

Wise Up!

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[0 : 0 0] so well done everyone I'm aware of the time and I'm going to take up some more of your time sorry about that but we're going to talk about wisdom and looking at this series growing older and wiser interesting that we often put those two so closely together and we look at as Julian mentioned earlier we look at our system our society at the moment and a lot of those people we look up to as older and wiser are struggling to kind of live up to it it's tough times and I bet you're looking at me now thinking 33 year old Jay is about to talk to us about wisdom and obviously he's going to talk about his vast wisdom from all of the podcasts he listens to and his addiction to queer eye for the straight guy don't judge me on that programme there are some great pithy sayings in there

I love it I've honestly binge watched that programme and I've become so wise but we all love a bit of a pithy saying don't we we all love a bit of a wise old saying you know don't what's the don't bite the hand that feeds you do you ever told that to a baby do you think they do you think they listen too many cooks spoil the broth that's what I keep saying to Laura shall I try and avoid the kitchen it's my excuse I'm just rubbish at cooking some of them are really good though aren't they love your enemies pray for those who persecute you we don't quite like that one as much or the ones that you have to say in an American accent you can lead a horse to water this isn't an American accent that was terrible but you can't make it drink better is a little righteousness than great revenues with injustice we don't quite like that one either we often cut out the bits of the Bible that talk about wealth and how sometimes it isn't always a good thing for us no man is an island quickly moves on do not throw pearls to pigs a chain is only as strong as its weakest link have you tried turning it off and turning it back on again age is just a number until you hit 100 and then you get grade 2 listed status

I'm sure I'm going to offend my older friends here and I am sorry but I'm also not sorry I wonder how many times that you may have thought or we think that age is one and the same age and wisdom same thing I wonder how many times you think that you're wise simply because you've lived a bit longer this view isn't isn't new James was speaking to a church in a culture that had that same mentality children they didn't count they were just not quite yet people they also thought that about women but you know they were a bit silly those days can you imagine that that's not really changed still that video is a good example at the start of the service children don't quite count or we feel a little bit intimidated when we start giving them a bit of space or a bit of autonomy or a bit of a voice we get a little bit scared because they say things we're not used to or they live in a world that we're not used to and we get intimidated and so we we oppress the voice of the young what was James's words to that church are still true to us today older does not mean wiser I'm sorry I know people as a youth worker when young people looked at me and they'd think that you know I'd have answers and I didn't yes I was older yes I've lived longer but I didn't mean I was by default wiser I still made silly mistakes I still make silly mistakes that you think an adult shouldn't do a grown up shouldn't do they're not the same it's funny with our church services if we look at them and we look at our culture in church we have infighting culture wars our systems our services are shaped on those things rather than godly character and seeking godly character and seeking god's will for those people he sent us to reach now of course when I talk about wisdom wisdom and when I talk about the roles of the old and the young you don't go looking for a mentor in a nursery you don't go to toddler group to find a financial advisor

I get that you don't learn to drive from a seven year old maybe a seven year old who's lived on a farm because actually they probably do know how to drive but generally speaking it's not a rule of thumb is it we have to be honest though do we really believe that wisdom comes of age I bet if we're honest and we think about some of the people we know of our peers my age your age people

older than us maybe your parents maybe you can remember those times where all of a sudden you realise your parents didn't quite get it and you knew they were your parents so you wouldn't say anything but you could just see the car crash coming or you hear views and you think where is that logic from and you find yourself in this difficult position where maybe they've not quite got the wisdom right now it's hard and I say this hesitantly because

[6 : 34] I know a lot of you will be thinking about this but let me just be honest if we look at scripture wisdom and age are not the same thing because if that was true isn't it fascinating that Jesus' public ministry started when he was 30 years old 30 years old isn't it odd that he sent out young recruits to work out what God was doing he sent them on mission before they'd learnt all the answers before they'd lived their life he sent them to places they'd never been before to see what God was doing and to play isn't it interesting that some of the greatest names that we love in the Bible were young when they started out young when they had an impact Joseph Daniel I didn't realise this but Daniel would have been under 20 that's fascinating considering his boldness right at the start

Samuel little boy Eli what was he doing David Solomon he had his moments though we all know that Jeremiah Naaman's servant girl we often forget her unless you've got kids and then you've read the story a million times Mary she would have been young she was chosen to carry the Messiah and you see her wisdom in her response to Gabriel the boy with the lunchbox have you ever thought about his wisdom in that story the disciples trying to be logical about it earthly about it well we've only got this stuff you know I don't know how we're going to feed all these people Jesus I mean look at look at look at the figures this little boy goes well I've got some lunch you're Jesus right here you go that's some godly wisdom we go foolishness there's a godly wisdom and we and I said that

