

Lesson 7 Godly Wisdom is Shown in Christlike Actions

James 2:14-19 "What good is it, my brothers and sisters if someone claims to have faith but has no deeds? Can such faith save them? **v15** Suppose a brother or a sister is without clothes and daily food. **V16** If one of you says to them, 'Go in peace; keep warm and well fed,' but does nothing about their physical needs, what good is it? **V17** In the same way, faith by itself, if it is not accompanied by actions, is dead. **V18** But someone will say, "You have faith; I have deeds." Show me your faith without deeds, and I will show you my faith by my deeds. **v19** You believe that there is one God. Good! Even the demons believe that—and shudder."

Matthew 15: 7-11 "You hypocrites! Isaiah was right when he prophesied about you: **v8** 'These people honor me with their lips, but their hearts are far from me. **V9** They worship me in vain; their teachings are merely human rules.; **v10** Jesus called the crowd to him and said, "Listen and understand. **V11** What goes into someone's mouth does not defile them, but what comes out of their mouth, that is what defiles them."

James 2:20-24 "You foolish person, do you want evidence that faith without deeds is useless? **V21** Was not our father Abraham considered righteous for what he did when he offered his son Isaac on the altar? **V22** You see that his faith, and his actions were working together, and his faith was made complete by what he did. **V23** And the scripture was fulfilled that says, "Abraham believed God, and it was credited to him as righteousness, and he was called God's friend. **V24** You see that a person is considered righteous by what they do and not by faith alone
Genesis 15:1-6 The Lord's Covenant with Abram. Abraham believed God's promises of descendants even when he and his wife were old and barren. He and others had forward-looking faith.

Genesis 22:1-14 Abraham Tested Abraham obeys God's command to offer Isaac as a sacrifice.

Hebrew 11:1-2 "Now faith is confidence in what we hope for and assurance about what we do not see. **V2** this is what the ancients were commended for". The faithful men and women of the OT were commended. *That was divine approval of their faith, evidenced in their bold acts of trust in the Lord. Only by faith can a person please God. (11:6).*

Hebrews 11:6 "And without faith it is impossible to please God, because anyone who comes to him must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who earnestly seek him." Faith brings insight and confidence that are otherwise unavailable; it is also necessary to please God. True faith is not just a passive belief that He exists; it also actively seeks Him and His will and looks to the future, boldly believing God will reward His faithful people. **Hebrews 11:17-19** "By faith Abraham, when God tested him, offered Isaac as a sacrifice. He who had embraced the promises was about to sacrifice his one and only son, **v18** even though God had said to him, 'It is through Isaac that your offspring will be reckoned.' **V19** Abraham reasoned that God could even raise the dead, and so in a manner of speaking he did receive Isaac back from death."

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1) The way we live shows whether we truly have faith in Jesus.

Q: What does the statement "Keep warm and well fed," but doing nothing, teach us about lip-service faith? James 2:14-19, Matthew 15:7-11

James tells the churches they were not saved by following the law but by the Gospel. That faith isn't real faith unless it shows itself in the way we live. He uses a metaphor about helping the poor. His example is walking up to a homeless person and saying, "keep warm and well fed," but that's it; you do nothing. "What _____ is this?" **v16** You have made no difference in their life. They are still cold and hungry. Words alone do nothing. Another example might be seeing someone struggle to purchase needed items such as school clothes, shoes and supplies. You pass by saying "I hope you find everything you want!" But offer no assistance to meet their needs. James' point is our _____ alone do nothing if they're not followed with _____. By "does nothing," James meant that that kind of faith doesn't change anything; it doesn't save you. **v14** Not because works saves us, but because that kind of faith is just lip service; it's not real. James wasn't saying that salvation is about following the rules or doing "enough" to be saved. *If you say you have faith, but you don't live it out, your faith isn't real. It's empty talk.* For us, we need to look honestly at our lives and ask ourselves if we are just giving _____ to God, **(Matthew 15:7-11)** like the example of just giving lip service to the poor.

This has happened throughout human history, and is still the same today. It is not our job to judge other people's faith, but we are called to look at our own _____ and examine our own lives to be sure our faith is real. Do our lives match our words.

Q: In what ways have your actions not matched your words? _____

James 2:20-24; Genesis 15:1-6,22:1-14 (OT events); and Hebrews 11:8-10, 17-19 (NT events)

2) Abraham was saved by faith but showed his faith in action.

Q: How and why was Abraham considered righteous in the eyes of God?

Abraham believed God's promises of descendants, even though he and his wife were old and barren, God "counted" his faith as righteousness. Abraham was able to stand before God justified, not based on any good deeds he did to earn it, but on his faith. He and others had a forward-looking _____. Jesus had not yet come, but their lives showed faith in the fulfillment of God's _____ to come in Christ. **Hebrews 11** is called the "faith chapter". It gives many examples of those who lived out their faith in God in action. It says, "Now faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things _____. For by it the people of old received their commendation." **(Hebrews 11:1-2)** *Abraham's faith wasn't just intellectual belief alone; it showed itself in action.* The biggest proof of Abraham's faith was he willingly offered his son Isaac as a sacrifice to God. **(Hebrews 11:17-19)** Isaac was the fulfillment of God's _____ to Abraham and Sarah. How would God's promise come true if Isaac was dead?

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James 2:25-26 "In the same way, was not even Rehab the prostitute considered righteous for what she did when she gave lodging to the spies and sent them off in a different direction? **V26** As the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without deed is dead."

