

"LIVING LIKE JESUS"

I got a call this week about changing my long distance carrier. They said I had to confirm who would be my communications provider. In a very real and far more sobering way, this message is a call about your carrier of long distance. Who will be each of our provider of power for relationships with other people?

We stand on a platform this morning. It is the platform of opportunity. We are offered free cable, access to an information highway that can and will touch every relationship, every conversation, every thought and every word.

- A new way of life that will help us get along with our family, friends and co-workers like we never thought possible.
- A new way to live that makes all of life meaningful, vital, worthwhile and worth living.
- A new orientation that removes the sadness of broken relationships, the coldness of emotional emptiness, the hopelessness of failure and that lingering fear of worthlessness. In every way, it is the most powerful connection you could ever make!

What is it? A new TCI cable venture or ATT cellular offer or a futuristic Microsoft electronic marvel? No, far better. It is time to pick whether you are going to get your power for living from below or above. It is the source of effective and healthy relationships with all the people we touch in our lives.

Follow along as I read: James 3:13-18:

- Who is wise and understanding among you? (that's a people person skilled in relationships)
- Let him show by good conduct that his works are done in the meekness of wisdom. (there it is the key to not fearing failure and disaster in learning to get along and stay in harmony with people)
- 14 But if you have bitter envy and self-seeking in your hearts, do not boast and lie against the truth. (donh-dah-donh-da there is the bad guy, the lethal firey tongued destroyer of last week) 15 This wisdom does not descend from above, but is earthly, sensual, demonic. (that's it. God does not intend for us to have a string of ruined relationship littering our life. He has such a better plan for us)
- 16 For where envy and self-seeking exist, confusion and every evil thing are there. (there is the rule for your marriage, family meetings, board meetings, business associations, and every other relationship in life)
- 17 But the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, willing to yield, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality and without hypocrisy. (the eight components of a meaningful way of life with healthy interpersonal relationships)

- 18 Now the fruit of righteousness is sown in peace by those who make peace. NKJV (what a a vivid picture of a life that sows fragrant, fruitbearing relationships every where it goes!)

Pick the supply that comes down from above and it is **THE ENDLESSNESS OF A LIFE LIVED WITH DIVINE WISDOM** (13,17-18).

Pick the supply that comes up from beneath and its **THE WORTHLESSNESS OF A LIFE LIVED WITH DEMONIC WISDOM** (14-16)?

To protect us from being tricked as to our true spiritual condition, James gives 12 clear indicators of what a genuine Christian looks like. You are assured of genuine spiritual life when these areas are in line:

1. A Genuine Christian **ENDURES AND GROWS THROUGH TROUBLES** 1:2-11
2. A Genuine Christian **RECOGNIZES AND TURNS FROM TEMPTATION** 1:12-16
3. A Genuine Christian **RECEIVES AND OBEYS THE WORD** 1:17-27
4. A Genuine Christian **LIVES A PREJUDICE-FREE LIFESTYLE** 2:1-13.
5. A Genuine Christian **PRODUCES AND DOES GODLY WORKS** 2:14-26.
6. A Genuine Christian **BRIDLES AND DIRECTS THEIR TONGUE** 3:1-12
7. A Genuine Christian **RECEIVES AND RETAINS HEAVENLY WISDOM** 3:13-18

THE WORTHLESSNESS OF A LIFE LIVED WITH DEMONIC WISDOM (14-16) What is produced by a self-lived, earthly oriented life? Nothing but wasted and ruined lives.

Look at the seven byproducts of human wisdom:

1. **BITTER ENVY**: envy is the mournful cry of empty hands wanting what another has, jealousy is the threat to the security of full hands wanting to hold to position, power or pleasure. **What is the cure?** James 5:8 You also be patient. Establish your hearts, for the coming of the Lord is at hand. NKJV
2. **SELF-SEEKING**: this is ambition motivated by self, pride and the flesh. **What is the cure?** James 4:6 But He gives more grace. Therefore He says: "God resists the proud, But gives grace to the humble." NKJV
3. **BOASTING**: this is literally "proud over sin" a hardness of heart that won't see personal sin. **What is the cure?** God says James 4:9 Lament and mourn and weep! Let your laughter be turned to mourning and your joy to gloom. NKJV
4. **DECEPTION**: lies to our self is the exact oposite of the godly person. Psalm 15 says they speak truth to themselves. Jer 17:9 reminds us our hearts come defective with deceit and will not be honest apart ferom the intervention of a holy God! **What is the cure?** James 1:18 Of His own will He brought us forth by the word of truth, that we might be a kind of firstfruits of His creatures. NKJV
5. **EARTHLINESS**: the false wisdom of mankind can only see things from the horizontal. God is not in the equation. One of the descriptions of the lost all the way through Revelation is "earthdwellers", those who live merely for earth, live for earthly success, earthly pleasures, have earthly motivations and methods The phrase "inhabiters of the earth" (or "them that dwell on the earth") is found twelve times in Revelation (3:10; 6:10; 8:13; 11:10 [twice]; 12:12; 13:8, 12, 14; 14:6; 17:2, 8). It means much more than "people who live on the earth," for that is where all living people reside. Instead, it refers to a kind of people: those who live for the earth and the things of the earth. These are just the opposite of people who have their

citizenship in heaven (Phil. 3:18–21). John described this worldly sort well in his first epistle (1 John 2:15–17), and later in this prophecy he again makes it clear that “earth-dwellers” are not born again (Rev. 13:8). **What is the cure?** James 1:21 Therefore lay aside all filthiness and overflow of wickedness, and receive with meekness the implanted word, which is able to save your souls. NKJV

6. **SENSUAL**: this is the word psuke natural (as opposed to spiritual), old natured as opposed to the new creatures we are in Christ. **What is the cure?** James 4:8 Draw near to God and He will draw near to you. Cleanse your hands, you sinners; and purify your hearts, you double-minded. NKJV
7. **DEMONIC**: Satan has lied and deceived from Eden to this moment. He wants people to believe his lie (Romans 1) and leads them astray blinding (Eph. 2) their minds. **What is the cure?** James 3:17 But the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, willing to yield, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality and without hypocrisy. NKJV

THE ENDLESSNESS OF A LIFE LIVED WITH DIVINE WISDOM (13,17-18) The perfections of Heavenly wisdom (how to get along with others). In 8 clear notes the scale of the divine wisdom bursts forth in the harmony of a life that is heavenly.

1. **The elegance of meekness**: strength under God's control knows no limits. Like a powerful horse doing it paces, there is an elegance surrounding the restraint of great power.
2. **The unashamedness of purity** (Sir Arthur Conan Doyle author of Sherlock Holmes once sent a telegram to 12 men which said “All has been found. Fly immediately.” To which all responded by leaving the country. On the outside they were respectable but if the truth were known, they feared exposure.
3. **The greatness of peace-lovers (NIV)**: Matthew 5:9 Blessed are the peacemakers, For they shall be called sons of God. NKJV
4. **The Christlikeness of gentleness**: remember how Jesus described Himself? Matthew 11:28-29 “Come to Me, all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. 29 “Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. NKJV
5. **The sweet reasonableness of yieldedness**: As Christ we say John 8:29 “And He who sent Me is with Me. The Father has not left Me alone, for I always do those things that please Him.” NKJV; 2 Corinthians 5:9 Therefore we make it our aim, whether present or absent, to be well pleasing to Him. NKJV
6. **The loveliness of godly mercy**: this is a heavenly mercy that pities as God does, even those whose calamity is self-inflicted. Matthew 9:36 But when He saw the multitudes, He was moved with compassion for them, because they were weary and scattered, like sheep having no shepherd. NKJV
7. **The confidence of unwaveringness**: this word is unvacillating and undividedness. Like Paul who said “This one thing I do” or the Psalmist who prays Psalm 86:11 Teach me Your way, O Lord; I will walk in Your truth; Unite my heart to fear Your name. NKJV And what is the sobering word of James 1:8 he is a double-minded man, unstable in all his ways. NKJV

So which will it be?

THE ENDLESSNESS OF A LIFE LIVED WITH DIVINE WISDOM (13,17-18) or **THE WORTHLESSNESS OF A LIFE LIVED WITH DEMONIC WISDOM** (14-16)?