Jesus started at 30 but we also forget he was a 12 year old boy teaching Pharisees what the what the scriptures said we forget that bit relatively short list but they all they all demonstrate that this idea that they had wisdom beyond their years kind of doesn't make sense they teach us that wisdom is something more about something that God gives to people and it's not about age all the time age of course you get older you learn things but when we talk about two wisdoms in a minute I want to make a distinction between them the wisdom they showed was based in a faith in who God is and in the God who gives wisdom I've got a great story I was thinking of is it Gretna is that her name I'm going to get it wrong now what's the young girl who just sailed across to America Greta Greta thank you not Gretna that's a place isn't it

Gretna Green Greta who is very green orientated is a great example that was terrible sorry is a great example of a contemporary young person who's gone this doesn't line up the world is not working in a logical way and do you know how the world treated her the papers criticised her facial expressions and then it turns out she's got Asperger's adults made fun of her but this young girl got it she's made some logical God I doubt she's a Christian to be honest with she doesn't talk about it at least but she's got some wisdom that kind of seems to kind of counter product earthly logic and I've got a friend called because you know as a friend I'll make up her name so my friend her name's Alan and Alan she is one of the most amazing people that I know and she was one of my young people so that might be part of the reason I've got a bit of a soft spot for her but she recently did a parachute jump and I don't know have you done a who's jumped out of a plane okay you're all mad 10,000 feet does that probably sound about right yeah why why we invented planes for a reason anyway she jumped out of a plane strapped to this bloke so Alan and probably Alan and she she told me she ran me through I don't like heights she ran me through the experience and she was saying it's like amazing I felt sick I was dizzy I was spinning out of control I was going so fast it was awesome and they're like screw loose and then she said and then the parachute opened and it like everything stopped and it was really slow and calm and peaceful and I realised

[11 : 58] I've got a while before I hit the ground I'm strapped to some guy I don't know she turns to him she says so what do you think about Jesus that's some godly wisdom right right he ain't got anywhere to go that's that that the Jehovah's Witnesses could learn a few things from her so what do you what do you mean well what do you think about him you know I just thought brilliant brilliant godly wisdom going on there but also that's a little bit of a funny one but she's also she's got some serious godly wisdom in her young bones her family is quite difficult Alan's family and actually her mum and dad split a bit of a horrible story the dad left with someone else and she had two siblings and basically train wrecked their family ended up marrying the other person and and then a few years later the family this family struggled

Alan's family struggled made made work obviously did not want to know there's a lot of hurt as you can imagine but then they decided they were going to have some more kids and so these two twins were born these twins were born it was not four it was two and and I remember like listening to the mum Alan's mum speak and listening to Alan's brother and sister talk about it and there was a lot of hurt and a lot of they're not interested in us we're not going to be interested in them and you know she looked at me and and she said whether I feel okay about it or not they're my brother and my sister and I'm going to be in their life she's carrying all this pain but her wisdom godly wisdom her self-preservation should have said cut the tie stay well clear godly wisdom said these little kids need someone that loves them needs to know that their sister's there

I was amazed by her see she's a good example of godly wisdom but there are two kinds of wisdom James actually later on tells us about them I'm just going to quickly read read it to you he says who is wise in understanding among you let them show it by their good life by deeds done in humility that comes from wisdom but if you harbour bitter envy and selfish ambition in your hearts you do not and do not boast about it or deny the truth such wisdom does not come down from heaven but is earthly and spiritual demonic 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 reap a harvest of righteousness so Alan nearly gave away her name and my other examples carried the latter of those of those wisdoms there's earthly wisdom people and there's godly wisdom and there's a load of earthly wisdom in this room right now there's a load of earthly wisdom in our country there's a load of earthly wisdom on our planet but we are told by James to seek godly wisdom it may sound a bit obvious but there is a big difference James speaks harshly of worldly wisdom earthly unspiritual even uses the word of the devil demonic wonder if you feel like that when you're doing your finances or you're planning your holiday or you're choosing where you go to shop it feels a bit harsh doesn't it I'm just being reasonable being logical being rational but James has no time for this it's crazy he says it's selfish desire based it's a desire to be someone we use earthly wisdom and when we're using it often it's to feed our envy of others it's to get one up on people it's to put ourselves above others it's to secure ourselves worldly wisdom has at its core our self preservation our my centered benefits our making a name for ourself creating a legacy gaining power and influence becoming completely independent of others

