

# Training for Wisdom

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[0:00] of wisdom. But if you have bitter jealousy and selfish ambition, the wisdom that comes down from above, but is earthly, unspiritual, demonic.

For where jealousy and selfish ambition exist, there will be disorder in every vile practice. But the wisdom from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, open to reason, full of mercy and good fruits, impartial and sincere. And a harvest of righteousness is sown in peace by those who make peace. Father, may you bless the reading of your word. You have spoken.

I pray, Lord, that that we would listen, that we hear what you have to say, and that we would hold your word up like a mirror to our soul and that we would compare the things that that are going on in our life, our conduct, our behavior, how we respond to all of that, that we would we would look into the mirror of your word and see what ought to be, that we would just be challenged by your word, by your Holy Spirit, bringing conviction to our hearts so that we would be a people who worship you with all of our heart, with all of our mind, with all of our soul and with all of our strength. And that we would love our neighbor as ourselves. And so, Father, I pray that you would be here with us in this time and you would bless as only you can and that our attention would not just be on the speaker, but Lord, that our heart would be in tune with you and that we would hear what you have to say and make application of it to our life. And if, Lord, there's someone here today that has not settled the issue of their relationship with you, I pray that today would be a day that they are born again into the kingdom of God, that they would turn from sin, that they would believe on you and that they would be changed in your presence. And so, Father, for those that know you, I pray that we would take up what we have in Christ and that we would walk. So, Lord, be with us in this time of worship. May you speak as only you can. We pray this all in Jesus name. Amen. Amen. You may be seated. James chapter three. The Lord has spoken.

A man by the name of John Ogilvie wrote this about wisdom. He said, wisdom is the special gift of the Lord of the Lord for our quest to know his will. It is beyond intellect and knowledge. Wisdom enables a person to hear with God's ears and see with his eyes.

[3:21] Wisdom is inspired depth perception into people and situations. It's the vertical thrust of the mind of God into our minds, making discernment possible on the horizontal level of human affairs. With wisdom, we can penetrate the mysteries of God, his nature, his plan, his purpose. If we long to know God's maximum for our lives, wisdom is the gift we need and want in order to do that will of God.

And I thought, man, that is just such a good encapsulated view of wisdom and we need it for our life. I was thinking this week, uh, as I saw a clip for Rocky four and just, uh, reminded, why do we love those movies? Like we do. You might not like those movies, but some of us do. And, and, and there's something about those movies I think that, that we love. And it's just because it deals with so much of the human condition and the struggles of life and everybody wants to be an overcomer. They watched the movie and they see this, but it was interesting because I came across an article that was talking about Rocky four and how Sylvester Stallone did all this training so that he could stand in the ring and look like a boxer. And he actually went through all this, this training, the exercises, he had trainers showing him how to box. He actually sparred with different people. And so when they were filming Rocky four, if you remember the theme of that, that's where he goes up against the Russian Ivan Drago, right? And it scares you just to say it. Ivan Drago, the Russian, and he's this mean robotic kind of a fighter. And he's just this machine of a fighter. And it's interesting to know the reality. He's not even Russian. He's Swedish. Now that sounds so less intimidating all of a sudden, right?

These are just actors. They're sparring on a, on, on the screen. And, and, and at one point, Rocky or Sylvester Stallone, see, I'm caught up in the character. Rocky tells, uh, Dolph Lundgren, who is playing this role of Ivan, he tells him, let's, let's stop, stop acting. Let's, let's really spar. Let's really fight. Let's really do this so that the cameras can capture the reality of the fighting. And, and he did. Well, what you don't know about Dolph Lundgren, champion in karate, an actual world champion, like many national championships to his name, one in these things. And so when he actually fought Sylvester Stallone in the filming of that scene, he punched Sylvester Stallone so hard that his heart stopped. And in the interview given by Sylvester

[6:41] Stallone, he was in the ICU for four days following that scene. It's one thing to act. It's one thing to go to the moment to think that you are really a fighter for a moment, get so caught up in your acting to think that you could actually take this guy on. And then in a moment to be punched so hard, your heart stops and you nearly die and spend an enormous amount of time in the hospital, recovering from what you thought you could handle.

Is he hitting home with anybody yet? See, this is life. This is the struggles of life and, and, and the spiritual life that you find in Christ is not you learning to look like a fighter.

It's not you learning to, to just train so that you can have all the appearances of a fighter. It's, it's actually you training to actually fight and to learn to apprehend and take hold of Christ for the things that you need to make it through this life. And, and this is what James is getting at in his life. It's the real thing that you're dealing with now. And it doesn't take long to go through life before something punches you in the chest so hard that your heart stops.

