

A Tale of Two Wisdoms Pt. 1 James 3:13-18

Guided Growth with Pastor Keith @ CBC Sunday, Feb. 21st 2021

Pr 24:3 *"Through wisdom is an house builded; and by understanding it is established"*

There are two distinct and diametrically opposed types of Wisdom that will produce two very different "foundations". James 3 contrasts these two basic philosophies or perspectives that are available to us. One is "from above" (vs 17) and *"is ... pure, peaceable, gentle, easy to be entreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality and without hypocrisy."*

The other one is characterized by: *"Bitter envying and strife... lie against the truth"* (14) *"is earthly, sensual, devilish"* (15) and will ultimately produce: *"confusion and every evil work."* (16)

These two "wisdoms" or value systems are in competition for our allegiances. (Gal. 5:22)

Most of the Conflicts that affect our relationships are related to our Core Value system; (*The foundational source of our "Wisdom"*) Let's take a closer look at the "wisdom of the world" and how it relates to many of the problems in our relationships.

(James 3:15) *"This wisdom ...is earthly, sensual, devilish"*

Most Relational Problems Come From One Of Three Primary Sources:

1. EARTHLY: (epi'geios: Worldly, terrestrial)

It comes from: "epi" (superimposition) and Gē (soil, ground, earth)

- A. Satan has "superimposed" his agenda on this earth; and seeks to do so in our individual lives. 2 Cor 2:11 *"Lest Satan should get an advantage of us: for we are not ignorant of his devices."* (Noema: purposes)

B. What do we "know" about the Earth/world.

1) It's under Satan's dominion/influence.

- a) Jesus called him: *"the prince (archon: chief, 1st in rank) of this world"* Jn 12:31; 14:30; 16:11
b) Paul called him *"The god of this world..."* 2 Cor. 4:4
c) John reminds us (1 Jn 5:19) *"we know that we are of God, and the whole world lieth in wickedness."*
Ponēros': Evil 51x; Wicked (one) 16x See also Jn 10:10 and 1 Jn 2:15-17

2) Its relationship principles are flawed.

- a) On July 3rd, 1975 Ann Landers wrote: *"The sad, incredible fact is that after 36 years of marriage, Jules and I are being divorced. It seems unreal that I am writing about my own marriage."* The Column was titled: "Ann has no answers."
b) "Relational expert" Barbara DeAngelis made millions giving advice and wrote 8 best selling books as well as a program "Making love work". She's been married 5 times!

3) It's getting worse. (1 Tim 4:1-3; 2 Tim. 3:1-5)

- a) In the 70's, Hollywood seldom portrayed divorced or immoral persons in leading roles. Today 90% of it's "stars" are either divorced or in premarital or extramarital sexual encounters.

4) We're "in" the world, but not "of" it. (Jn 15:19; 1 Jn 3:1; Col. 1:13; 2 Cor. 6:14-18)

5) It still seeks to "Shape" (Influence) our values. (Ro. 12:2)

- a) The world's "values" have infiltrated the church.

The "World's Wisdom" is enticing because it's also:

2. Sensual (psychikos': animal sentient principle) aka: feelings" based)

- A. Our natural soul (Mind, will, emotions) is deceptive. Jer. 17:9

1) Based on Feelings rather than fact (or faith)

- a) Produces “Emotional Reasoning.” Motivation is based on “feelings.”
- b) Marriages were “arranged” for over 5000 years, with a much lower “divorce rate!”

2) Based on Performance rather than principle.

- a) We’ll “do our part” only to the extent that we think our partner is “doing their part.”
(This is the basis of 50-50 relationship)
- b) Love / affection is “withheld” if we don’t perceive progress.

3) Based on Comparison rather than commitment.

- a) We compare our relationship (or spouse) with:
 - (1) Past relationships. (Parents, previous)
 - (2) Others we “know” (or think we know)
 - (3) Our ideal “fantasy”.

4) Based on Assumption rather than honest communication!

- a) Instead of vulnerably sharing our needs, feelings or perspectives, we simply reach “conclusions” based on surface or inadequate information. (Jn 7:24; Eph. 4:15; 1Pt. 3:7)

3. Devilish: (daimoniō’ dēs: demonic) (Jn 10:10; 2 Cor. 4:4; 1 Peter 5:8)

Although demons isn’t directly responsible for every “problem” we face, they will seek to use each issue to further Satan’s agenda and plant “weeds” (Mt. 13:22) that spread or “strongholds” (2 Cor 10:3-5) from which they can work to clutter and/or control (influence) us. (Eph. 4:26; 2 Tim. 2:24-26)

A. His Nature. Jn 8:44 *“He was a murderer ... abode not in the truth... for he is a liar and the father of it.”*

- 1) Deceiver. 2 Cor. 11; 2 Cor 4:4 “he is a liar...”
- 2) Destroyer. Jn 10:10 *“steal, kill, destroy”* (See also 1 Pt. 5:8; Rev. 8:11)

B. His Resources. *Pleasure; Possessions; Pride* (see Luke 4:1-13; 2 Cor. 4:4; 1 Jn 2:15)

C. His Methods. *Deceive; Divide; Destroy.* (Gen. 3; 2 Cor 11)

D. HIS ALLIES: This world and our own selfish Flesh.

Conclusion:

God tells us in James 1:2-6 that life’s challenges provide opportunities for us to look beneath the surface and recognize which Foundational Values (Wisdoms) we’re building on.

What’s the solution to the seduction of “Worldly Wisdom?”

Seek (and submit to) the *“Wisdom that is from above”* James 3:17; 1:5

This is what David did in Ps. 139:23,24 *“Search me, O God, and know my heart: try me, and know my thoughts: and see if there be any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting.”*

In Mt 19:28,29 Jesus invites: *“Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For my yoke is easy, (Chrēstos’: useful, furnished) and my burden is light.”*

Thankfully our Lord is a gifted “Carpenter” who delights in helping us:

Recognize faulty foundations; Replace them with Truth; Repair the damage; and Rebuild our lives and relationships on the foundation of His Wisdom. (Isaiah 61:1-4; Lk 4:17-21)

Application: Will You Prayerfully:

- 1) Join me in asking God to reveal the *“cracks of worldly wisdom”* in the foundations of our lives and relationships? (Ps. 139:23,24) *“Search me Oh God”*
- 2) Purpose to ask God to help you rebuild your life/relationships on His Wisdom? *“Lead me in the way everlasting”* Ps. 139:24