

Two Kinds of Wisdom: False Wisdom

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[0:00] James 3 beginning in verse 6 through the end of the chapter. The tongue also is a fire, a world of evil among the parts of the body. It corrupts the whole person, sets the whole course of his life on fire, and is itself set on fire by hell.

All kinds of animals, birds, reptiles, and creatures of the sea are being tamed and have been tamed by man, but no man can tame the tongue. It is a restless evil full of deadly poison.

With the tongue we praise our Lord and Father. My brothers, this should not be. Can both fresh water and salt water flow from the same spring? My brothers, can a fig tree bear olives or a grapevine bear figs?

Neither can a salt spring produce fresh water. Who is wise and understanding among you? Let him show it by his good life, by deeds done in the humility that comes from wisdom.

But if you harbor bitter envy and selfish ambition in your hearts, do not boast about it or deny the truth. Such wisdom does not come down from heaven, but is earthly, unspiritual of the devil.

[1:10] 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 raise a harvest of righteousness. Well, at any point in your life, there are always two different kinds of wisdom competing for your heart and life.

There's true wisdom and there's false wisdom. Maybe James is thinking about Proverbs chapter 9 where we have there lady wisdom and lady folly, both competing for the souls of men.

But this is no small matter, as James makes clear to us. To ask which wisdom is holding sway in the center of your being is like asking, who's at the helm of this ship?

Who's in the cockpit of this plane? On 9-11-2001, United Flight 93 nosedived into the ground near Shanksville, Pennsylvania.

[2:32] And we may never know the full story of what happened on board that day. But it seems this much is clear that there was a struggle for the controls of that airplane.

First, the true pilots were in control and headed the plane for San Francisco. Then terrorist hijackers attacked the pilots, took control of the plane and turned it around and headed back toward Washington, D.C.

And then passengers revolted and charged the cockpit, attempting to regain control of the plane. And at that point, it crashed nose first into the ground, killing all on board.

Do you see the importance of who is at the controls? Who was at the controls of the airplane that day made all the difference between arriving in sunny California and being instantly buried in a field near Shanksville, Pennsylvania.

And James tells us, you are that plane. And every moment of your life, there are two kinds of wisdom competing for the controls of your heart.

[3:54] And depending upon which one is given the controls, your life will be marked either by righteousness, peace and holiness, which leads to life.

Or by disorder, destruction and every evil practice, which leads to death. And as if that's not sobering enough, we learn that true wisdom may be in control at one moment and false wisdom may be in control the very next.

Even as it was on board United Flight 93. Now, this is vintage James. In chapter two, he told us there are two kinds of faith. There's the true kind and there's the false kind.

There's the kind that saves and the kind that doesn't save. And now in chapter three, he tells us there's two kinds of wisdom. There's the true kind and the false kind.

And their results could not be more opposite either. And so James, filled with the wisdom and love of God, the Holy Spirit, wants us to be sure we have the right kind of wisdom, just as he was concerned that we have the right kind of faith.

[5:11] You see, the problem is that both claim to be true wisdom. That's what makes it so tricky. False wisdom doesn't come with a label that says false wisdom.

It comes with a label that says wisdom. It claims to be every bit as much wise as true wisdom does. And in fact, it's got far more teachers and far more followers going its way than true wisdom has. And all of that makes the whole matter very sticky, very difficult to unravel. So which kind of wisdom do you have this morning? Which is ruling your life?

James has a test to put your wisdom through. To see which kind it is. And so he's got two charts. Chart number one, true wisdom.

Chart number two, false wisdom. And he describes both for us. And on each chart we'll find three things. Its source. Where it comes from.

[6:20] Its characteristics. What it looks like. And third, its results. What it leads to. What it produces.

And we'll follow those same three points for both kinds of wisdom. I'm afraid, and this is why you don't have handouts this morning, that I was thinking we'd get through both kinds this morning. And I wasn't wise in thinking so. We're only going to be able to look at the false wisdom this morning. And Lord willing, come back next week and see the contrast between these two as James sets them before us.

So this morning it's more on the false wisdom, although he starts out with a word about true wisdom. Notice how he introduces the discussion in verse 13.

With a question, as he often does. Who is wise and understanding among you? It's like saying, let him stand up. Go ahead. You who are wise and understanding.

[7:24] Who are you? Make yourselves known. Now, many were claiming to be wise. In fact, they were claiming to be so wise that they claimed to be instructors and teachers of others.