And I, knowing all the families in this room enough to know that you've had that. And what you need today is you need Jesus. He's the one who fights for us.

James understands this because the truth is, this is an issue of wisdom in our life. And he's wanting us to grapple with the real thing. Just like he talked about faith and talked about faith being this, this dead faith versus living faith. There's a faith that doesn't save.

[8:52] You think you have it. You, you think you've, you believe in God and it looks like the real thing, but it's not the real thing. Doesn't bring change and transformation in your life. Your heart is not transformed and you don't have a desire for the things of God. And, and, and so without that transformation, this, this is a dead faith. It can be all talk and no real action and no real substance. And now he's moved, moving on from that kind of faith to say, but we also need God's wisdom for this life. The wisdom that you're going to need when, as he said in chapter one, when the crisis comes and the punch comes to the chest and, and those difficult things of life that are so challenging, so overwhelming, and you're going to need God's wisdom to navigate through this without it. You're not going to make it that you need the wisdom of God. And there is a false wisdom that you may think. And it's just like the false faith. The false faith doesn't save and the false wisdom doesn't help you. So Socrates said, he said, the only true wisdom is knowing that you know, nothing.

Amen. So today we're diving into a powerful section in the epistle, which is a letter of such great practical wisdom. We call this the Proverbs of the new Testament. That's, and so now you'll kind of see why, because we're dealing with this issue of wisdom and it's such a heart of this epistle. You almost think James must've been reading Proverbs as he was writing this, uh, because so much of it is reflected in what he's saying. The title is learning to be wise, but not in the way you think, or not maybe in the way the world thinks we're talking about the kind of wisdom that comes from above wisdom that reflects the character of God in every aspect of our life.

James begins it this way. Who is wise and understanding among you. And it's a question that we need to consider today because it's not just about us being smart and clever from the world's standards. It's about us embodying godly wisdom that transforms us, changes us. So let's look at what he has to say about this. And I really think it's this passage from chapter three, verse 13.

On down through verse 18, you could divide it into three sections, three parts about wisdom. Uh, the first being the call and the challenge of wisdom. Uh, it's really the question he's posing the

question saying, are you pursuing this? Is this the pursuit of your life? Is this, does this characterize any, you know, anybody like this?

James 3.13. He then moves on to the comparison of the two kinds of wisdom. You could think of it almost like street smarts versus heavenly insight.

[12:06] Do you even know what true wisdom looks like? So that's verse 14 through 17. And then not only the call and challenge of wisdom and the comparison of wisdom, but then the conclusion of wisdom. Verse 18. Will you find what you think you're looking for in this?

And it's really, this is what the mirror of God's word is doing as we, as we examine ourselves and compare in the word. Is this reflected in my life? So let's look, let's begin with verse 13.

So let's, let's look at it together where he says, where he poses the question, who is wise and understanding among you? And then everything's going to follow this by his good conduct. Let him show his works in the meekness of wisdom. So he starts by the challenge. It's a question challenging us who is wise and understanding among you. And for us as a church, this is not just a rhetorical question. It is a call to self-examination. It's for us to really look, is the wisdom that's guiding my life true wisdom or am I, have I mingled so much false wisdom with it that I don't know what's true. I don't know where true North is in this. It's about character and conduct.

James, like us lived in a world that glorified arrogance in the Roman culture. This is, this is part of what it means to be a Roman is to be arrogant. There is a, an idea of self-promotion that you see in Roman culture that has, has crept into the church even. And, and it's characteristic, apparently of these believers that James is addressing in the scattered believers in the assembly and the assemblies that they find themselves in. True wisdom is going to show itself in humility. That's going to, that's going to challenge this. And so you, you look at the text and it's, it's really, own what a chatzian aspect of view looks like. It really doesn't follow the text, but it's really. So sometimes two times one closer to the evidence. It's one closer to the text. It, it's a little closer to the text. It comes to a voice himself and every time, he means no longer gaining his Called roof.

[15:10] . Drawing it into the assembly. This isn't just in general how to do it.

This is for the assembly for the church. It's individually called a call for us, but it's a call for us corporately.

The you here is the scattered believer. It's the you among the assembly. And just like the Corinthian church that was failing to practice church discipline, in that place, Paul used the same question.

Is there anyone among you wise enough to judge? Is there nobody? It was directed in toward the leadership of the church, but in turn to everyone in the church. Wisdom is sought out in the scripture.

It's the call of God to us to pursue it, to respond to God as God reveals himself. And in response to his revelation, we take hold of that.

[16:17] It is to be the pursuit of our life. To answer that question, is there anyone wise among you? It ought to be every one of us answering, Paul, I'm working toward that.