Is it possible to have this life of meaning that has value and purpose? Is it possible to turn away from the empty and worthlessness of human wisdom? Yes! Look at 1 Corinthians 1:30-31 But of Him you are in Christ Jesus, who became for us wisdom from God—and righteousness and sanctification and redemption—31 that, as it is written, “He who glories, let him glory in the Lord.” NKJV

Where does the wisdom from above come from? God. And how do we obtain it? In the person of our Lord Jesus Christ. He is the wisdom from above. His life perfectly lived out each of these elements of heavenly wisdom.

NKJV	WORD STUDY	JESUS EXEMPLIFIES
1. good conduct meekness	prautes = loveliness, gentleness	Matthew 27:4 saying, “I have sinned by betraying innocent blood.” But they said, “What is that to us? See to that yourself!” NASB; 1 Peter 1:19 but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot. NKJV
2. pure	hagnos = “pure enough to approach the gods”	John 8:46 “Which of you convicts Me of sin? And if I tell the truth, why do you not believe Me? NKJV John 18:38 Pilate said to Him, “What is truth?” And when he had said this, he went out again to the Jews, and said to them, “I find no fault in Him at all. NKJV also 19:4,6; Luke 23:41 “And we indeed justly, for we receive the due reward of our deeds; but this Man has done nothing wrong.” NKJV
3. peaceable	eirenikos = “right relationships man to man, God to man”	John 14:27 “Peace I leave with you, My peace I give to you; not as the world gives do I give to you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid. NKJV
4. gentle	epiekes = “sweet reasonableness” “golden rule living”	Matthew 12:19-21 He will not quarrel nor cry out, Nor will anyone hear His voice in the streets.20 A bruised reed He will not break, And smoking flax He will not quench, Till He sends forth justice to victory; 21 And in His name Gentiles will trust.” NKJV
5. willing to yield	eupethes = “willing to listen and respond”	Luke 2:51 Then He went down with them and came to Nazareth, and was subject to them, but His mother kept all these things in her heart. NKJV; Luke 22:51 But Jesus answered and said, “Permit even this.” And He touched his ear and healed him. NKJV
6. full of mercy and good fruits	eleos = reflecting God's pity for any in trouble even if self-inflicted”	Matthew 4:23-24 And Jesus went about all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues, preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing all kinds of sickness and all kinds of disease among the people.24 Then His fame went throughout all Syria; and they brought to Him all sick people who were afflicted with various diseases and torments, and those who were demon-possessed, epileptics, and paralytics; and He healed them. NKJV; Acts 10:38 “how God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and with power, who went about doing good and healing all who were oppressed by the devil, for God was with Him.NKJV
7. without partiality	adiakritos = “undivided, unvacillating”	John 4:34 Jesus said to them, “My food is to do the will of Him who sent Me, and to finish His work. NKJV;
8. without hypocrisy	anupokritos = “without masks”	Luke 22:27 “For who is greater, he who sits at the table, or he who serves? Is it not he who sits at the table? Yet I am among you as the One who serves. NKJV; Philippians 2:8 And being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself and became obedient to the point of death, even the death of the cross. NKJV

In contrast to the wisdom that is earthly, sensual, and devilish, James describes a “wisdom that is from above” (James 3:17). “Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above” (James 1:17). The Christian looks up to heaven for all that he needs:

- Our Father is in heaven (Matt. 6:9).
- Our treasures are in heaven, not on earth (Matt. 6:19ff).
- Our true birth was from above (John 3:1–7) when he trusted Jesus Christ.
- Our home is in heaven (John 14:1–6) and
- Our citizenship is in heaven (Phil. 3:20),
- Our affection and attention on things above, not on earthly things (Col. 3:1–4) and finally
- Our hope is in heaven (Hebrews 6:19-20).

So what do we do right now? Turn to Romans 13:14 But put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh, to fulfill its lusts. NKJV Put on the wisdom from above, Jesus Christ right now by asking and believing Him for His wisdom to live like Jesus !

THE ENDLESSNESS OF A LIFE LIVED WITH DIVINE WISDOM (13,17-18) or THE WORTHLESSNESS OF A LIFE LIVED WITH DEMONIC WISDOM (14-16)?

#390 May the Mind (Men, women close eyes; then Ladies)