

Characteristics of Wisdom

James 3:17-18

2/13/2000

This is the book of James, chapter 3. Now in the book of James, chapter 3, James has been exhorting us regarding the control and use of our tongues. And from that subject, he has expanded into a discussion of wisdom. And he, in verse 13 through 18, discusses that subject, and it is to that passage that we want to give our attention this evening. So follow along with me if you will as we read together James, chapter 3, verses 13 through 18.

“Who is a wise man and endued with knowledge among you? let him shew out of a good conversation [conduct] his works with meekness of wisdom. But if ye have bitter envying and strife in your hearts, glory not, and lie not against the truth. This wisdom descendeth not from above, but is earthly, sensual, devilish. For where envying and strife is, there is confusion and every evil work. But the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, and easy to be entreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality, and without hypocrisy. And the fruit of righteousness is sown in peace of them that make peace.”

Now in our study together last week, we considered the characteristics of a wise man that are recorded for us in verses 13 through 16. We saw that a wise man is revealed by two things: by his good conduct and by his humble attitudes. And so if we are attempting to discern who is a wise man, we can say, Well, how does he apply his knowledge to his personal life *choices*? And if that application of that knowledge to his personal life choices shows good conduct in his works, *and* if he possesses and displays an attitude of meekness and humility with reference to the employment of that wisdom, then we can be confident that this is a wise man.

On the other hand, we saw that one who is full of envy, and therefore engages in strife, is someone who is not wise. And so therefore, in order to discern who the wise are, we need only look at their conduct and at their attitudes in order to make an accurate assessment as to whether or not they are wise people.

Now having considered together then last time the characteristics of a wise man, James now goes on in verses 17 through 18 to describe the characteristics of wisdom *itself*. He's just got done talking about what is a wise *man*; now he's going to talk about what is *wisdom*. And so in answer to the question, What is wisdom? How would I recognize it?, James gives us some guidelines by which to make those kind of assessments. And so when you hear the statements that people make and view the actions they take, how do you know if they are wise or not? Well James gives us a *standard* by which we can measure the words, the actions, the attitudes of both ourselves and other people in order to assess whether what is *being* expressed is wisdom, or whether it is something else.

And so what we want to do, then, is turn our attention and focus on verses 17 and 18, and consider together the characteristics of wisdom. In the first place this evening, let us consider together the

origin of true wisdom—the origin of true wisdom. Now in verse 17 it says, “But the wisdom that *is from above*.” And so the first thing James identifies for us is the origin or the source of true wisdom, and he says that it comes from *above*.

Now this phrase “from above” has been employed by James back in chapter 1, and verse 17, when he says, “Every good gift and every perfect gift is from *above*.” Well what does that mean? Well, it means that it comes down from the *Father*, “with whom is no variableness neither shadow of turning.” So when he uses this phrase that something comes from above, what he means by that simply is that it comes from *God*. Now this is the second time in this book that he mentions God as the source of wisdom. You remember back in chapter 1, and verse 5, he says, “If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and...it shall be given him.” And so we see that if someone *needs* wisdom, he simply goes to the source of wisdom, who is God.

And now in this passage in verse 15, he talks about the wisdom that is *not* from above, and then in verse 17, he talks about the wisdom that *is from above*. Now the significance of all of this is that the source of wisdom determines its characteristics. If wisdom is from *beneath*, then it produces envy, strife, confusion, and evil works, as we saw in our previous study. And why is this? Because these are the characteristics of *Satan*. But if wisdom is from *above*, then it will reflect the character of God. And really, verse 17 is really just a list of some of the attributes of God. The Devil’s wisdom is like the Devil. It is jealous, it is destructive, it is confused, and it is evil. God’s wisdom is like God. It is pure, it is peaceful, it is gentle, it is reasonable, it is merciful, it is fair, and it is consistent. And those words describe God *Himself*. And of course, therefore, they describe the wisdom that comes *from Him*.

Now it is obvious which wisdom is desirable and which is to be avoided, and it does not take a great deal of brilliance to discern between them or determine the desirability of their various outcomes. But it is amazing how people in the heat of controversy forget to apply these simple tests. How easy it is to become caught up in the passion of rapidly unfolding events, abandon reflective thought, and find ourselves promoting the wisdom that is from *beneath*, engaging in strife and envy and confusion and evil works in our conflicts with people, instead of engaging in a pattern of behavior that produces purity and peace, and manifests gentleness and reasonableness and mercy and good fruits.