I want to be that guy. I want to be that woman. I want to be that boy or girl. I want to be that teenager that's actually wise, not just putting on the show and learning how to talk the talk. But I want to learn how to fight the good fight of the faith. I want to learn how to stand in the ring and in the end be crowned with the crown of life. I want to be able to stand against the crisis of my life and the challenges of my life and the trials of my life and be able to fight those fights in the power that has been given to me through the Lord Jesus Christ.

The filling of his Holy Spirit in my life. The enabling of me, just a normal person, just an everyday person, just an anyone, to be able to stand in the ring and try to stand against the challenges of discipline in our life or our job.

It's the fight of our life.

[17:46] And this fight is the call of wisdom, the challenge that James is giving under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit is for the church to say, am I that God?

Am I that man? Am I that woman? And I say this as reflecting Proverbs because as I was looking to Proverbs, as I read through, I was like, man, I'm going to quote that verse. I've got to quote that

verse.

Boy, I've got to quote that one. When I came up with this list, we'll be here all morning. But I'll read a few of them. Proverbs 120. Listen to what it says and think about what James is saying.

Proverbs 120. Wisdom cries aloud on the streets. In the markets, she raises her voice. At the head of the noisy streets, she cries out.

At the entrance of the gates of the city, she speaks. How long, O simple ones, will you love being simple? How long will scoffers delight in their scoffing and fools hate knowledge?

[18:49] If you turn at my reproof, behold, I will pour out my spirit to you. I will make my words known to you because I have called you and you have refused to listen because I have stretched out my hand and no one has heeded.

Because you have ignored all my counsel and would have none of my reproof, I will also laugh at your calamity. I'll mock when terror strikes.

When terror strikes you like a storm and your calamity comes like a whirlwind, when distress and anguish come upon you, then they will call upon me, but I will not answer.

They will seek me diligently, but not find me because they hated knowledge. They did not choose the fear of the Lord. They would have none of my counsel. They despised all of my reproof.

Therefore, they shall eat the fruit of their way, have the fill of their own devices, for the simple are killed by the turning away, and the complacency of fools destroys them.

[19:52] But whoever listens to me, dwell secure and be at ease without dread of disaster. This is the call of God. Listen to my voice.

He's saying, Proverbs 2, My son, if you receive my words and treasure up my commandments within you, making your ear attentive to wisdom and inclining your heart to understanding, yes, if you call out for insight and raise your voice for understanding, if you seek it like silver and search for it like hidden treasure, then you will understand the fear of the Lord and find the knowledge of God. For the Lord gives wisdom. From his mouth comes knowledge and understanding. Proverbs 3, Blessed is the one who finds wisdom.

Proverbs 4, The beginning of wisdom is this. Get wisdom in whatever you get. Get wisdom. It goes on over and over and over. Ecclesiastes, when Solomon writes this, For the protection of wisdom is like the protection of money.

And the advantage of knowledge is that wisdom preserves the life of him who has it. The wisdom of God is to be the pursuit of our life. And the question, the call to the church, the question for you is, Is this the pursuit of your life?

[21:15] Notice the challenge.

The challenge, he says, is to show this. So he gets the question, Who is wise and willing to understand it? By his good conduct, let him show. Let him demonstrate.

This again is the same idea that he's talking about. Living faith, there should be a transformation in living faith where not only I believe it doesn't affect my mind and my heart, but it affects my behavior and my life.

And if there's no life effect, then I have to look at it and say, Well, this is a dead faith. For some reason, there's something wrong with my faith. This is not the faith that saves. Faith that saves, it brings transformation.

And in the same way, wisdom is, wisdom that's from love, wisdom that's from God, shows itself. And there's a characteristic about this kind of love.

[22:16] The challenge is to show. You've got to show this. There's a different kind of wisdom that's going to be presented here.

It's the difference between what we say and what people see. You can say it, people need to see it. You want to be wise. And so as you're examining this and start to take the mirror of the scripture and start to look at yourself and say, Well, is the wisdom that's guiding my life, does this match the character of the wisdom of scripture?

Is it showing? And in the context up to chapter 3, that's what we've been seeing. What's showing in your life? What's showing?

Show by good conduct. And the character of the scene right there, it's not just conduct, but it's the goodness of the conduct. It's the rightness of the conduct. And it's done in the meekness of wisdom.

[23:22] The character. Meekness is strength under control. It's not meekness. I guess Dolph Lundgren was showing meekness in the Spartan.

And then, Stallone messed around and found out that the conduct works done in meekness. It's right. It's good. It's righteous. It's the call of wisdom to show and display righteousness in life. Because I've been created in the image of God. My whole life is to reflect His glory.