But they were not truly wise. And that's the problem that set up this whole issue of chapter 3 about the tongue. Remember? Verse 1. Not many of you should presume to be teachers, my brothers, because you know that we who teach will be judged more strictly.

We all stumble in many ways. And especially with our tongue. So don't be many of you teachers. They were claiming to be wise.

To have understanding such that they would be good instructors of others. We have the answers, they thought.

But many of them were using their tongues not to build up the people of God, but to build themselves up and to put others down. And it was wreaking havoc in the congregations of the early church, causing quarreling and fighting and divisions and rivalries, all kinds of troubles in the church.

[8:41] So James asks, well, who are the really wise ones among you? Let him show it by his good life, by deeds done in the humility that comes from wisdom.

James is saying it's show and tell all over again, folks. Remember chapter 2? I've got faith. Don't have any deeds that support it, but I've got faith.

And James says, well, you show me your faith without deeds, and I'll show you my faith by what I do. Now here's the same claim, a similar claim.

I've got wisdom. I'm fit to be a teacher. And James says, okay, show me. Enough talk. Now show me.

Let's see it. By what you do. By your good life. Show it by your good life. That is by the way you live. And right away, we're into the question of, well, what is wisdom?

[9:46] What is wisdom after all? James talks as if it's the way you live. At least that's how it's seen. And we need to be careful that when we think of wisdom, that we don't think of smarts.

We don't just think of intelligence and IQ and brain power. You know, you can have a doctorate in science and not have enough wisdom to know when to get in out of the rain.

Wisdom is not the same thing as brains. Rather true wisdom, as we find it in scripture affects the whole life. Doesn't just affect your brain.

It affects that. But also affects your tongue. And your hands and your feet and your decisions. And your priorities and your values.

And your relationships and your work and your play. And in fact, everything that you do. It's far more than knowing truths and facts up here. It rather has to do.

[10 : 50] It's what you do with what you know. It's skill in right living. It's making it comes upon a situation and it's making a correct assessment of the situation and then choosing the best way to act in it.

That's wisdom. It's a way of life. It's it's a very practical thing. It's it's right thinking joined to right behavior. And don't think of wisdom as just right thinking.

It's both. It's living right as God defines it. That's wisdom. And just as true faith shows itself by deeds, so does true wisdom.

It'll show itself by a good life. Full of good deeds. And then James specifies one very specific mark of wisdom's deeds.

You will show wisdom by a whole life of deeds. And there are certain kind of deed. They are deeds shown. They are deeds done in the humility that comes from wisdom.

[11 : 57] Now, there's the hallmark that James is putting on true wisdom. And this is where we'll at least get into a peak of what is true wisdom. Well, it's a whole way of life, for one thing.

And it's marked by humility. Meekness. Gentleness. That's the stamp that is left on everything that wisdom does.

Mark it down. Where humility is absent, so is wisdom. I don't care how educated he is. I don't care how intellectual she is.

I don't care how gifted a speaker, how many books they've written. Where humility is absent, so is wisdom. If we're not humble, we know nothing as we ought.

Think of the humblest teacher, the wisest teacher of all, our Lord Jesus. Almost said the humblest teacher. Well, he was that too, wasn't he?

[13 : 03] And that's where I'm going. The wisest teacher of all, our Lord Jesus Christ. And what does he say? He says, come to me, all you who are weary and heavy laden, and I will give you rest.

Take my yoke upon you and learn from me. For I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls.

For my yoke is easy and my burden is light. I am gentle, meek, and humble. Me, the teacher. You need to learn from me, and I am humble.

He's the great God, but he's so humble. And he's taking on our human nature. He's becoming a man.

Humbling himself. And he's now taking on our sins. Humbling himself, even to the point of death on the cross.

[14 : 09] Here's wisdom on two feet, and all his deeds are marked all along the way by humility. The deeds done in the humility that comes from wisdom.

So, who is wise and understanding among you? I see a rather simple woman who never finished high school. And she's being railed on by her husband's sharp tongue.

And she's giving a gentle answer to his harsh words. What a wise woman. And there's a teenager, and his sister wants to argue with him, and he's not picking up on the bait.

And he's humble enough to let her get the last word in. Wise teenager. And I see a man whose life has been turned upside down by a difficult providence.

Events that have happened to him leave him whirling and confused. And he's quietly trusting, putting his neck under the yoke of Christ.