And so what James does, then, having expressed the origin of this wisdom, he then gives us a rather extended list of the characteristics of wisdom. So in the second place this evening, let us consider together the characteristics of wisdom. Now he lists here a number of characteristics of wisdom. And notice first of all, godly wisdom is pure. Godly wisdom is pure. He says, “The wisdom that is from above is *first* pure,” that is, it *promotes* purity and it *conducts* itself with purity.

And so before we ask ourselves anything else, the *first* thing we should ask is this: Is the wisdom that I am hearing or practicing that which *promotes* and *permits* sin, or is it that which promotes and pursues *holiness*? Godly wisdom always moves people towards greater godliness and towards

greater *purity*. It does not move people towards greater *ungodliness* and *immorality*. In other words, it promotes purity of heart in the inner man; it promotes purity of life in the outer man.

Godly wisdom will not move one to defile the mind, nor will it ever move one to corrupt the conduct. Godly wisdom, when it is being expressed and when it is followed, leaves us with a clear conscience. It leaves us with confidence before God that all is well between God and our souls. So then that which would lead us into a closer conformity to God's law *is* true wisdom, while that which would lead us to *violate* God's law is not the wisdom that is from above.

So when someone is giving counsel, and you're trying to say, Now is this counsel wise or not? Ask yourself, Does this counsel move me towards greater purity, greater conformity to God's law, greater departure from sin? If so, then we may conclude that it is godly wisdom.

The second thing that marks or characterizes godly wisdom is that godly wisdom is not only pure, but godly wisdom is also *peaceable*; that is, it is that which promotes and encourages *peace* between people. Ungodly wisdom—the wisdom that is from beneath, that has been spoken of in our context—is that which engenders strife and *envy* between people.

In Second Thessalonians 3, and verse 16, God is called the God of *peace*, and we would expect that the wisdom that *comes* from God would *produce* peace between people. And so first of all, *true* wisdom from God will strive to *keep* peace. It will strive to keep it. That is, godly wisdom handles matters in such a way as to *not disturb* the peace that currently exists between people. And this why, for example, someone like a talebearer who goes around engendering strife between people is not someone who is being wise or expressing wisdom in that type of conduct.

Ephesians 4, and verse 3, says that we are to *endeavor* “to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.” That is, people who are saved naturally have a peace between themselves, and that peace needs to be preserved and not disturbed. And so godly wisdom seeks to eliminate unnecessary offense in the words that it uses, in the tone it conveys, in the methods it employs. It will strive not to disturb the peace and unity of the brethren or of the *church*.

But secondly, true wisdom from God will not only strive to *keep* peace, true wisdom from God will strive to *restore* peace. When sin *has* broken peace between people, godly wisdom seeks a remedy to restore it. Godly wisdom does not counsel resentment or revenge or ongoing alienation, but rather, it emphasizes restoration and reconciliation. In Matthew 5, and verse 9, it says, “Blessed are the *peacemakers*: for they shall be called the children of God.” And the children of God *make* peace by the proper use of the *wisdom* of God.

However, godly wisdom never pursues peace at the expense of *truth*. Oftentimes people say, Well, the wise course of action here is to make peace, but it is a peace that is accomplished at the *expense* of truth and godly *principle*. And so you will find people who are exhorted to, for example, engage in forgiveness and just make peace with those who have offended them, when in fact, there has never been any confession of sin, there has never been any repentance, there has never been any effort to deal with the matters that caused the *breach* of peace in the first place.

That kind of peace, the peace of compromise, is not the peace that the wisdom of God *produces*. Godly wisdom never pursues peace at the *expense* of truth; rather, *godly* wisdom pursues peace by the *employment* of truth. And if we must sacrifice truth to maintain an external peace, then that kind of peace—the peace of compromise—is not the peace that the wisdom of God produces.

Even the *wisest* people cannot always keep *peace*. In Romans 12, and verse 18, it says, “If it be *possible*, as much as lieth *in* you, live peaceably with all men.” But unfortunately, it is not always possible, because all men will not always abandon sin, which is the cause of the breach of peace. But nevertheless, it is the nature of godly wisdom that it always seeks to restore peace through the use of biblical methods and means to *deal* with, in a responsible fashion, the *sin* that has caused a *breach* in the peace. So godly wisdom is peaceable. It strives to *keep* peace and strives to *restore* peace.

