



2. The example of the contradiction (James 3:11-12)
 - a. The example of the fountain (James 3:11-12)
 - (1) The question asked (James 3:11)
 - a) The specificity of the question
 - i) Doth **a fountain**
 - ii) Send forth **at the same place**
 - b) The complication of the question
 - i) Sweet water
 - ii) Bitter
 - (2) The question answered (James 3:12)
 - a) The absolute—"so can no fountain" is equal to *no fountain can*.
 - b) The contradiction—"both yield salt water and fresh."
 - b. The example of the fig tree (James 3:12)
 - (1) Can the fig tree
 - (2) Bear olive berries
 - c. The example of the vine (James 3:12)
 - (1) Can a vine
 - (2) Bear figs
 - d. The lesson
 - (1) A godly man ought not be able to send forth
 - a) Blessing God
 - b) And cursing men
 - (2) This is contrary to the new nature gained in salvation and requires hypocrisy.
 - (3) That being said, the presence of any problems in the tongue identifies problems with the source—the heart.

II. THE NEED FOR WISDOM (James 3:13-18)

A. Identifying Wisdom (James 3:13)

1. The question of wisdom; Note: This question is asked in relation to the discussion above—a wise man bridles his tongue (Proverbs 29:11).
 - a. Endued with knowledge
 - (1) Knowledge involves factual information that enables the believer to possess details before making decisions.
 - (2) The simple, for example, are rebuked of the Lord because "they hated knowledge" (Proverbs 1:29).
 - b. A wise man
 - (1) Wisdom, on the other hand, involves the proper use of the knowledge provided by God.
 - (2) Wisdom takes the facts obtained and uses them to make sound decisions.
2. The demonstration of wisdom (see James 2:18)
 - a. A good conversation (see 1 Peter 2:12)
 - b. Works with meekness of wisdom

**B. Sources of Wisdom (James 3:15, 17)**

1. Earthly wisdom (James 3:15)
 - a. Its source
 - (1) It is not from above.
 - (2) It is of the world (1 Corinthians 1:20; 1 Corinthians 2:6; 1 Corinthians 3:19).
 - b. Its nature
 - (1) It is foolishness with God (1 Corinthians 3:19).
 - (2) It is earthly.
 - (3) It is sensual. Note: Historically, the word *sensual* meant “as pertaining to the senses.”
 - (4) It is devilish.
2. Godly wisdom (James 3:17)
 - a. Its source
 - (1) From above
 - (2) From God
 - b. Its nature
 - (1) It is pure.
 - (2) It is peaceable.
 - (3) It is gentle.
 - (4) It is easy to be intreated.
 - (5) It is full of mercy.
 - (6) It is full of good fruits.
 - (7) It is without partiality.
 - (8) It is without hypocrisy.
3. Note: If we are not careful, we might lose sight of the overall message of James chapter 3.
 - a. The message
 - (1) From start to finish, this chapter is concerned with man’s relationship with man.
 - (2) It began with an emphasis on the importance of getting control of the tongue and it ends with the search for men with wisdom.
 - (3) We commonly think of wisdom in other contexts, but stop and think about how it applies to man’s relationships.
 - b. The wisdoms
 - (1) Earthly wisdom
 - a) It is of the flesh.
 - b) It is selfish and cares only for self.
 - (2) Godly wisdom
 - a) It is from God.
 - b) It is selfless.
 - c) It seeks peace.
 - d) It is willing to negotiate and forgive.
 - e) It is fair and fruitful.
 - f) It avoids the hypocrisy presented in the wisdom of the world.

**C. Unveiling a Lack of Wisdom (James 3:14, 16)**

1. The dangers of lacking wisdom (James 3:14)
 - a. The demonstration of no wisdom
 - (1) Bitter envying
 - (2) Strife
 - (3) Note: A man who lacks wisdom struggles in making and keeping peace. This is not only true for himself, but also for others.
 - a) Contention comes by pride (Proverbs 13:10). It is a product of carnal Christians (1 Corinthians 3:1-4).
 - b) Godly wisdom brings humility and, as a result, is peaceable.
 - c) Consider the wisdom of Solomon (2 Chronicles 1:10-12).
 - b. The tendencies of no wisdom
 - (1) To glory
 - (2) To lie against the truth
 - (3) Note: A man who lacks wisdom finds two great problems: (1) he has a specific sin problem—no wisdom, and (2) he does not have the wisdom to do that which is right in order to repent and walk with the Lord. With that in mind, he turns to one of two things:
 - a) Boasts of his wickedness
 - b) Lies against the truth
2. The result of lacking wisdom (James 3:16)
 - a. The demonstration of no wisdom
 - (1) Envy
 - (2) Strife
 - b. The outcome of no wisdom
 - (1) Confusion—the state of bewilderment or uncertainty, or a lack of internal peace
 - a) Rather than churches, homes, and individuals choosing the blessings of peace, many have chosen the struggles resulting from envy and strife.
 - b) In doing so, they reap the resultant confusion.
 - c) This fact definitely accounts for the magnitude of Christians living outside the will of God with no opportunity to even discern what it is.
 - (2) Every evil work; a lack of external peace

D. The Presence of True Wisdom (James 3:18)

1. The fruit of righteousness is sown.
2. Of them that make peace
3. Note: Not only did James state that God's wisdom brought peace, but he said that wisdom "is first pure" (James 3:17).