

Week 7 – James 3:13-18

DAILY DOSE OF JAMES



MONDAY – 3:13 – How do you define “wise”?

At an airport, you can find plenty of books at the concourse bookstore on how to be “wise” about life. Of course, those books are usually sitting next to an “unwise” food choice at the fast food spot! As Jesus followers, we believe the Bible is truth – and therefore gives the best advice on what is wise.

James 3:13 defines “wisdom” by what it produces in our lives: a good life, with deeds done in humility that comes from wisdom. While our culture often tells us it’s smart to be selfish, this verse explains that, actually, it’s wise to be humble.

Questions for Thought:

1. Do I do good things humbly, just because it’s right?
2. Do I know people who have the good life this verse describes?
3. What good things can I do today, “just because”?

TUESDAY – 3:14 - If I’m being foolish, am I showing it off?

The saying goes, “Better to remain silent, and be thought a fool, than to open your mouth and remove all doubt!”

The world teaches us to want what others have. This verse calls that desire “bitter envy” and “selfish ambition” and says that they are foolish. Our spirits can take our envious desires to the extreme, so that they block out what can truly give us peace. This verse says that selfish envy and ambition are NOT things to be proud of – and in fact, they keep us from following the truth.

Questions for Thought:

1. What do you want that others have?
2. If you told someone the honest answer to that question, what would they say that means about you?

WEDNESDAY – 3:15-16 – If I’m unwise, what’s the result?

As a train passes, you look where it came from to guess at its source. You look where it’s going for an idea of its destination.

This passage gives both the “source” and the “destination” of bitter envy and selfishness. It might seem a bit scary to read that selfishness is “demonic” – but that truth

is mentioned for our benefit. It helps us avoid the destination of envy and selfishness – disorder and evil.

Questions for Thought:

1. Can you think of any famous people whose selfishness cost them dearly?
2. Have you ever been selfish - and had it cost you?
3. Application Tip: Ask a trusted friend whether he/she thinks you have any selfish habits. Thank the friend, confess your actions to God, ask Him to help you turn from them, and think of what you can do to change things tomorrow.

THURSDAY – 3:17 – The Quality Seal

When we check fruit at the store or market, one of the things we look for is the quality seal – a stamp or sticker that says, “This fruit’s good!” This verse describes the quality seal of wisdom from God – pure, loving peace, considerate, submissive, full of mercy and good fruit, impartial and sincere. It’s a good list.

Food for Thought:

1. Think of the list of things mentioned in this passage as the “fruit of wisdom” – pure, loving peace, considerate, submissive, full of mercy and good fruit, impartial and sincere. Now think of the list of “opposites” of these things – impure, loving conflict, inconsiderate, rebellious, judgmental and full of bad fruit, playing favorites, fake. Which best describes the TV shows and movies you watch or the magazines and books you read? Does there need to be an adjustment?
2. Application Tip: Write out James 3:17 word for word and put it next to your alarm clock. When you get up tomorrow, read the verse and ask God to make you those things, just for that day.

FRIDAY – 3:18 – Getting a Good Return

“Steady growth over time” is a magic phrase in the investment world. Financial institutions work hard to get a good return on their investment. Individual investors plan and act carefully to get a good return over the long haul. God tells us in this verse that “sowing”, or investing, in peace gives a return, or “harvest”, of righteousness.

Questions for Thought:

1. How when you lost your temper, has it hurt your relationships? How has that set your “investment” in relationships back?
2. What people should you make peace with? How would doing that help you?
3. Are selfishness and envy getting in the way of you living at peace with someone?