And when I'm living in sin, when I'm not acting according to wisdom, I'm obscuring the vision of God for people as they look in my life. So that the message that I preach and the words that I say ought to match up and demonstrate some transformation about me.

Right? I ought to be living when I say I believe. And I ought to be looking to God's word to find out what that looks like. To show means to exhibit something.

[24:35] Something that can be apprehended by one or more of the senses. To point something out. To show something. To make it known. To prove something. By presenting evidence.

He says show. That's what he means. To presenting the evidence. Transformation. Am I pursuing wisdom? Am I hearing the call?

And this may be why for some. Why Bible study doesn't interest you. Right? I mean. It's not the pursuit of your heart.

It's difficult to get into the habit of studying the scripture or being in the scripture daily if your heart has not been changed. So as a lost person I'm not going to have that desire to want to know God. Now I might want to know facts about the Bible so I can debate as far as people. I mean we like that. It's American pastime. Right? I want to know theology because hey I don't know that I want to look stupid and I want to be able to debate that when I'm with other Christians so that we can talk about soteriology and I can even say that word without stumbling through it.

[25:47] And so we want to learn it but to be wise we're gaining wisdom. We're in the pursuit of this wisdom so that not so that we can just get known because I know God. And I'm not just pursuing information.

I'm pursuing Him. Christ is the wisdom come down from God. The scripture revealed Christ. I studied the scripture so that I can know Christ.

I want to hear His words. I want to study His words because I've been changed. My life was so radically changed from what I was before. I was a self-centered sinner that just did nothing except what I wanted to do.

I pursued everything that I wanted for pleasure for you name it. all of a sudden Jesus came and rocked my world.

And now I want to I want to know. I want to I get into the scripture. I'm studying the scripture because it's the call of wisdom to us to respond to Him.

[26:51] And I want to know His word. I want to study His word and memorize it and meditate on it. I want to get in His word and read it. I want to hear it taught. I want to listen to other people teach it on podcasts and on the radio and I can't get enough of it because it's the food for my soul.

It's the pursuit of my life. It's an issue of justification and sanctification. In justification I've been declared righteous.

I've been made righteous by the work of Christ. I'm going to stand at the judgment seat with all of the righteousness of Jesus. It's going to be as if Jesus is standing at the judgment seat.

Isn't that awesome? And it's only because Christ went to the cross as if He committed my sin. He stood in my place. And now I'm justified because of this and legally declared righteous.

I've got His righteousness as my own. I've got a heart of unknowing, a mind that has a capacity to receive Him. I've got the Holy Spirit living inside of me to enable me to not watch W and walk in me.

[27:59] And in my sanctification it's me taking hold of that practically. In the one sense it's positional.

I've been made righteous. I've been made holy by the work of Christ and now by the work of the Holy Spirit within me He's making me righteous practically. And so I'm pursuing Him.

I'm gaining knowledge. I'm pursuing wisdom for this reason. Does my, in the context of James, does my wisdom reflect humility? James 4, 6 He goes on to say God opposes the crowd and gives grace to them.

Submit yourselves therefore to God and resist the devil and he will flee from you. Draw near to God and he will draw near to you. Cleanse your hands, sinners. Purify your hearts, you double-minded. Be wretched and mourn and weep let your laughter be turned to mourning and your joy to woe. Humble yourselves before the Lord and he will exalt you. This humility, the mark of the wisdom that's at work in my life.

[29:11] Is patience and perseverance a mark as you've described in James 1? Am I enduring to the end through crisis and suffering or am I just defeated every single time, every time the wind blows so I get knocked down?

James 5, 7 is going to say be patient therefore for those until the coming of the Lord. How long? Until the coming of the Lord. Guess what?

Whatever comes until the coming of the Lord. You'll be faithful until then. Be patient. Endure hardship. Is that characteristic the wisdom that you have in your life?

Compassion and mercy. The pure religion of caring for orphans and widows. That's what he's been talking about. Is that the mark of the wisdom of my life? Is it leading me into more compassion and mercy on others or is it self-exalting?

Does the wisdom show self-control? James 1, 19 be quick to listen be slow to speak be slow to anger.

[30:20] James 3 as we talked about in verse 1 through 12 the controlling of our tongue is my tongue under control? Am I saying the things that should be said? Am I being silent where I should be silent?

Wisdom is a call and challenge. Are you pursuing Christ in his wisdom? There's also a comparison. That's the second part. Because now he goes into the division to show you what it looks like and to give example so that you can discern the difference of what heavenly wisdom it looks like versus an earthly wisdom.

