

CCC HOW TO RELATE WISELY TO OTHERS P9

Developing a Faith That Works

James 3:13-18

Every day you encounter many different kinds of people. Some are very delightful. Some are very difficult. Some of them are inspiring. Some of them are irritating, Some of them are fascinating, and in some case maybe intimidating. The fact is a lot of the problems we have in life are because of personality conflicts. We don't get along with people. When your relationships are bad, life stinks doesn't it and it makes life, miserable. So therefore it's very important that we learn how to get along with other people and God's word, the bible tells us how to do that...

In the book of James God gives us some practical advice in this area. And today, we're going to look at what

he has to say about, "How do we relate wisely to other people". [Read James 3:13-18](#)

The key verse is v18, *"And those who are peacemakers will plant seeds of peace and reap a harvest of goodness."*

James says to us, every day in every relationship you have, you're planting seeds. They maybe seeds of anger, they maybe seeds of jealousy, they maybe of peace, of confidence, insecurity, but everyday you're planting many different kinds of seeds and James says, "Inevitable you reap what you planted in your relationships." So God's word tells us if you want to have peaceful relationships and reap a harvest of goodness, become a peacemaker. So how can I plant seeds of peace? How do I go about becoming a peacemaker? How can I have peaceful relationships?

Wisdom, we need to learn how to be wise in the way we act towards people. Often we treat people in very

foolish ways and we provoke the exact opposite behavior of what we would normally like to see in them. A lot of very smart people are not too wise. You and I may be educated but they don't have wisdom. We may have all kinds of degrees but we're a washout when it comes to relationships. James defines the real wisdom, then he shows how it differs from human wisdom, then he details how it operates and were going to look at that today.

The first thing he says in v. 13 is that **wisdom is a lifestyle**. So therefore it has nothing to do with your intelligence and everything to do with your relationships and your character. v.13 says, *"Who is wise and understanding among you. Let him show it by his good life, by deeds done in humility that comes from wisdom."*

Imagine if James was to come here to Calvary this morning and ask, "Let me see the hands of those who are wise?" If

you were to raise your hand James would say to you, "Prove it, show me, how do you get along with other people? Because that shows how wise you really are, it's a lifestyle. Wisdom has more to do with your character in relationships than it has to do with education and intelligence of a relationship. See knowledge causes pride, but wisdom causes humility.

The second thing in Verses 14-16 James says **lack of wisdom causes problems** -- all kinds of problems. v. 14 *"If you harbor bitter envy and selfish ambition in your heart don't boast about it and deny the truth. Such 'wisdom' does not come down from heaven but is earthly, unspiritual, even of the devil. For where you have envy and selfish ambition there you find disorder and every evil practice."* Lack of heavenly wisdom or maybe I can say it this way earthly wisdom causes all kinds of disorder it

causes all kinds of problems, chaos and confusion. Let me ask you. Do you have confusion in your home? Do you have chaos in your life or is there areas of your life that are a mess and you just can't get it together, James says, you lack wisdom. Lack of wisdom causes all kinds of problems in our lives.

So how can I know if I'm wise... Today, we're going to take a wisdom test. We're going to test your wisdom – We're going to see how wise you really are. James in v. 17, lists the characteristics of wise people. *"But wisdom that comes from heaven is first of all -- pure, then peace loving, considerate, submissive, full of mercy and good fruit, impartial and sincere."* So James first says:

1. IF I'M WISE, I WONT COMPROMISE MY INTEGRITY. *"The wisdom that comes from heaven is first of all pure..."* Pure means it's uncorrupted, it's

authentic. In 1 John 3:3 this word is used to refer to Christ like character. Integrity. If I'm really genuine, if I'm wise, I'm not going to lie to you, I'm not going to cheat you, I'm not going to manipulate you, I'm not going to be deceitful. I'll be a person of integrity, pure. See, relationships are built on trust and respect. If you don't have honesty who's going to trust you... who's going to respect you? You have to have integrity in your life

2. IF I'M WISE, I WON'T ANTAGONIZE YOUR ANGER. I won't make you angry. Wise people work at maintaining harmony in their life. They're not always looking for a fight or an argument. We read in v. 17 *"Wisdom is peace loving."* Proverbs 20:3 *"Any fool can start arguments. The wise thing is to stay out of them."* What causes arguments? If you desire to be wise you will

want to know this... because then you can avoid them.

Three things that cause arguments:

- 1. Comparing.** 2 Corinthians 10:12 says, it's unwise to compare. When we say thing like, "Why can't you be like ...", "When I was your age..." When we say thing like this were headed for an argument. You're asking for a fight.
- 2. Condemning.** Saying things like, "It's all your fault", or these famous sayings, "You always", "You never", "You ought to", "You should...", "You shouldn't..." Someone said, "You can bury a relationship, you can bury a marriage with a lot of little digs."
- 3. Contradicting.** How do you like to be interrupted in the middle of a sentence? It's irritating. James says, Wisdom is peace loving. Proverbs 14:29 *"A wise man controls his temper. He knows that anger causes*

mistakes." How many of you have ever done something stupid in anger? Anger causes mistakes.

