

THE WISE, THE UNWISE, AND OTHERWISE

James 3:13–18

All the way through his letter, James continues to emphasize the value of our living honorable lives. As we learned during our last time together, a major factor in accomplishing that goal is keeping our tongues under control (3:1–12). For that to happen, we need more than the discipline of self-restraint . . . we need a good supply of divine wisdom. That helps explain why James slips into the topic of wisdom immediately on the heels of his exhortation regarding the control of our tongue. Very early in his letter he mentioned that we may ask God for wisdom when we need it, and He will graciously and willingly give it to us (1:5). He now comes back to that subject and gets into the details of what “God’s kind of wisdom” does and does not include. It’s not what we know that makes us wise, but what we are—it’s more than possessing knowledge or being clever or having a high I.Q.

I. When God’s Wisdom Is Present

- Signs (v. 13)

- Characteristics (v. 17)

- Results (v. 18)

II. When God’s Wisdom Is Absent

- Signs (v. 14)

- Characteristics (v. 15)

- Results (v. 16)