

Wisdom in Tough Times

James 3:13-18 (NIV)

"Who is wise and understanding among you? Let him show it by his good life, by deeds done in the humility that comes from wisdom. ¹⁴But if you harbor bitter envy and selfish ambition in your hearts, do not boast about it or deny the truth. ¹⁵Such "wisdom" does not come down from heaven but is earthly, unspiritual, of the devil. ¹⁶For where you have envy and selfish ambition, there you find disorder and every evil practice. ¹⁷But the wisdom that comes from heaven is first of all pure; then peace-loving, considerate, submissive, full of mercy and good fruit, impartial and sincere. ¹⁸Peacemakers who sow in peace raise a harvest of righteousness."

This passage reveals to us that there are 2 sources of wisdom (or wisdom for living) available to us. Which one we choose will make an enormous difference in our lives.

Three specific consequences of choosing "earthly" wisdom:

- I. Blurring of lines between right and wrong.
- II. Growing ignorance of Biblical knowledge.
- III. Embracing of postmodernism.

Ten Things That Are Taking Over Our Culture:

Application:

What can we do?

We can commit ourselves to studying God's word and knowing His **moral will** for our lives.

We can commit ourselves to praying as individuals, families and the church so we can stand against the spirit of this age.

Small Group & Personal Reflection Questions:

1. Read the passage in James and the parallel passage in 1John 2:15-18, 4:1-4. What marks do you see in both of these, taking place today? Which seems more prevalent?
2. Are you concerned that we are losing our profound Christian heritage and becoming more secular in all that we do? Why or why not?
3. Are you uncomfortable in seeing this as a "spirit of the anti-Christ"? Does this cause you fear or does it bring you resolve?
4. How does this affect our church and what can we do to help people interpret the importance of these things within our congregation?
5. What can we do to reach people outside of the church who have lost interest because of the sweeping power of the "spirit of the age"?