He talks about the wisdom of the world. Kind of think of that in terms of street smarts. There are a lot of people that are street smart. I can appreciate that. You've been through a lot in your life.

You've picked up a lot of life experiences. You've been on the street. Man, you've been a fighter out there. You've learned a lot in your life. You know how to operate in all kinds of situations.

[31:27] You can get by. That's not what he's talking about. See, if that's all you've got to guide you through your life, what he's saying is that is earthly wisdom.

That's a different kind of wisdom. Is it wise? Well, yeah, you can describe it as a kind of wisdom. But it's not what you're needing from these soul issues in your life. It's not what's going to enable you to fight the good fight for the thing that stands wrong.

It's a different kind of wisdom. wisdom. This one is earthly. It's unspiritual. The Holy Spirit is not guiding this.

It's wisdom that's not coming from the Holy Spirit of God, whether through his word, where he so clearly speaks, or moving our spirits through his providence and guidance to his plan.

It's a spiritual wisdom that's very pragmatic, or an unspiritual wisdom that's very pragmatic. Could be just pragmatism alone. What works?

[32:30] We're all about what works. Right? Well, that doesn't work, and we're not going to do that. Well, you look at some Bible verses, and you're going to come to the conclusion, well, that just doesn't work in today's world.

It doesn't work. Well, I've got news for you. It's not about it working. God didn't say that's going to work every time. God said, this is how you're going to honor me in every circumstance.

It's a totally different thing. Ultimately, God's going to get the glory. Ultimately, it's going to work out. Right now, it may not feel right. It may not feel good. It may be painful for me to obey the Lord.

I guarantee you, there are many times that you're going to obey the Lord, and it's going to cost you something. Can I get an amen? It's going to cost you. It's going to cost you friends, isn't it?

How many of you found that out? You started following Jesus. Oh, man, it then disappeared. I can remember that so vividly as I came to Christ, a young soldier in Fort Sill, Oklahoma, and all my drinking buddies, my best friends, man, we're out drinking every night.

[33:43] I mean, we had some great times together. All of a sudden, I got changed, man. I mean, it was transformed. I got the ghost. I mean, my life was changed.

And because of that, all of a sudden, I was alone. You know what I'm talking about? Yeah. Some of y'all are working in a place, and you're the only believer there.

And if there are the other ones there, they're in secret. They don't know. heavenly. There's a, there's an earthly, unspiritual kind that's very pragmatic, and then notice the word that he uses here, just like he talked about faith that's not real, and that this is the faith, same faith that demons have, right?

And it's, it's in a demonic kind of description, telling us that there's a deception about this kind of faith, self-deceiving. You think it's real, it's not, it's demonic.

It's actually demonic work in your life to keep you in a place where you think you have faith and don't have real faith. And it's a demonic kind of wisdom.

[34:58] So this whole issue of demonic, you know, we're giving a version of talking about those things because we don't want to sound too charismatic or something, but the reality is if you read your Bible, it's going to be very uncomfortable for you because this demonic issue is real.

And the influence of it is real. And there's a deception about it. And if, those of you who think, well, I can't be deceived in that, you're probably deceived.

And it's characteristic a certain way. He said, he shows it being driven by bitter jealousy and selfish ambition. This is where this kind of wisdom bleeds, the fruit of it.

This is what it looks like. Bitter jealousy. Selfish ambition. Am I really doing the right thing just so that people will like me?

am I a child in a family where the parents are Christians and am I doing the right thing and going through devotions and getting baptized and all those kinds of things?

[36:04] Am I doing that just to please my parents? That could be a selfish ambition. It's self-serving. It's not just that you're elevating yourself, but it's a self-serving thing.

It could be ambition that you're trying to, like some of these teachers, you're wanting to be in a position where you're seen and recognized just for being in a position.

It's not going to get you through the fight. You're going to get punched in the chest. You're going to find yourself in the ICU. In the church, sometimes it's hyper-spiritualization where I'm super spiritual about everything except the discipline's like reading your Bible and studying for it or showing up in church sometimes, right?

There's some people in the church that have that kind of hyper-spiritualized. It's a wisdom talk. Their voice changes when they start talking about spiritual things and you just think, I don't know that I've ever seen this guy in the Bible study.

And then if you were to investigate this a little bit, tell me about your time with God. You spend a daily time with God.

[37:23] Oh yeah, I'm on my way to work. I think about God on my way to work. When I'm mowing the grass, I like to think about God. And there's no time pursuing the wisdom of God and His Word.

I'm not delving into the Word so that I can hang for my very life on what God is saying so that I can make application. I'm just super spiritualized and deceived.

Or I can be hypersensitive. I'm super spiritual so I don't ever get into controversy. I don't remember. We don't talk about anything that's going to stir up trouble like doctrine.