[15 : 29] Willing to let God be God in his life. Not demanding to have life my way, but meekly yielding to God.

Oh, wise, wise man. Now, you may not have thought of wisdom that way before. Then you need to think again.

You need to think again, because that's what wisdom is. Wisdom produces humility. Humble deeds that prove its presence. The presence of genuine wisdom.

There's this mark of humility on everything they do. Now, that's going to be spelled out further as we come to verses 17 and 18 next week.

But James would ferret out these self-professed wise ones then, who didn't have true wisdom. And though that's the immediate starting point, the launching point of James, we must not think, well, this is just for people who want to be teachers.

[16:41] There's nothing said to these teachers that does not apply to every one of us. Indeed, James has every one of us in his sights as he talks about true wisdom and false wisdom.

So this morning, let's look then at false wisdom as James paints it. Number one, its characteristics. Verse 14. But if you harbor.

Just heard about true wisdom being humble. But if you harbor bitter envy and selfish ambition in your hearts, do not boast about it or deny the truth.

Such wisdom, he goes on to say, is not from heaven. So such wisdom that is marked by not humility, but by two very different hard attitudes.

Number one, bitter envy. And number two, selfish ambition. Look first at bitter envy. That's that warm, I should say, hot feeling of resentment and ill will that we have for something, that we have towards others for something that we don't have.

[17:52] It not only wants what they have, but it doesn't want them to have it either. I don't want others having what I can't have. If I can't have it, I won't be happy if you do.

That's bitter envy. By the way, it's the same word used for bitter that is used earlier of that water, that salty, bitter, brackish water that spews out of the heart that is bitter.

So we have bitter envy. It's the wife with a difficult marriage, resenting her sister in Christ because she has a good marriage, a husband who really loves her.

That sister's done nothing to offend her. She just has a good marriage. And bitter envy will resent her for it.

It's the athlete who sits most the game on the bench while his rival starts every game and gets his picture in the paper. It's the student begrudging the better grades of her rival.

[19:06] It's the one with fewer friends resenting the popularity of others. It's the man with lesser gifts resenting the man with greater gifts.

It's the sick resenting the health of others. In fact, there's nothing that bitter envy will not fasten upon. Their houses that are better than mine.

Their cars. Their jobs. Their children. Their incomes. Their blessings. Their prosperity. Yes, even preachers can just as soon have sinners stay lost than to have God use some other minister or some other church to save more than him.

God forbid that anyone should have a greater influence in the kingdom of Christ than me. Bitter envy. Bitter envy. Bitter envy. That sees the success of another and scorns them for it.

You see, when a brother is blessed, envy refuses to rejoice with those who rejoice. It rather grieves to see the person rejoice.

[20:25] And it rejoices to see them grieving. That's ugly, folks, isn't it? That's bitter envy. John Blanchard tells a story of two men who lived as neighbors.

It was envy and covetous. And the king sent for them, saying he wanted to give them each one wish apiece. With this stipulation that the one who would choose first would get exactly what he asked for.

While the other man would get exactly twice what the first had asked for himself. And so envy was told to choose first. Well, he immediately found himself in a dilemma.

You see, he's thinking of all the good things that he wants to choose. And then it hits him that if I choose that, then my neighbor is going to get twice that.

And he could not bear the thought of his neighbor having more than him. So he finally asked for this, that one of his eyes would be put out.

[21:33] Well, our envy is just that ugly. We would rather suffer harm than to see someone else blessed more than us.

Or it may be that we do have something good. And then bitter envy wants to be the only one who has it. I like my honor.

I like my position. I like my new car. I don't want you to have the same thing that I have. Bitter envy. So how are you, brothers and sisters, with the blessings, the successes of your brothers and sisters?

And I ask you that especially when you are going through trials of many kinds. That's the context of the whole letter. That's where the whole thing started, wasn't it? And so we need to keep the context as we go through the letter.

We have a tendency when we're going through hard trials to be envious of those who aren't going through such difficulties. Beware.

[22:48] Bitter envy is a mark of false wisdom. Don't harbor it in your heart. It's the wrong pilot to have it to control. It defiles many and causes all sorts of trouble.

But there's a second characteristic mark of true or of false wisdom. Not only does it have bitter envy, it also has selfish ambition. This, again, is opposed to the humility that marks true wisdom. Well, selfish ambition. The Greek word was used of politicians who entered politics for selfish reasons and was willing to do anything to get elected to office.