The third characteristic of godly wisdom is that it is gentle—godly wisdom is *gentle*. And what this means is that someone who is truly wise will not only be pursuing purity, they will not only be pursuing peace, but they will *do* so in a way that is not harsh, demanding, or insensitive to other people. Rather, it will be considerate, it will be forbearing, and it will be *moderate*, because godly wisdom is gentle.

A wise person makes allowances for the ignorance and the weaknesses of other people, and he does not demand more of them than they are *capable* of. He gives them the benefit of the doubt. He considers mitigating circumstances when he is dealing with the sins of other people. And an excessive severity in the name of justice is not compatible with the *gentleness* of wisdom in dealing with *offenses*.

And we need to be gentle, not only in dealing with the *defects* that are in people, but also in dealing with the controversies that are *between* people, especially when it comes to doctrinal *disputes*. Unnecessary personal attack, provocative language, hostile attitude, and an adversarial tone all are contrary to the wisdom of gentleness. Employing personal attack, provocative language, hostile attitudes, or an adversarial tone may *overwhelm* our opponent, but it will certainly never *win* our opponent.

And so godly wisdom is gentle. It is gentle in dealing with *people*, it is gentle in dealing with *conflicts*. Now this doesn’t mean that it is *compromised*, but it does mean the tone and the attitude with which it is set forth is one of considerateness, patience, and moderation.

The fourth aspect of godly wisdom is that it is easily entreated. Godly wisdom is easily entreated. Now our text says it is “easy to be entreated.” And that doesn’t mean that godly wisdom is easy to get other people to *receive*, but rather what it means is that godly wisdom is easy for *other people* to entreat. And what I mean is that godly wisdom is willing to give a full, fair, and attentive hearing to other people. A wise person is a person who *can be entreated* by others. He allows others to fully explain their thoughts and their positions without cutting them off, without mischaracterizing what they are saying, without evil surmising about their motives.

A wise person is not only willing to *listen* to others and allow them to fully *explain* their thoughts, but he's also willing to *learn* from others. He listens to new ideas and to opposing points of view with an anticipation as to what might be learned that he did not know before. This is especially true regarding pleas for justice from those that he has authority over. All of us, in one way or another, are in a position of authority. And because we are in a position of authority, if we are wise, when those who come—who are under our authority *come*—to us, they will find us those who are open and willing to listen to their concerns and their complaints.

And so whether we have authority over children, or whether we have authority over wives, or whether we have authority over church members, or whether we have authority over coworkers, or whether we have authority over citizens, the mark of wisdom is that it thoughtfully and openmindedly listens to those who appeal for an understanding of their case. Those who are under the authority of a *wise* man can say, You know, I can go to that person and I can lay out my case before them, and they're willing to be entreated. They're willing to listen. They're willing to give me an honest, open, and fair hearing, and they are willing to entertain new ideas and concepts that I present to them without hostility and without shutting me off.

Godly wisdom is easily entreated; that is, it is willing to give a full, fair, and attentive hearing to others. But also, it is willing not only to give a full, fair, and attentive hearing to others, it is willing upon suitable evidence to change its *position*. Godly wisdom is willing, upon suitable evidence, to *change* its position. Proud men think it a disgrace to change their mind, and are therefore headstrong, stubborn, intractable, and obstinate. But there is no greater mark of a fool than one who will not yield to irrefutable evidence and reason.

Wisdom is marked by the *ease* with which it can be persuaded by scriptural information, proven facts, and sound *reason*. And a wise man is someone who should be *easily* persuaded by scriptural information, proven facts, and sound reason. He has the humility to admit when he is wrong, and the flexibility to embrace a more accurate and godly stance or behavior regarding an issue when it becomes clear that he should do so, because he's *easily entreated*.

Now this does not mean that he's *wishywashy*, changing at every suggestion that happens to come along, from whoever happens to offer it. But it *does* mean that he's willing to change when scriptural principle and facts and sound reason make it clear that that is the only responsible course to take, irrespective of whatever positions he may have held before or the consequences of those changes.

The fifth characteristic of godly wisdom is that godly wisdom is full of mercy. It is full of mercy. That is, it is marked by a *determination* to relieve the distresses of other people. Godly wisdom is employed to relieve the distresses of other people. If that distress, for example, is one of guilt, then godly wisdom leads one to forgive that person. If that distress is a result of conflict, godly wisdom counsels *reconciliation* with that person. If that distress is one of need, then godly wisdom moves one to *give* to that need. If that distress is one of sorrow, then godly wisdom guides one to *comfort* that person.