Because doctrine divides after all. Have you ever heard that phrase? It's demonic. That's a demonic phrase. Doctrine divides.

Well, of course it divides because you believe something. Right? It means you believe something and somebody else doesn't. That's the whole point of it. For you to actually believe God and take Him at His Word is going to separate you out of the world.

[38:31] It's going to make you distinct and unique. The wisdom of the world is not going to get us through it. And I'll say this because I think this applies probably to the politics in America right now more

than anything.

Because I'm first to admit, I'm going to vote for Donald Trump. I don't care who you vote for. I'm not endorsing him as a candidate. I don't care if I did endorse him as a candidate. It doesn't matter. It's beside me. I don't want to get off on that.

But I also make a distinction here. I'm not saying Donald Trump is a believer in Christ Jesus. I heard him on his Laura Ingram interview where he just said, go to heaven.

Sure. I'm going to heaven. I mean, who doesn't want to go to heaven? Be good. You get to go to heaven. Oh. That's not the gospel. Right. What he just revealed is that he has no understanding of the gospel of Jesus Christ.

Am I going to vote for him? Yes, I'm going to vote for him. Because the other side is way more than easy. Right? I mean, it's like the dark side. It's like Lex Luthor. Leeds me new.

[39:48] But I'm not mistaking this for godly wisdom. Neither. Right. He's not wise in Christ. This is not spiritual heavenly wisdom.

And Jordan Peterson for that. Do I like Jordan Peterson? Man, that guy said he's right on so much of what he says to men. Men need to hear some of those things that he has to say.

But I'm also going to make a distinction. Because as wise as he may seem in worldly wisdom, he lacks one key ingredient. And that is a relationship with Jesus Christ in the indwelling Holy Spirit.

Right. So while I acknowledge there's some wisdom there, it's not enough to get me through. It's not enough to enable me to stand.

It's characteristically not what James is talking about here. You need more than that. If all you're doing is studying Jordan Peterson's book about how to be a man, I got news for you.

[40:47] You ought to open your Bible. If you open your Bible and start reading about what God says about you being a man that rises up to lead his family, to be the husband that sacrificially loves his wife, to love his neighbor as himself and live a sacrificial kind of life, serving and pouring himself out for others.

I'll tell you what, you'll be a man of God at that point. And that's way more than you're going to ever achieve from Jordan Peterson's encouragement. Can you learn a lot? Yes.

but it's not enough. Don't be fooled by that. People are more interested in not offending the lost world than they are in maintaining righteousness and not offending God.

That's why we don't speak up about things. Lost people just go and be lost. lost. And safe people need to be safe. Safe people need to speak up and speak true.

It's what we do. James describes the other kind of wisdom. And where this one is earthly and demonic, so it's coming, it's a man-centered kind of thing, and it's even demonically influenced.

[42:07] Here, the wisdom he's talking about, he says, is from above. Now that's characteristic. He did. It's from above. It's a heavenly wisdom.

And this kind of wisdom is going to show itself in character. It's pure and peaceable and gentle. It's open to reason. It's full of mercy and good fruits. It's impartial.

It's sincere. It's not just brash. It's really thinking things through, but it's grounded in something that's coming from above. A truth, a wisdom that's coming from above that settles all the issues.

It gives you the confidence that when you're speaking that kind of truth to whatever the circumstance, you know, it's the final answer. Isn't that good?

We have to conclude when he's speaking of the wisdom of God here that he's talking about the revealed wisdom and the word of God. It's not just some ethereal kind of wisdom that's out there floating around.

[43:10] Like, oh, I'm going to find it. It's out there. It's wisdom. I'm pursuing wisdom. Pursue it right here. It's what he said all along leading up to this, which is telling you this isn't just some kind of magical wisdom that you're going to find out there.

It's actually rooted in Scripture. He said in James 1:18, of his own will, he brought us forward by the word of truth. By the word of truth. The gospel of Christ.

The teachings of Christ. That we should be kind of a first fruits of his creatures. And then in chapter 1, verse 21, he says, therefore put away all filthiness, haramment wickedness, and receive with meekness the implanted word.

The word. The message from God. The teachings of God. The gospel of Christ, which he said is able to save your soul, actually. And so in James 1, 22, it comes to the conclusion that saying, you are to be a doer, not if you have the real wisdom floating out there.

You are to be a doer of the word. That's why you're pursuing wisdom. You're looking for wisdom so that you can be a doer of the word and reflect glory and the character of God.

[44:27] And he has given you his word so that you can do that. He's given you his Holy Spirit. You have everything that pertains to life and godliness.

