



STUDY GUIDE

JAMES: Week 7

7.28.13

[set up]

Talk about a time when you relied on earthly wisdom (yourself) in making a decision or responding to a situation and what happened as a result.

Are there certain circumstances in which you tend to rely on earthly wisdom more than others (high stress situations, moments of insecurity, etc.)?

Think about desire and ambition. Are there good desires and bad desires? Are there good ambitions and bad ambitions? Where do you draw the line and why?

[digging deeper]

What are some of the fruits of heavenly wisdom and earthly wisdom (see James 3:16-17)? How do you specifically see these fruits play out in your life (which ones do you see more than others)?

Read 1 Corinthians 1:18-25. How is the wisdom of the world contrasted with the wisdom of God? Who is the embodiment of the wisdom of God (see v. 24) and why do you think this is foolishness to the world?

What role does pride play in earthly vs. heavenly wisdom (See 1 Corinthians 1:27-31 and James 4:13-17 for more insight)? How does pride manifest itself in your life (maybe in competition, jealousy, arrogance, self-pity)?

According to James 4:2-3, what is one reason why God sometimes won't answer prayer? Are there others (Read Matthew 22:21, John 14:13, John 15:7)? How do we know whether we're asking with the wrong motives or whether God is teaching us to persevere in prayer and waiting to answer (Like Luke 18:1 says)?

The beginning of James 4 tells us that our passions are at war within us and that we are looking for something that we cannot attain. Read John 6:35. Who is it that our souls truly thirst for? How do we "drink" from Him? Why don't we always drink from Him if He is what our hearts are always thirsting for?

The header features a horizontal bar with four colored segments: light blue, green, brown, and orange. To the right, a large circular logo contains a stylized white figure, possibly a dove or a person, set against a grey background.

STUDY GUIDE

[living it out]

Which characteristics from James 3:17-18 do you see in your life when you operate using heavenly wisdom? How does that motivate you to keep wanting heavenly wisdom in your life? What steps can you take in your life to faithfully utilize the heavenly wisdom God makes available to us?

Which characteristics from James 3:14-16 do you see emerge in your life when you operate using earthly wisdom? How does that motivate you to stop falling back into using earthly wisdom? What steps can you take to stop falling back into using earthly wisdom?

Have you ever felt like you came to God in prayer and didn't receive what you asked for? What were your motives when praying? Were you pursuing your own will or God's? What questions can you ask yourself before making requests to God in helping determine whether you have the right motives in prayer?

Receiving Christ is described as a being satisfied in who Christ is. If you have already made the decision to believe in and follow Jesus, how have you seen heavenly wisdom come "online" in your life and overflow out of your relationship with Christ? James 4:8 says that if we draw near to God, He will draw near to us. Are you drawing near to Christ? How? And if not what is stopping you from doing so?

Suggested prayer for Individuals/Families/LifeGroups: *Heavenly Father, you are the giver of all heavenly wisdom. I/We ask that you would give me/us a hunger for heavenly wisdom that only You could satisfy, and that you would show us where in my/our lives I/we rely on myself/ourselves and my/our earthly wisdom. Help me/us to learn discernment in prayer that I/we may know when my/our motives are wrong and sinful and when you are growing me/us to pray in perseverance. I/We ask that I/we would have hearts that come to Jesus and that He would satisfy my/our soul(s) that I/we might no longer have selfish passions for things that could never satisfy. In Christ's name, Amen.*