The point is this, is that a person who is wise is neither coldhearted nor are they hardhearted. Whenever they see someone in distress, they immediately employ whatever means are available to them to relieve that distress. He knows that he has often received mercy himself, and he is glad to extend it to others. And so godly wisdom always employs itself about finding biblical methods to relieve the distress of various situations that it becomes aware of.

Sixthly, godly wisdom is full of good fruits. In other words, godly wisdom is constantly looking for opportunities to do *good* to other people. Wisdom does not passively sit in an ivory tower somewhere, pondering the deep mysteries of life in complete isolation from human needs. We often think of the wise as those who somehow withdraw from society and just sit and *think* all day. Wrong. The wise person is the one who *immerses* himself in people's needs and an opportunity to do people *good*.

Wisdom is actively involved in going about doing good to other people as it has opportunity. Peter says in Acts 10:38 of our Lord Jesus Christ—who, by the way, happened to be the wisest person whoever walked on the face of this earth—that He “went about doing good.” And if we want to know if we are a wise person, or if we want to know if someone *is* a wise person and they possess *godly* wisdom, ask yourself, How much *good* do they do? It says of the wicked in Psalm 36, and verse 3, “He hath left off to be wise, *and* to do good.”

Now isn't that an interesting association? As soon as one abandons wisdom, he also abandons doing that which is *good*. And the reason why is because *wisdom* and *goodness* are *inseparable*. Our text says that a wise person is *full* of good fruits. There's not simply an *occasional* good work, but there are *abundant* good works towards other people. He is *full* of mercy, he is *full* of good fruits.

Now we come to two negative characteristics, and the seventh characteristic is that godly wisdom is without partiality. It is without partiality. Now he has just got done telling us what it *does* have, and now he tells us what it *doesn't* have. And he says that godly wisdom is without partiality; that is, it does not recognize differences between people based on nonmoral issues.

Now you'll recall, when we preached in chapter 2, we spent a lot of time talking about discrimination, and how that some discrimination is *wicked* and *immoral*, and on the other hand, some discrimination is *required* and it is *godly*. And we said the difference between *legitimate* discrimination, which is required of us, and *illegitimate* discrimination, which is forbidden to us, is the *basis* upon which the discrimination is carried out. And if it's carried out on the basis of *moral issues*, then it is entirely appropriate and it is *required* of us. But if it is carried out on the basis of *nonmoral issues*, then it is sinful and it is wicked.

And so godly wisdom is not guilty of this latter kind of partiality. It does not recognize differences between people based on *nonmoral issues*. And so things like outward appearance, class, wealth, clothing, and similar such matters do not sway his attitude towards people or his treatment *of* people. Fools are very much impressed with outward show and material distinctions. But wisdom does not give any weight to such matters. It does not value people on the basis of style, or dress, or fashion, or beauty. To do so is, as Paul says in Second Corinthian 5:16, to know people “after the

flesh.” That is, to know them after mere outward appearance. But rather, godly wisdom evaluates character, godly wisdom evaluates conduct, and recognizes the differences between people based on *those* criteria, and nonmoral issues are nonconsequential issues to the wise man. It’s not a moral issue as to the color of your skin. But it *is* a moral issue as to whether you *lie* or not. And so we discriminate against liars; we don’t discriminate against people of different *skin* color. One, you see, is a moral issue, and the other is a nonmoral issue.

Now we *ought* to have partiality with reference to moral *issues*. It is *required* of us that we distinguish between good and evil, and give preference to the one and that we *punish* the other. But on nonmoral issues, wisdom makes no distinction—shows no partiality.

The eighth and final characteristic of wisdom—godly wisdom is without hypocrisy. Godly wisdom is without hypocrisy. In true wisdom, there is no deceit and there are no double standards. True godly wisdom does not teach one thing and then practice something else. A wise man is a *transparent* man; that is, he really *is* what he appears to others to be. He is not a phony. He is not a hypocrite.

Notice if you will, Second Corinthians, chapter 1, and verse 12. Paul is describing his own situation in relationship to the work of the ministry. In Second Corinthians 1, and verse 12, he says, “For our rejoicing is this, the testimony of our conscience, that in simplicity and godly sincerity, not with *fleshly* wisdom, but by the grace of God, we have had our conversation [manner of life] in the world, and more abundantly to you-ward.” In other words, what he’s saying is that when one lives with simplicity and with sincerity—that is, he is what he seems to be—it is *living* in an opposite manner to fleshly wisdom.