- 3. I WON'T MINIMIZE YOUR FEELINGS.** "Wisdom is considerate" and "considerate" means "mindful of the feelings of others". Wisdom is being mindful of other people and not if I don't feel the way you feel then your feelings must be invalid or illogical or irrational or silly. James says, "Wise people are considerate; they don't minimize other people's feelings." If I'm wise I will not minimize your feelings. I don't have to accept them... but I can appreciate them and understand them. Proverbs 15:4 *"Kind words bring life, but cruel words crush your spirit."* Typically when we react to people's emotions we say things that hurt. Often we belittle their feelings by not appreciating those feelings. We put people down, or we play psychologist. I call it the, I can fix you game, "I know

why you feel that way... and here why.” Do you ever play this game: My day can beat your day. The husband comes home worn out and starts complaining, "The traffic was bad, my boss got upset, the air conditioning went out." Wife says, "Oh, yeah? Junior dunked the cat down the toilet, the beans burned..." The fact is they both had a tough day. God’s word, the bible says, Wisdom is considerate. Allow your spouse to be tired and listen to them... without having to say, "I'm more tired than you are or I can fix that. A lot of people who share want and need to do just that... share, allow them that and give them the attention and don't feel like you have to say something or tell them what they need to do, be considerate.

4. I WON'T CRITICIZE YOUR DECISIONS/

SUGGESTIONS. A wise person can learn from anybody.

In other words, he's not defensive... he's not on the defense

but is open to reason. James says, He's not stubborn... he's willing to listen and learn. "*Wisdom is submissive*". This word is used only one time in the New Testament. It doesn't really even mean submissive. It really means reasonable, willing to listen, willing to be open to ideas and suggestions. The Revised Standard Version says, "*It's open to reason.*" The Living Bible says, "*It allows discussion.*" It's easy to be entreated.

Let me ask you a few questions right now? Are you a reasonable person? Can your kids reason with you? Can your wife or husband reason with you? Can a friend. The Bible says if you're wise, you're reasonable. You're open to suggestions.

The truth be known most of us are way too oversensitive anyway. If somebody makes a suggestion we take it as a personal criticism and we become immediately

defensive. James says that's not wise. Proverbs 12:15 *"A fool thinks he needs no advice. A wise man listens to others."* A wise person can learn from anybody, will be open to reason and won't criticize your suggestions.

5. IF I'M WISE I WON'T EMPHASIZE YOUR

MISTAKES. *"Wisdom is full of mercy and good fruit."*

Do you jump on people every time they make a blunder, every time they make a fault and fumble it?

God's word, the bible says, Wisdom is full of mercy. I won't emphasize your mistakes. Do you ever let people go, or do you keep hounding them about their past mistakes? It's called leverage, and they never can be set free even if they have asked you for forgiveness? You're always saying, "Remember the time you did..." You're always holding on and bringing up the past for leverage. If I'm wise, I won't emphasize your mistake. I'll be full of mercy. I'll give you

what you need, not what you deserve. Proverbs 17:9 *"Love forgets mistakes. Nagging about them parts even the best of friends."* If you're wise you don't rub it in, you rub it out. You don't hold it over their heads. You forget it.

When somebody stumbles, you don't judge them. You encourage them back up. We don't need judgment when we fall. We need encouragement when we stumble. Are you that way at home? If somebody forgets something -- forgets to fill the car with gas, forgets to bring the mail in -- how do you act? Do you rub it in or do you rub it out?

The wise thing is to not emphasize the mistake. *"Wisdom is full of mercy and good fruit."* Good fruit is kind actions, it's something you do. You don't just show sympathy. You don't just say, "I feel for you... You brought it all on yourself." You do something about it. You take action.

It's a kindness. It's being a doer of the word. James 2:12

"Mercy triumphs over judgement." Mercy is a greater principle than judging. James says, "If I'm wise I won't emphasize your mistakes, I won't criticize your suggestions, I won't minimize your feelings, I won't antagonize your anger."

6. IF I'M WISE, I WON'T DISGUISE MY OWN

WEAKNESSES. A mark of a wise person is they don't try to hide and disguise their own weaknesses. *"Wisdom is impartial and sincere."* These two words in Greek sound similar. They sound like "hypocrite" and that is where we get the word from. It means "without hypocrisy" -- straightforward, right on. In the Greek theater they often would have just a couple or three actors playing an entire play. These people would change parts. They would hold masks in front of their face. One person would have five or

six different masks and parts and that actor, was called a hypocrite. They have all kinds of masks.

James says if you're smart and wise, you're not phony. You don't wear masks and try to be something you're not. I've said before, if you're perfect this is not the church for you. If you're going to wear masks this isn't the church for you. This church is for real people, with real sins, real hang ups, real faults, real emotional problems, real family problems. Not veneer people...

