

# Understanding Wisdom

## What is it?

David Platt writes, *"In relation to the wisdom of God, our own wisdom grows through three different factors: knowledge, perspective, and experience. Our limitations in all three of these areas lead to limited wisdom. When we walk through trials, we realize we don't know all that is going on (knowledge); we don't see our situation from every angle (perspective); we oftentimes lack experience in what to do (experience). God, on the other hand, possesses all knowledge, He has an eternal perspective, and in Christ He has experience every kind of test and has prevailed. And we can ask God because he "gives to all generously and without criticizing" (James 1:5).*

Wisdom is \_\_\_\_\_ that comes through \_\_\_\_\_  
and \_\_\_\_\_.

### Two Types of Wisdom:

1. \_\_\_\_\_

From \_\_\_\_\_

*"But the wisdom from above is..."*

*James 3:17a*

Based on \_\_\_\_\_ of the Lord

*"The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge; fools despise wisdom and instruction."*

*Proverbs 1:7*

*"And do not fear those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul. Rather fear him who can destroy both soul and body in hell."*

*Matthew 10:28*

John Piper writing on Matthew 10:28, "This is an amazing verse. Who today would say things like this? In the midst of trying to encourage fearlessness and comfort Jesus throws this sentence: "fear God because he can destroy soul and body in hell." Fear doing anything that would cause you to be cast away by God. How does that help us become fearless toward man? It's quite simple. The fear of man is the motive behind many sins. And Jesus wants to tell us that the penalty of those sins is much more to be feared than anything man might do to us.

2. \_\_\_\_\_

Based on \_\_\_\_\_

John Piper continues, "Verse 33 says, "Whoever denies me before men, I also will deny before my Father who is in heaven." And why do many people deny Jesus before men? Fear. But fear of the wrong thing. What ought to be feared is denying Jesus because if we do that Jesus will deny us and God will destroy soul and body in hell. Therefore, Jesus is indeed trying to embolden his disciples and take away their fear of men. A proper fear of God liberates us from the bondage of fearing men."

\_\_\_\_\_  
*"This is not wisdom that comes down from above but is earthly, unspiritual, demonic."*  
*James 3:15*

Compared to \_\_\_\_\_  
"You adulterous people! Do you not know that friendship with the world is enmity with God?" James 4:4

## How do we obtain Godly wisdom?

We \_\_\_\_\_ for it!

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

God freely, graciously \_\_\_\_\_ it!

"...who gives generously to all without reproach, and it will be given to him." James 1:5b

We \_\_\_\_\_ Him!

"But let him ask in faith, with no doubting, for the one who doubts is like a wave of the sea that is driven and tossed by the wind." James 1:6

We fear \_\_\_\_\_!

"Blessed is the man who remains steadfast under trial, for when he has stood the test he will receive the crown of life, which God has promised to those who love him." James 1:12

## What does each produce?

*Earthly* "14 But if you have bitter jealousy and selfish ambition in your hearts, do not boast and be false to the truth. 15 This is not the wisdom that comes down from above, but is earthly, unspiritual, demonic. 16 For where jealousy and selfish ambition exist, there will be disorder and every vile practice.

*Godly* 17 But the wisdom from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, open to reason, full of mercy and good fruits, impartial and sincere. 18 And a harvest of righteousness is sown in peace by those who make peace.

*Earthly* 4 What causes quarrels and what causes fights among you? Is it not this, that your passions are at war within you? 2 You desire and do not have, so you murder. You covet and cannot obtain, so you fight and quarrel. You do not have, because you do not ask. 3 You ask and do not receive, because you ask wrongly, to spend it on your passions. 4 You adulterous people! Do you not know that friendship with the world is enmity with God? Therefore whoever wishes to be a friend of the world makes himself an enemy of God. 5 Or do you suppose it is to no purpose that the Scripture says, "He yearns jealously over the spirit that he has made to dwell in us"?

*Godly* 6 But he gives more grace. Therefore it says, "God opposes the proud, but gives grace to the humble." 7 Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you. 8 Draw near to God, and he will draw near to you. Cleanse your hands, you sinners, and purify your hearts, you double-minded. 9 Be wretched and mourn and weep. Let your laughter be turned to mourning and your joy to gloom. 10 Humble yourselves before the Lord, and he will exalt you."

James 3:14 – 4:10