Fleshly wisdom says, You want to present the best possible picture of yourself to other people, even if it isn’t true. And you see, the fool tries to convince other people that he’s something he’s really not. And so he’s forever going around putting on a show, trying to convey an image that is contrary to reality. And the foolish thing about it is that he doesn’t really ever fool anybody, because a man’s sins always find him out. And those who cover their sins don’t prosper, but those who *confess* them and forsake them, they are the ones who obtain mercy.

And so *fleshly* wisdom counsels hypocrisy, but godly wisdom counsels simplicity, transparency, and sincerity. And you know, those who are honest about their sins, and thus expose them, are esteemed *far more highly* by people than those who go around trying to act like they don’t *have* any, and yet everybody knows the reality.

And so Paul was honest. He was sincere. He was consistent in how he lived in relationship to what he taught. And he never had to worry about somebody finding out the *truth* about what he was really like. Wisdom recognizes that deceit never accomplishes a godly outcome. And so he does not even *attempt* to convey a picture of himself to others that is not the truth.

Well these, then, are the characteristics of wisdom. We have seen the origin of wisdom, that it is from above. We have seen the characteristics of wisdom, that it is pure, and that it is peaceable

and gentle and easy to be entreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality, without hypocrisy. Now in the third place this evening, let us consider together the outcome of wisdom—the origin of wisdom, the characteristics of wisdom, now the *outcome* of wisdom. And that is contained in verse 18, when it says, “And the fruit of righteousness is sown in peace of them that make peace.”

Now in our previous studies, we have seen that the wisdom that is earthly, sensual, and devilish has an outcome. And that outcome was stated for us in verse 16, that there would be confusion and every evil work—that’s the outcome of wisdom that is from beneath. Well the wisdom that is from above *also* has an *outcome*. And the outcome of the wisdom which is from above is the fruit of righteousness, or we could say, the fruit which *consists* in righteousness. In other words, verse 18 is describing righteousness as the *fruit* of true wisdom.

First of all, then, notice that true wisdom moves people to righteous behavior. True wisdom moves people to righteous behavior. Now notice the previous description of wisdom’s characteristics is really a description of righteous behavior. If you ran into someone who was morally pure, who was peaceable and gentle and reasonable and merciful and good and fair and honest, would you say that that was a righteous person? Sure you would. And who wouldn’t want to be around a person like *that*? Who wouldn’t enjoy the company of such a person?

And you see, it is precisely these characteristics that make a marriage work. When wisdom is present in a marriage, when people treat each other with purity and with peace and with gentleness and with reasonableness and mercy and goodness, and they are fair and they are honest—man, that makes for marvelous relationships. And if there is strife and envy and evil works going on in your marriage relationship, it’s because somewhere, somehow, wisdom has broken down and you’re functioning on devilish principles. When you follow biblical wisdom, it moves you to righteous behavior.

And secondly, it brings to pass righteous results. When this kind of wisdom is employed, the outcomes it produces are always godly, just, proper, and peaceful. Notice it says, “the fruit of righteousness is sown in peace of them that make peace.” Isaiah 32, and verse 17 says, “And the work of righteousness shall be *peace*; and the effect of righteousness quietness and assurance *forever*.” When you have *peace* in relationships and quietness and assurance in relationships, it’s because you’ve got *righteousness* in relationships. And righteousness is achieved by nothing more than exercising biblical wisdom in the way in which you *treat* the people that are *in* those relationships.

And so you need to ask yourself, How am I treating my fellow church member? How am I treating my wife? How am I treating my husband? Am I treating them in a way that is *congruent* with these characteristics? Or am I treating them in a way that is contrary to them? You see, those who are wise have peaceable intentions, and they sow their wisdom in peace, not in strife. And their goal is to *make* peace through the *use* of godly wisdom, not to make conflict, not to make confusion, not to make evil works, but rather, to produce righteousness and peace, because that’s what godly wisdom produces—righteousness and peace, not envy and strife.

