

POWER HOUR

10/25/2026

Lesson Text:
James 3:13-18

Related Scriptures:
Colossians 3:12-17; 1 Peter 3:8-12;
1 Corinthians 3:18-23; James 4:1-10

“THE WISDOM OF THE MEEK”

NLT TRANSLATION

Golden Text: Who is wise and understanding among you? Let them show it by their good life, by deeds done in the humility that comes from wisdom. James 3:13 NLT

Time: between 40 and 48

Place: from Jerusalem

James 3:13-18 NLT

¹³ Who is wise and understanding among you? Let them show it by their good life, by deeds done in the humility that comes from wisdom. ¹⁴ But if you harbor bitter envy and selfish ambition in your hearts, do not boast about it or deny the truth. ¹⁵ Such “wisdom” does not come down from heaven but is earthly, unspiritual, demonic. ¹⁶ For where you have envy and selfish ambition, there you find disorder and every evil practice. ¹⁷ 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. ¹⁸ Peacemakers who sow in peace reap a harvest of righteousness.

INTRODUCTION

Heavenly wisdom stands in sharp contrast to earthly wisdom. The wisdom from above produces peace, gentleness, and mercy. This highlights the transforming power of godly wisdom in the life of a believer. Do our actions demonstrate this godly wisdom? Are we known for a meek spirit or for arrogance and self-promotion? True wisdom must be evidenced in how we live. James provides a powerful reminder to us that true wisdom is a gift from above meant to glorify God and serve others.

Additional Scripture Readings:

From the Heart. Matthew 12:33-37.

Submit to God. James 4:1-10.

Do All in the Name of Jesus. Colossians 3:12-17.

True Wisdom. 1 Corinthians 3:18-23.

Reject Evil and Do Good. 1 Peter 3:8-12.

The Tongue. James 3:1-10.

Heavenly Wisdom. James 3:13-18.

1. Wisdom from meekness (James 3:13). This verse begins with the question “Who is a wise man and endued with knowledge among you?” We cannot look inside a person’s mind to see if he thinks wisely or foolishly. So how can we identify a wise person? James answered his question, saying, “Let him shew out of a good conversation [way of life] his works with meekness of wisdom.” So a wise person is one who acts and speaks “with meekness of wisdom.” That phrase is key to understanding James’s instruction. “Meekness of wisdom” means the meekness or humility that is produced by wisdom. How does wisdom produce meekness? **By helping us recognize our own inability and our total and humble reliance on God.**

So how can we identify wise people? They demonstrate meekness in their lives and actions. Solomon pointed out this same relationship in Proverbs 11:2—“When pride cometh, then cometh shame: but with the lowly is wisdom.” Therefore, wise people are those who humbly rely on God. In the next verses, James further described the wisdom of the meek.

2. Wisdom from the world (James 3:14-16). When we read these verses, our first thought is, “These verses do not describe wisdom,” and that certainly is true as we know wisdom. But in (vs 15), James wrote, “This wisdom [of verses 14-16] descendeth not from above.” Therefore, James was using the word “wisdom” here to show the contrast between false wisdom from a human origin and true wisdom from above (vss. 17-18). Bitter envy and strife are characteristics of this false kind of wisdom (vs. 14). People who exhibit these traits should neither boast about them nor deny what God says about this kind of behavior. If they do, they are lying to themselves. Verse 15 lists three other properties of this false wisdom. It is “earthly,

sensual, devilish." It comes from sinful humanity, it appeals to the flesh, and it is motivated by the devil himself. John uses the same three concepts in 1 John 2:15-17. (Read these three verses.) There John referred to the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life. James 3:16 adds that when false wisdom produces envy and strife among people, it leads to confusion, disorder, and every kind of evil action.

3. Wisdom from above (James 3:17-18). Verse 17 tells us how the wisdom of the meek shows itself in daily life. (Here are eight qualities for thought.)

Pure (is free from sinful motives)

Peaceable (produces peace, not strife)

Gentle (shows consideration for others)

Easy to be entreated (submits to others)

Full of mercy (overlooks the faults of others)

Full of good fruits (looks for ways to help others)

Without partiality (does not show favoritism)

Without hypocrisy (lives a life of sincerity)

James concluded his thoughts by stating in (vs 18) that wise people are peacemakers ("them that make peace") who reap a harvest of righteousness (Matthew 5:9) These verses describe the kind of wisdom a meek person demonstrates, as opposed to earthly wisdom, which is not godly.

PRACTICAL POINTS

True wisdom is meek rather than pretentious (James 3:13).

We should shun jealousy and seek contentment (vs. 3:14; 1 Timothy 6:6-10). Much that the world considers wise is sinful and even demonic. We should be careful when following popular figures (vs. 3:15).

Self-centeredness leads to chaos and every kind of sin. Wisdom, conversely, serves others (vs. 3:16; Philippians 2:3-4).

True wisdom is marked by holy actions and a willingness to learn (vs.17). Being a peacemaker fosters righteousness (vs. 18).

CONCLUSION

We have seen from this lesson the kind of wisdom a meek person demonstrates. It is pure, peaceable, and gentle. We should apply this teaching to all situations. Let us be people who act and respond with wisdom from above in every area of life. When we do, we will demonstrate the wisdom of the meek.

Next weeks lesson: *'The Wisdom of the Gospel' – 1 Corinthians 1:18-31* To many people, the gospel is foolish. This lesson points out the true wisdom of the gospel.
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