Now, this is going back, you know, 2,000 years to the Greeks and some things never change, do they? That's the word. That's the word James gets a hold of.

The selfish ambition of the politician who wants great things for himself and will spare nothing to get it. Whoever he's got to walk over, whatever laws and rules there are, he's selfish ambition and he must have it.

[24:00] Well, it's pride that's promoting myself, isn't it? That's the selfish ambition. It's pushing myself forward.

It's making sure that I get to the top of the ladder, no matter who I have to walk over. It's wanting to outshine others. And the focus is all self, selfish ambition.

Now, it may say that it's all for God's glory, but at the bottom is this root of selfish ambition. Wanting to puff up my reputation.

It's Ananias and Sapphira. Wanting to be known as very generous and giving individuals. When Barnabas, the son of encouragement, sold land and gave it to the church to be distributed among the poor.

No doubt. The church people were very happy with brother Barnabas. And Ananias and Sapphira with envy look on that scene and with selfish ambition say, let's go sell a parcel of ground ourselves.

[25:04] That people might think well of us. And you remember, they lied about the purchase price to make them look more generous. Why did they do that? They could have kept it all for themselves, but they lied so that they would look better.

It's selfish ambition. That's the sort of thing that's found in churches. Yes, even the Jerusalem church. It was the right thing done for the wrong motive.

Look at me. Look at me. And selfish ambition is able to take any ministry and turn it into a soapbox to promote me.

That's why Paul has to say, we do not preach ourselves. It's possible for preachers to stand in a pulpit and to make that pulpit a soapbox for his own gifts.

It's ugly, folks, to be preaching a humble Jesus from such a proud heart. You must pray that God will burn it out of our souls.

[26:08] But that's the sort of thing James is talking about. That selfish ambition that thinks I'm the big fish in the pond. My ideas are the most important. And without me, nothing will succeed.

And so these two often are found together. Bitter envy that would tear others down. And selfish ambition that is out to lift me up.

The two are often found together in the heart. They're often found together in the scriptures. Turn over to Galatians chapter 5. That list of the fruit of the flesh found right before the fruit of the spirit.

The acts of chapter 5 verse 19. The acts of the sinful nature are obvious. See if you can find our two culprits from James. Sexual immorality.

Impurity and debauchery. Idolatry and witchcraft. Hatred, discord, jealousy, fits of rage, selfish ambition.

[27:14] Dissensions, factions. I'm sorry. Selfish ambition, dissensions, factions. And envy. Drunkenness, orgies and the like.

I warn you as I did before that those who live like this will not inherit the kingdom of God. There we find them in this horrendous list of fruits of the flesh. Selfish ambition.

And this bitter envy. The apostle Paul found them in his day. He's he's in Rome. He's in jail. He'd love to be out preaching.

And God was blessing his preaching so that many were being converted. And it made other preachers grow envious. Yes. And so when Paul was thrown into jail, these preachers of the gospel of Jesus Christ were inwardly happy.

Now, perhaps they sent a note. Sorry to hear you're in jail, Paul. But inwardly they rejoice. Because now I can get some of the limelight that brother Paul has been stealing for all this time.

[28:22] And so Paul says from jail, some preach Christ out of envy and rivalry.

They preach Christ out of selfish ambition, not sincerely, supposing that they can stir up trouble for me while I am in chains. And I say if people can preach the true gospel of Jesus from selfish ambition and envy, there is nothing that you cannot do for selfish ambition and envy. It can hide behind a pretended humility. It can hide behind a claim to be doing it all for God. And so James says, if you harbor these two things in your heart, do not boast about it or deny the truth. First of all, don't boast about it. It's nothing to be bragging about. This kind of wisdom that you have. It's really empty and worthless. And he's going to say more about it. And then don't deny it. If you've really got at the bottom this envy and selfish ambition, don't deny it. Don't cover it up.

[29:40] Don't say, oh, it's not true. God knows the heart. You know your heart. You know if God the Spirit is putting his finger upon you. Don't deny it. Healing can only come when we say, I'm the sinner.

Have mercy upon me, God, for Jesus' sake. So don't deny this truth. So we're looking at the characteristics of false wisdom. And it's marked by bitter envy and selfish ambition.

And if we're providing safe harbor, that's the picture that I get when I see this word harbor. If we're providing safe harbor in our hearts for bitter envy and selfish ambition to just pull in out of the turbulent ocean and to get in here where it's safe and protected.