You have it. I'm just waiting until I learn enough. No, you've got it. Take the word and obey it radically. Listen to what God says and make application to your life and watch the transformation and watch the wisdom begin to work.

All scripture is breathed out by God. It's profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for training and righteousness so that we can be equipped for every good work.

It's the knowledge from above, the wisdom from above. It's breathed out by God. 2 Peter 1.20, a memory verse for many of you knowing this verse of all that no prophecy is prophecy of scripture comes from someone's own interpretation.

I have to get that ESV version. No prophecy was ever produced by the will of men but men spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit.

[45:41] You don't need more pragmatism. You need more scripture poured into your soul. You need to pursue the word of God and listen to the call of God in wisdom and make application of the right kind of wisdom to your soul.

And when you do that you're going to be more successful as a husband and you're going to be more successful as a wife and as an employee and as a friend and as a citizen. More than pragmatism.

John MacArthur said it this way. He said, when pragmatism is used to make judgments about right and wrong or when it becomes a guiding philosophy of life or even ministry it inevitably clashes of scripture.

Spiritual and biblical truth is not determined by testing what works and what doesn't work. We know from scripture for example that the gospel often does not produce a positive response.

On the other hand satanic lies and deception can be quite effective. Majority reaction is no test of validity and prosperity is no measure of truthfulness.

[46:51] Pragmatism as a guiding philosophy of ministry is inherently flawed. Pragmatism as a test of truth is nothing short of Satan. So I typed an article that captured my attention in Wall Street Journal and was talking about the diamond in history.

Why weird things catch my attention. I don't know. I went out and I went shopping although my wife deserves more than that. But in this case it was the article because the title really grabbed my attention and talking about the fact that in 1954 General Electric Laboratories developed a way to make lab-grown diamonds.

Lab-grown diamonds that are indistinguishable from the actual diamonds. and so they worked this process and then sold some of the rights of it to De Beers which is I guess a major company that owns stock in all of the diamond industry and they marketed these diamonds as a special class of diamond right next to the natural diamonds and probably the price difference was negative.

they had a certificate of authenticity and they've done this even up until this last year I think it was this last year maybe beginning of this year that they decided they're no longer going to make those lab-grown diamonds for jewelry they're only going to use it for commercial and industrial use for blades and different things like that computers or whatever but what caught my attention was the title of the article that said genuinely fake and I thought man that's exactly what James is talking about a stamp of approval certificate of authenticity that it's actually a fake diamond and we take that certificate and so I saw on the there was a baseball game or something they showed a video they had a diamond tester you know and I don't know if you've seen something that's been going to a couple they said let me see your wedding ring and they take the diamond tester and it's like oh there's 25% chance that it's genuine you know and then they showed the expression on the face of the lady that she's like that looks right and every guy filmed it you know fake fake news fake cheese don't you just want something real

I mean when you see the real thing and you see the reality of what's real doesn't it bring into contrast what's fake I'm so tired of fake stuff everywhere I can go to Taco Bell my kids love Taco Bell they want to do the midnight round to the bell ding ding and go get some tacos partner midnight and they're like oh you're going to try the cheese dip and then fries or whatever and I'm like no it's fake it's nasty fake it's like one step away from being poor wax it's fake fake fake no I don't want oh it tastes so good I don't want I don't want fake sugar I've been drinking some here lately because I'm getting fat alright and so I've been the reality is I don't want it I don't like it I don't like the way it tastes I don't like the way it looks on the label I want the real

[50:46] I want cane sugar I like the real thing there may be I go through the drive through at Burger King and then I've got a coupon okay hey \$3.00 I'm going to go through oh you want the impossible whopper no I do not want the impossible it's fake I don't know how you grew that thing I don't know what it grew off of it's not beef I don't want it I want the real thing I'm sick of fake stuff and I'm just telling you the reason the gospel is ineffective in most of our churches is because all they're tasting is fake stuff fake fake fake it's a production it's a show if we don't get it all right it's not just smooth and just right and oh we're going to lose people if we don't get it right you know what show's over I'm not about productions here do I want us to do things with excellence yes I want to be always striving

I want to be better I want to make it right I want to make it good this is not a show amen I'm no entertainer I'm not something that's real Paul said that in the Trinity Church the word of the cross is folly to those who are perishing but to us who are being saved it is the power of God for it is written I will destroy the wisdom of the wise and the discernment of the discerning I will reward who is the one who is wise where is the scribe where is the debater of this age has not God made full of God through wisdom through worldly wisdom it pleased God through the folly but we preach Christ crucified a stumbling block the power of God