And so I think there are two things that we need to consider by way of closing. First of all, let us seek wisdom from God. The Bible says if any man lacks wisdom—and the clear implication is that *every* man lacks wisdom, James 1:5—“let him ask of *God*, who gives to all men liberally, and upbraids not; and it *shall* be given [to] him.” And we spent a whole sermon on that one passage. Perhaps it might be well to get a copy of it and to relisten to the method and means for the acquisition of wisdom. Certainly prayer is involved, but we also have to employ the means of grace that I spoke of in that message.

But the point is, Proverbs 2:6 says, “The Lord giveth wisdom; out of his mouth cometh knowledge and understanding.” If we’re ever going to have wisdom, we’ve got to get it from above. These characteristics that we have talked about in this passage are not normal to us. They are things that do not come naturally, but are things we have to *work* at. And you might just take *one* of them and say, You know, am I being *gentle* in the way in which I deal with the people that are in my relationship circle? Am I someone who is merciful? Do I strive to make peace on the basis of biblical principle? Well, we need to seek wisdom from God.

And then we need to examine our words and actions as to whether they are wise. Ask yourself, Are my words and actions pure? Are they peaceable? Are they gentle? Are they reasonable? Are they merciful? Are they good? Are they fair? Are they honest? And you know how to figure out the answer to that? You know, a selfrighteous person might say, Oh, yeah, sure. I’m all that stuff. Well, is there righteousness and peace in your relationships?

It’s kind of like the man who said, Lord, what must I do to obtain eternal life? And Jesus said, You know the commandments. You know—honor your mother and father; don’t steal; don’t kill; don’t commit adultery. He says, *All these have I kept* from my youth up. You suppose he had? Suppose he was a little selfdeceived there? Jesus says, Well, just take this one test—sell everything you’ve got, give it to the poor, come and follow me. And suddenly the lights come on, and this guy realized he hasn’t obeyed *half* the commandments, not the least of which is that he had some god before the Lord his God, which was his *money*. And it was more important to him than obeying God and following God. Well, there’s not peace there, and not just any old peace, but a godly peace.

You see, a lot of people say, Well, you know, I’ve got peace in my home. And the reason why is because they just shut up, clam up, never deal with issues. And so there’s no controversy. That’s *not* biblical peace. Biblical peace is achieved by *dealing* with issues, and it is achieved by resolving them biblically with proper attitudes. That’s *true* peace.

Well, where there’s sin and strife, there’s an absence of wisdom. And if that situation obtains, then we need to be examining ourselves with reference to these characteristics, these eight characteristics that James has set before us and see where it is. Maybe we’re being *pure*, and maybe we’re trying to be *peaceable*, but we’re not being very *gentle*. And maybe that’s the breakdown. You see, you violate any one of these, and it kind of wrecks the other seven. So we

have to take a comprehensive test and strive for comprehensive obedience, and put each one of them into practice. Well, let us pray together.

Father, thank you so much that you are the only wise God. And as the only wise God, you are all of these things that we have spoken of tonight. Father, there is no hypocrisy with you, nor is there any partiality. Father, you abundantly do good and you show vast amounts of mercy. And you are *easy* to be entreated. Even as we talk to you now, we understand and know that you are listening and you are willing to hear what we have to say. And you are not coldhearted and hardhearted towards the pleas of those who are under your authority. And Father, how gentle you have been with us, and how you have pursued dealing kindly and softly with us when we certainly deserved much harsher treatment. And Father, you have been peaceable. You have sent your Son to *make* peace, and Father, we are grateful for that. And Father, you are pure. You are morally just and righteous in your dealings with us.

Father, thank you that you are the wise God. Help us, then to be the wise *people*—to be the people in who wisdom is found, and therefore, who pursue righteous behavior and achieve righteous outcomes, especially in the area of being at a biblical peace with one another.

Father, may these things increase and abound in our marriages and in our church and in our relationships in our families and at our work. Father, I pray that we might *remember* these checkpoints and test ourselves against them and *grow* in further conformity *to* them. Father, we ask it in Jesus' name. Amen.

Page 3, paragraph 5: “In Matthew 5, and verse 9, it says, ‘Blessed are the *peacemakers*: for they shall be called the children of God.’” Incorrectly cited as verse 8 in sermon.

Page 6, paragraph 4: The transcript said, “Fools are very much impressed with outward show and **nonmaterial** distinctions. But wisdom does not give any weight to such matters.” “Nonmaterial” was replaced with “material”.

Page 6, paragraph 4: Gap in recording. “But rather, godly wisdom **evaluates character**, godly wisdom evaluates conduct...” Inserted “evaluates character” into the gap.