If you're protecting envy and selfish ambition, then you've just let two enemy nuclear subs into New York Harbor. And from there, they will wreak havoc in your lives, your relationships, your families, your church.

That's nothing to ignore, to have these things harbored in your hearts. That's the characteristic. Secondly, its source.

[30:56] What's the source of this wisdom? James talks, as he often does, in the negative and the positive. It's not this, but it's this. First of all, he says, verse 15, such wisdom does not come down from heaven.

Let's be clear about this. It's you're bragging about how wise you are. God's wisdom. God has given you understanding. No, we need to realize the source is not God.

It does not come down from heaven. Whatever you call it, it's not heavenly wisdom. Well, then where does it come from, James? Well, not from above, but from below.

Oh, how below? Well, he tells us it's, first of all, earthly. It's earthly. Here's heaven. Here's earth. It's below, isn't it?

This is worldly wisdom. This is the way man thinks without God. This is the man who calls himself wise, but he's really a fool.

[32:02] Because he shut his eyes to the true wisdom, which is from above. And so it's all about the earth. This wisdom has its source in earth. It's just from man.

It never rises higher than the earth. It's it's they mind earthly things. Philippians 3:19. Their mind is all about the earth. That's this wisdom. It's earthly in its source, in its focus.

And since they reject the word of the Lord, Jeremiah asked, what kind of wisdom do they have? Well, they're left with their man made earthly wisdom.

Secondly, it's unspiritual. That means it's it's the wisdom of the natural man, not taught by the spirit of God. You see that contrast in First Corinthians chapter 2 to the natural man, man as he is without God, the spirit enlightening him.

He's natural, unspiritual man. And that is his wisdom. Again, it's the best that natural man can come up with left to himself without God in the picture.

[33:09] And then thirdly. It is earthly, unspiritual. It is devilish of the devil. How below is it?

Heaven, earth. You haven't gone far enough. James says, you got to go further. And James is tracing this wisdom right back to its source. And he follows it all the way down to hell.

And he says, that's where it's come from. You've heard people talk about a lie from the pit. That's exactly what James is saying about this wisdom, this wisdom that by which our world operates, by which every unconverted person operates, has at the controls right now of their playing false wisdom.

It has its origin in hell. And so Jesus is able to say to religious people in his day in John 8, your father, the devil, he's the father of lies.

He's the author of this wisdom that is so-called wisdom when really it's a cheating lie. And he's the father of it. Jesus traced it to hell.

[34 : 24] James traces it down to hell. It's not from above. It's from below. Wasn't it the same with the tongue? Isn't that what we saw in chapter three earlier in this chapter?

Your tongue is set on fire and it sets on fire the whole course of your life and is itself set on fire by hell. Oh, yeah, I've got a pipeline to hell right into my mouth.

That's the source of this venom that pours out of it. And now he's talking in chapter two about faith. And what's its source? This faith that doesn't have works.

Where does that come from? He says, well, you believe there's one God. Good for you. The demons also believe that and shudder. That's devilish faith.

And now he talks about wisdom. And James is following it to his source. It's inspired by the devil. He's the one behind it all. The father of lies.

[35 : 27] He's the one who sold his wisdom. First of all, to Eve in the garden. Do you remember the job he did there? He didn't say, Eve, would you like to have false wisdom?

No. He says, would you like to be made wise? Would you like to have your eyes opened and get knowledge like God has? Then listen to me, not to him.

And so, scriptures say, when the woman saw that the fruit of the tree was good for food and pleasing to the eye and also desirable for gaining wisdom.

Who told her that? Well, the devil did. He told her, you want to be wise? Eat some of this. She took some and ate it.

She was sold. What was the thing that took her over the top? It was desirable for gaining wisdom. Oh, but the so-called wisdom turned out to be false wisdom.

[36 : 32] A pack of lies. It had the smell of hell all over it. And so, is that not what we should expect? Now, think about it. We've seen the marks of this kind of wisdom.

It's, what did we say? We said bitter envy and selfish ambition. And now we're looking at its source. Where did those come from? Where's this wisdom come from? And we trace it back to Satan.

Say, is there any selfish ambition in Satan? I will be like the Most High. Is there any bitter envy in Satan?

Not happy with his life as God in his wisdom had planned it for him and created him to be. I don't like this. There's someone above me and I don't like him being above me.

I want to be the one above. Are we surprised that this wisdom from hell looks so much like the devil himself?