Christ is the wisdom of God and when Jesus describes our relationship with him what's this wisdom going to bring my conscience is coming because I'm doing the right things right but that's not really what he's getting at look at verse 18 and the harvest of righteousness is sowing peace by those who are in peace the sowing in peace is the application of wisdom in the way that I'm trying to make peace wherever I am with the wisdom of God make peace in my heart make peace in my relationships make peace in the world but it's the harvest of righteousness

I want peace but I'm sowing peace so that there'll be a harvest of righteousness the righteousness is what we're looking for it's the end goal it's a harvest of righteousness it's the continuation of the list that he said the wisdom that's from above it's pure it's peace it's gentle it's self-control it's all fruits of the spirit and further he says in the original language it's like and furthermore moreover specifically it's a harvest of righteousness wisdom my pursuit of wisdom is leading is leading to an end result of righteousness that is a harvest of righteousness not little righteousness harvest of it in my life a change that's going to demonstrate that I have not just been informed but that I have been transformed by Jesus it's a pursuit this is what God wants it's the call of wisdom it's the comparison of wisdom it's the conclusion of wisdom

King Asa found this out in 2nd Chronicles 16 he stopped relying on the Lord to fight the battles he's fighting battles he's winning he's doing awesome seeing God move and defeat the enemy and then he stopped consulting the Lord the prophet came the prophet said these words the eyes of the Lord run to and fro throughout the whole world to give strong support to those whose heart is blameless toward him and now he's against you the eyes of the Lord run to and fro throughout the whole earth to give strong he's already calling out wisdom if you pursue him in wisdom what did he just say a few verses before if any man lacks wisdom let him ask of God who gives to all men liberally that's the only time it's okay to be a liberal amen yes that's why Jesus said whoever has my commandments

[57:14] John 14 21 whoever has my commandments and keeps them it's he who loves me and he who loves me will be loved by my father and I will love him and will manifest myself to him want to see God I really I hear this from preachers a lot man I just want God to handle my life I just want to be anointed in some way like some special thing like guess what here's

the best way to sense the anointing God radically obey be filled with his Holy Spirit radically obey and I guarantee we're going to sense a whole lot more of his anointing in our life because he said that's what he's going to do you obey me and I'm going to manifest myself to you I'm going to show my character in your life I'm going to display my power in you I'm going to know him the power of his resurrection

Jeremiah 9 23 this is what the Lord says let not the wise man boast of his wisdom or the strong man of his strength or the rich man boast of his riches but let him who boasts boast about this that he understands and knows me I remember being in China and going to the zoo do you remember that?

oh the zoo in China I think the guy the Lonely Planet guy said these animals would best be put out of their misery but it was terrible I mean it was the worst zoo you've ever seen just bugged apart decrepit whatever and we went up to one area with baboons where our kids want to see the monkeys you know every kid wants to see a monkey and everywhere we went in China you have to realize that everyone and of course in China they have black hair and brown eyes everybody I mean everywhere we went especially on the western side of China there are very few white people in that area so when we came in it was like rock stars in town because we've got four little kids with blonde hair and they've never seen it in their life and so in some of these places we went they would flock around us to the point where we could not walk down the sidewalk and I'm not kidding and so we go to the zoo of course we have to keep moving because we stop and the rest and we go to the baboons we see the baboons and I'm looking and it is exciting and I looked and the person next to me there was a Chinese man next to me and he's not looking at his baboons he's looking at me and he's looking at my kids and I realized

I looked down the road and the next person is looking at me and the next person they're looking at me they're looking at my kids they're not looking at the baboons they're looking at us and one another there are probably 25 people down this entire road and every last one of them is staring at us and our children and I was just thinking how that has got to be they should be looking at the baboons right and then I looked at the baboons and they were all looking at us everybody because it's something so out of the ordinary where they're at I think what James is getting at here is that when the wisdom of God is characteristic in your life you will you will draw the attention of the world because they want to see why you're living the way you are they want to see why your marriage is working they'll want to see why you're raising your kids and they're not acting like wild crazy animals they want to see your family they want to see how you function in a relationship they want to see us work through difficulties and do it God's way and show the world what it means to work through conflict right and when we do that the whole world will be staring and wanting to know the reason why the answer of course is because it's the wisdom of God it's not us we're not great at best we're weak best be the wisdom of God are you a wise man are you a wise woman is that the pursuit of your life are you hearing the call of God to pursue you are you seeing the difference between real and false wisdom are you going to find the end of his own righteousness peace

J.F. chapter 7 I'll close with this he says it is our high privilege calling to do the will of God in the power of God and to the glory of God this is wisdom let's pray father father oh we're going to be coming to you today in a day when the world Legend of Vida to B■■ the Babylon