavenly
 - *unspiritual*, or *natural*—it comes from human nature, not the Holy Spirit
 - Not from the Father, but from demons!

B. Bitter envy and selfish-ambition bear some fruit too.

- i. **disorder**: chaos, instability, anarchy!
 - a) 1:8 *unstable in all his ways*
 - b) 3:8 the tongue is a restless evil

ii. **every evil practice**

C. “But if you...”

- i. We must not only be wary of these character traits in would be teachers, we must discern them in ourselves.
- ii. Why is discerning authentic wisdom so difficult?
 - a) The counterfeit usually offers us what we want!
 - b) James 1:14

III. Discerning Authentic Wisdom (3:17-18)

A. Discerning Authentic Wisdom (3:17)

- i. **It is first of all pure.**
 - a) Peace-making is not “peace-at-all-costs.”
 - b) Especially important because James 1:19.

ii. *then peace-loving, considerate, submissive*

- a) **peace-loving** may better be “*peace-pursuing*”.
- b) **Considerate** is *gentle, gracious, and forbearing* with those you disagree with; the opposite of quarrelsome.
 - An elder must not be pugnacious. (1 Timothy 3:3)
 - Proverbs 20:5
- c) **Submissive**: willing to submit; obedient to authority.

iii. *Full of mercy and good fruit*

- a) **Full of mercy** isn't speaking of how we feel (an emotion), but of what we do (acts of compassion).
 - This person is constantly engaged in doing mercy.
- b) **Full of good fruits**
 - God isn't looking for a tiny harvest from our lives. (Matthew 21:43)

iv. *impartial and sincere*

- a) **Impartial**: not showing partiality, not discriminating.
- b) **Sincere**
 - Often contrasted with love
 - *not two-faced... not two-tongued*

“The good mind does not have **two tongues**, of **blessing** and of **cursing**, of **insult** and of **honor**, of **sorrow** and of **joy**, of **hypocrisy** and of **truth**, of **poverty** and of **wealth**; but has one disposition, uncorrupt and **pure**, concerning all.” (T. Benj 6.5)