[37 : 32] Oh, he's full of envy and bitter hatred and malice against God. He doesn't want people praising him. He doesn't want people glorifying God. He doesn't want people living for him.

He wants people following him. Come on, Eve, follow me. Oh, how he rejoiced when he bit the fruit and Adam took some too. But now God has laid hold of them and brought them into his arms and onto his side to the work of Christ.

And Satan hates that when people serve God and make God look beautiful. And he's full of bitter envy against you.

Whoever you are, a human being, you're made in the image of this God. And you are offered mercy. Whoever you are, this God, when you rebelled, he came and offered you mercy.

He didn't offer that to me, Lucifer would say. And he is full of bitter envy against you who's been offered mercy. Only two sources for wisdom.

[38 : 39] There's God and the devil. There's heaven. There's hell. You know what that tells me? If any piece of wisdom that I'm allowing into my heart does not come from heaven, I need to get rid of it because it's come from hell.

And I'll never be able to be wise until I reject the world's wisdom. Well, it's result. Where's this plane going?

He tells us in verse 16. He moves right through it. The characteristics, verse 14. The source, verse 15. And now the results, verse 16. For where you have envy and selfish ambition, there you find disorder and every evil practice.

Where you have the cause, you'll find the effect. That's what he's saying. James fully believes that outward end results are the results of inward hard attitudes and causes.

Cause effect. Well, what does this wisdom from hell marked by envy and selfish ambition produce? Number one, disorder. That's the opposite of peace in 1 Corinthians chapter 14, 33.

[39:57] Disorder instead of order and peace. It's disharmony, division, disturbance. It's confusion. It's chaos. And again, why are we surprised, right?

God is the God of order. That's his fingerprint. Everything he does. It's order. Notice that about creation. When he first created the world, it was...

What does Genesis 1 say? It talks about it. Verse 2 talks about it being without form. Without form. And what does God do in his creative days, six days of creation?

He puts order. He puts the light here and the darkness there. And he puts the water here and the land here. He puts everything in order. God is a God of order.

The devil is the author of confusion. That's his finger mark. Where you see confusion, you see a fingerprint. The devil's left his fingerprint on that.

[40:58] Chaos and confusion. And he seeks to bring it into the order. To bring confusion into the order that God has established in creation.

And so with the entrance of sin, this whole world is moving from the order that God created it to the chaos. And the confusion and the disorder.

As the devil's wisdom is spreading like yeast through the whole lump. And blessed be God. That Jesus Christ is recreating some.

And moving them from chaos and disorder back into order. Into being what God made them to be in the first place. Oh, but disorder is the product of devilish wisdom.

Where bitter envy and selfish ambition are they naturally lead to this. Disorder. Chaos. In the family. Husbands and wives.

[42:02] Parents and children. Fighting and quarreling among the children. Tearing apart, you see, what God has put together. Each in their place.

And it's all turned to chaos. In the church. Order. Yes. Pastors and members.

Deacons. Everyone loving and serving one another. Beautiful order. And the devil comes in with selfish ambition. And bitter envy.

And it's rivalry. I'm of Paul. I'm of Paul. I'm of Peter. I'm of Christ. It's chaos. And it's division. Disturbance.

And disharmony. No church can survive with bitter envy and selfish ambition. Being harbored within. It corrupts entire congregations. In the workplace. I don't need to tell you what it does there.

[43:01] In the nation. In politics. Turmoil! Tumult and trouble. In every social relationship. Disorder. And destruction. Are the result of this wisdom.

Shatters unity. And unravels relationships. Will you see the cause of this mess? It goes back to the bitter envy. Because bitter envy will suggest bitter words to be spoken to your brother.

To your husband. It goes back to selfish ambition. Selfish ambition. Will not think twice of trampling and walking over somebody else.

As we're making our way in a scramble to the top. So that's the result. That's where this ship is going. To disorder. But it doesn't end there. James adds.

And every evil practice. Like Paul did in Galatians. Five. And all sorts of such behavior.

[44:02] Every evil practice. How true it is. There's no end to the evil produced by the devil's wisdom. Of envy and ambition.

It was because of envy that Cain murdered his brother Abel. It was because of envy that wicked Haman built the gallows for Mordecai.

And sought to extinguish the Jews. It was envy that led Absalom. To start a revolution against the kingdom of his father David.

I want to be on the throne. And even Pilate knew. Didn't he. That it was out of envy. That the Jewish leaders had delivered Jesus over to him to have him crucified.