I wonder if you're honest actually and you make decisions I wonder what the reason is we see it a lot right now in our culture and the fruits even more evident division insecurity inequality poverty the fact that we can have in our country powerful people and powerless people in a free country clans cliques earthly wisdom's fruit may be good for you on earth but it always damages other people and there's no place for it in heaven godly wisdom however is reflected not in power or the influence one has or in the successful life now and there's nothing wrong with having a successful life but it is reflected in a faith filled life that shapes the way we live a life of faith grounded in

[18:10] God's character choosing to believe and not doubt believe and not doubt that God is faithful and living out that that reality living out that reasoning making your decisions based on that truth even when it's costly even in times of persecution and trial we see this wisdom in the apostles we see it in those Christians throughout history and today who choose the way of Christ of integrity humility mercy peace choosing overworldly gain choosing others putting themselves down building others up seeing the prosperity of ourselves as second to the blessing of others I know it sounds obvious but godly wisdom is the kind of wisdom we should be interested in developing in our lives it is a wisdom that's not exclusively proved in years nor is it in clever sayings it's founded and rooted in trusting in our loving

God who desires us to have it see earthly wisdom is there we can get earthly wisdom we can become wise people on the planet but we are called to be godly wisdom people and there is crossover please don't get confused here I'm not saying that like the logic of running in front of a car is a bad idea is earthly wisdom I'm not saying that I would probably think that was godly wisdom but I am saying that we do make choices which if we're honest and we've built our wisdom up and if we're honest it's built on earthly wisdom it's built on the here and now and not the kingdom and I know that's uncomfortable to hear and I was really nervous about doing this preach because what I love about James and what I hate about James he's a book that's very happy to punch you in the gut it's beautifully crafted no messing this is the facts and it's in our holy book

Martin Luther didn't like it very much but that was to do with something about faith and deeds but it's in our holy book these words are not to be ignored we are to take it seriously we are earthly wisdom people we live in an earthly wisdom world but we are called to be godly wisdom people and you know why God desires us to have it because it is good for us he desires us to have it because we need it because through godly wisdom that's how we mature and grow which is our topic for this season we will mature and grow in godly wisdom and that's what we need because we are called to be Christ like and if you were to look at our Messiah our saviour he took down an empire did he do it with earthly wisdom no he took it on himself he took on an empire by getting beat up he took on power by becoming powerless we need to remember the core message of the gospel we are meant to be godly wise someone in the congregation right now is thinking something about shrewd as vipers and innocent as doves yeah sure

I'm not going to ignore those bits that show that we need to have a little bit of earthly wisdom but I'm asking about our core where is our core what wisdom are we living on because the godly wise Christians are the ones that will bring the kingdom here the godly wise Christians are the ones that will see transformation renewal on earth okay Jay great feeling guilty feeling heavy now thanks a lot so how do we get this godly wisdom that this maturing and growing wisdom that god has for us that we're meant to have for us to be the us that he wants us to be i love james here he says ask god ask god believe and don't doubt thanks james thanks james i didn't think of talking to god about it i didn't think about praying and i didn't think about the consequences of what he's saying i'm not allowed to doubt anymore apparently i don't think that's what james means i don't think we're not meant to doubt anymore doubt is human doubt is actually quite healthy doubt is how we know whether we are doing godly stuff or doing earthly stuff doubt is that seed that we grapple and wrestle with but james gives us this example doesn't he he says this double-minded person it's like a wave in the sea passive directed by the wind going with the flow or like the chaff in psalm 1 has no grounding and therefore gets blown away or like the seed in jesus parable that is not deeply rooted and gets snatched up this person james uses as example is someone who has sat on the fence trying to play the world's game and the kingdom's way they may dip their toe in but they are yet to jump in to jump in in faith that god is who he says he is even when life makes that hard to see yes this sounds like a big ass but remember james wrote this challenge to a persecuted church who was suffering with worldly wisdom the jude gentile thing who are we he wrote this not long after this he was martyred by the jews he knew the cost of choosing godly wisdom over worldly wisdom worldly wisdom says play it safe make some friends get yourself secure james refused that he wrote bluntly to his church to the church you need godly wisdom he knew what he was asking of us and so yes this message ends with a ridiculous challenge will you take james at his word will you choose to be matured in godly wisdom even when it's costly both feet in even though life right now may be hard choosing faith over letting the waves bash you about will you ask god for the wisdom he has for you and will you listen to the spirit god has placed in you which is maturing and growing you into a kingdom person who through god will redeem this world and to that one and to and and Whoo and G you and