If I'm wise I'm not going to disguise my weaknesses. Today, there are so many phony people and relationships. Proverbs 28:13 *"You will never succeed in life if you try to hide your sins."*

If you desire to be wise start sharing with someone and guess what when you start telling people what your weaknesses are... they are not going to be shocked because

they already know. You're not fooling anybody but you're yourself. Everybody already knows your weakness. You're the only one who won't admit it. We see each other's weaknesses all the time. It's obvious to everybody but ourselves. So share it...

So let me ask you... How do you rate yourself on the wisdom test? Do you compromise your integrity? Do you use people; do you manipulate them and use them for the things you want? Do you tend to antagonize anger... you know if you say it, it will press their hot button, but you say it anyway. James says if that's the case your foolish. It's not being wise. If I'm wise I will not antagonize your anger. If I'm wise I won't minimize your feelings. Feelings are neither right nor wrong, they're just feelings. When my wife has a feeling it's valid. Whether it's logical, whether it makes sense, the fact is she really feels it. If I'm

wise I'm not going to minimize that. If I'm wise I won't criticize your suggestions, but will accept them. If I'm wise I don't try to disguise my feelings.

So, how do I get wisdom? How do I become one of those wise people in relationships so that I have that peace that everybody is talking about? This is the difference between knowledge and wisdom. Knowledge comes from education. Wisdom comes from God. To get knowledge you look around. To get wisdom you look up. Knowledge comes from reason. Wisdom comes from revelation. Knowledge is something you learn. Wisdom is a gift.

James 1:5 *"If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask of God."*

Wisdom is a gift from God. I sometimes ask 20 times a day, "God, give me wisdom." I want to be wisest person I can be in this situation or that situation and I want that more than anything else. If I'm loving and I'm wise, I'm

going to make it in life. If you're loving and wise you're going to make it in life. *"Ask of God who gives generously."* He loves to give. Colossians 2:3 *"The secret is Christ Himself. In Him lie hidden all God's treasures of wisdom."* It's all wrapped up in a person, Jesus Christ. If you want God's wisdom get Jesus in your life. You invite Him into your life and say, "Christ, think Your thoughts through my mind and say Your words through my mouth. Help people through my hands. Love people with my heart. And put Your wisdom in my mind." The wisest thing I ever did was give my life to Jesus Christ. Why didn't I do it sooner? That's where wisdom comes from. When you get God's wisdom in your life, day by day, as you allow Him into your life and develop your character, you'll find your relationships getting better and better. As you allow Him into your rooms of life to clean them up

with you, you will obtain His wisdom, as you trust Him. You will learn how to relate wisely instead of stupidly to people.

Prayer: How wise are you? Where do you need wisdom? Do you need wisdom in your marriage? Do you need wisdom with your kids? Do you need wisdom at work? How to relate to people? That cantankerous person who just ticks you off... a secretary... a boss... a co-worker -- you don't get along with them at all. Where do you get that kind of wisdom"? It's all wrapped up in Jesus Christ. The first step is to invite Him into your life. Wisdom begins with knowing God. Psalm 111:10 *"Reverence for the Lord is the beginning of wisdom."* It starts with salvation. Ask Him into your life. Then day-by-day you continually ask Him for wisdom and fellowship with other Christians. The Bible says, as iron sharpens iron, a wise friend sharpens

another friend. A man is wise by the company he keeps.

Read God's word. All God's word has wisdom. The more you read God's word, the wiser you'll be.

Pray in your heart right now, "Lord, I need Your wisdom in my relationships. Please give me Your wisdom. I'm asking in faith, as best as I know how. Lord, help me not to compromise my integrity in relationships. Help me to keep my life pure in an impure world. Help me not to give up my convictions just for a friendship. Lord, help me not to antagonize people's anger. You know I know what makes them mad and I tend to use it when I want to get even. Help me not to say those things or do those things. Help me to be wise. Help me not to minimize other people's feelings, that I'll respect it whether I agree with it or not and not put it down, whether I understand it or not. Help me to be wise and not be defensive and not criticize other people's suggestions but to be open to learn and to be reasonable and willing to talk things out, to discuss things. Lord, You've said that's a characteristic of being wise and I want to be that way. Help me not to emphasize other

people's mistakes but to show mercy, because I sure need mercy. I make mistakes. Help me not to nag others about their past, things that are behind us. Help me not to disguise my weaknesses, to learn to be open and honest. God, that scares me but I want to be wise and You've said I can never succeed in life if I try to hide my sins. Jesus Christ, come into my life. Give me your wisdom." If you've never invited Him in say, "Make me a new person inside. I want You to direct me."

Father, I thank You for Your word. I thank You that through it we become wise people in relating to others. I know there are a lot of smart, intelligent and educated people in the world that are really foolish in relationships. Yet You say that's where wisdom shows itself. Give us Your wisdom. In Jesus' name. Amen.