And if you harbor this bitter envy and selfish ambition in your hearts. There's no telling what forms of evil practices it will lead you to.

[45:00] What relationship in your life will be ruined. Because this wisdom leads to disorder and every evil practice.

So what have we seen this morning? Well we've seen that there are two kinds of wisdom. And already even with the little peak we got into true wisdom.

Being marked by deeds of humility. We can see what a contrast. Humility. Envy. And selfish ambition. Those are such opposed attitudes of the heart. Quite contrary.

Different sources. One's from heaven. One's from hell. Different results. And we'll see the result next week of true wisdom. But what an end.

You see kids there's no question where Satan's wisdom is driving the plane. He's taking it down. He's taking it down. And if you've got Satan's wisdom in the cockpit, you're going down with him.

[46:05] You're nosediving. Into ruin, into disorder, into every evil practice in the hell that waits for all such.

I said that there's two kinds of wisdom competing for the cockpit in your heart. But on flight 93, the true pilots started the flight.

But children, I must tell you that when you started the flight and first took off, already the devil's wisdom was in the cockpit.

Folly is bound up in the heart of a child. It wasn't that you started off right, heading for San Francisco, heading for heaven.

No, you started off with a heart that's full of every evil, vile practice that hell would suggest. And that's why you're not happy when somebody else has something that you don't have.

[47:12] That's why you want to be noticed. And you're not happy unless you're in the limelight and you're getting your way. It's all in evidence.

It's all the result. And it tells us, OK, where's that coming from? Well, let's follow the flight of the airplane and let's see who's driving that thing. And it says Satan's wisdom.

That's what it is. It's the wisdom of the world. There is none that understands. That's the that's the summary of mankind.

Every boy and girl brought into this world. There's no none that are wise. There's none that understand and that seek God. They all seek their own way. How did that get in the cockpit?

Well, you inherited that sinful heart from your parents and they got it from their parents and they got it from their parents and they got it way back from their fallen parents, Adam and Eve.

[48:13] And this is the wisdom that is now operating all over the world. It's operating in in your workplace, your school, families, communities, politics. It's the wisdom of the world.

It's corporate flesh. Seen by its marks of envy and selfishness and by its ruination of disorder and every evil practice.

It's the way that seems right to a man. Because that's all that's got is the man's thoughts. Nothing from God that comes down from heaven.

Well, if that's the end of the story, folks, we'd we'd we'd all be sunk. But there is the other half.

James says, blessed be God. There is a wisdom that comes down from heaven.

And I don't want to get ahead of me. And we don't have time to say a whole lot about that. But I just want to tell you there. There was somebody else. There was something else that came down out of heaven, wasn't there?

[49:12] There was a perfect son that came down out of heaven. And he came to teach us and to make us truly wise through faith in Jesus Christ.

Do you know him? Have you trusted in him? That's the beginning of wisdom, the fear of the Lord, to be right with the Lord. That's the beginning.

That's where you start. You don't just say, OK, I'll come back next week and try to learn how to put on wisdom. No, you got to know Christ. You got to know the Lord and to fear him, to trust him, to hold him in the highest regard.

And that's the beginning of wisdom. Until you stand in awe before this holy God and recognize your sin and be humbled before him and ask him to forgive you. You'll not be teachable.

You'll not be able to learn true wisdom. Oh, but come to him with your sin. And own what you are.

Own the wisdom that's been driving and flying your plane ever since you were born.

[50:11] And flee to this Savior. And say to him this morning from the heart, have thine own way, Lord. We've heard God set before us our way, the way in which we were born.

Let us cry out to him for mercy and ask him to have his way in our lives. Thank you, our Father, for speaking to us words of life. You never bring us to see ourselves without holding out Christ before us.

You never condemn us without pointing to one who is condemned for all who trust in him. Oh, forgive us for pretending to be wise.

Forgive us for thinking we have what it takes to direct ourselves through this life and into eternity.

Wash us and cleanse us. Thank you for sending Christ who has become our wisdom.

Sending him from heaven. He's come down from heaven. He's brought wisdom with him. Wisdom for the fools. Oh, thank you for him. Make us truly wise. Thank you that there is power, all power, to break our bondage to foolishness and to this world's wisdom.

[51 : 26] Oh, Lord Jesus, may you and your wisdom hold sway at the helm of our life for your praise, for our eternal good, and for the glory of your Father.

We ask in Jesus' name. Amen.