Abraham, a godly Hebrew man and Rahab, a Gentile prostitute were very different people, they both showed their faith by their works. (Joshua 2:1-24; Hebrew 11:31)

Joshua 2:1-5 Read along with "Why did God honor Rahab's lie? DJB

Joshua 2:8-9 "Before the spies lay down for the night, she went up on the roof **v9** and said to them, 'I know that the LORD has given you this land and that a great fear of you has fallen on us, so that all who live in this country are melting in fear because of you.'

Joshua 2: 11-13 "When we heard of it, our hearts melted in fear and everyone's courage failed because of you, for the LORD your God is God in heaven above and on the earth below." **V12** 'Now then, please swear to me by the LORD **v13** that you will show kindness to my family, because I have shown kindness to you. Give me a sure sign that you will spare the lives of my father and mother, by brothers and sisters, and all who belong to them—and that you will save us from death.' "

James 3:13 "Who is wise and understanding among you? Let them show it by their good life, by deeds done in humility that comes from wisdom."

With this passage James presents the contrast between earthly and heavenly wisdom. People's lives reflect the source of their wisdom. Those who have a right relationship with God are understanding and concerned for others, demonstrating the wisdom of heaven. Those estranged from God will be sensual and selfish, reflecting the wisdom of Satan.

Matthew 11:28-30 "Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. **V29** Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. **V30** For my yoke is easy and my burden is light."

One of the most gracious commands in the Bible, Jesus' Invitation to come that speaks to all who are oppressed and burdened to endure something that is laid on them from an inside and outside source, causing what we would today call "burnout", *Jesus' form of rest is not absence of work but rejuvenation and refreshment. In Jesus' day, taking the yoke of another meant coming under that person's leadership and walking in that person's footsteps.* When believers take Jesus's yoke, they place themselves under His dominion. Only then do His followers enjoy the day-by-day release from stress that God intended.

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3) Rahab's action showed her faith in God even from just hearing about Him.

Q: How did Rahab's actions show her faith in God? How was she saved?

James 2:25-26, Joshua 2:1-5, 11-13, 6:24-25; and Hebrews 11:31

Rahab's story in the OT proves God's rescue plan was always meant to include people of faith from every nation, even their enemies. She was a prostitute living in _____. It was the first city conquered upon entering the Promised Land. The army did nothing in their own power, it was a supernatural act of God as the army showed trust in His promises by following His ridiculous (by military standards) march around the city for seven days. Before the battle, Joshua sent two spies into Jericho to search out the land. They stayed in Rahab's house. "I know the Lord has given you the _____" she said (**Joshua 2:9**). This was a statement of faith in their God. She said when her people heard they were _____. Their "hearts melted". Rehab reacted in faith. (**Joshua 2:11**). She chose to disobey her own king and put her trust in the Lord, believing God would win the battle and that she and her family would be saved (**Joshua 2:12-13**). She said it with her _____, but her _____ showed it. She didn't just say she believed, she put her life on the line to join God's side. We choose to put our trust in Him, even when His commands may seem ridiculous to the _____. When it came to righteousness by the standards of the Jewish law, Rehab was about as unrighteous as you get. She was a Gentile prostitute and the last person you would expect to be commended for her _____. ***The Gentile prostitute and the Jewish patriarch share one thing in common, _____ that showed itself in action. This kind of faith is real, alive not dead, and is a saving faith.***

Q: What is God's redemptive purpose for seeing very different people being united in faith?

Godly wisdom in action bringing peace, harmony, and human flourishing.

4) Wisdom is shown by gentleness and pursuit of holiness. James 3:13, Matthew 11:28-30

Q: Why is godly wisdom connected to humility and gentleness?

This passage is about how we can tell someone has godly wisdom by the way they live. This flows with *how faith is shown in our actions*. (**2:14-26**) Faith is shown *by the way we talk*: those who know Jesus speak with truth, love and grace (**3:1-12**). Those who have true godly wisdom live with _____ and *a virtuous way of life, particularly in the way they treat others*.

Gentleness: It is on the list of the Fruit of the Spirit and can mean meekness or humility. It is the ability to remain _____ and collected no matter what is going on. Gentleness does not mean _____; it is power under control. It takes a lot of _____ to live with gentleness. In the biblical context, it is a virtue that reflects the character of Christ; "gentle and lowly in heart" (**Matthew 11:29**) **He** is the most powerful Being in the universe. He didn't come to be _____; He came to serve. Jesus tells us living in gentleness is an "easy yoke" and it will bring us rest for our _____. (**Matthew 11:28-30**)

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Philippians 2:1-5 "Therefore if (since) you have any encouragement from being united with Christ, if (since) any comfort from his love, if (since) any common sharing in the Spirit, if (since) any tenderness and compassion, **v2** then make my joy complete by being like-minded, having the same love, being one in spirit and of one mind. **V3** Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit. Rather, in humility value others above yourselves, **v4** not looking to your own interests but each of you to the interests of the others. **v5** In your relationships with one another, have the same mindset as Christ Jesus." *Not casting doubt on his argument here, Paul assumes his statements to the believers was true.*

Ephesians 6:10-14,18 "Finally, be strong in the Lord and in his mighty power. **V11** Put on the full armor of God, so that you can take your stand against the devil's schemes. **V12** For our struggle is **not** against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms. **V13** therefore put on the full armor of God, so that when the day of evil comes, you may be able to stand your ground. " **V18** And pray in the Spirit on all occasions with all kinds of prayers and requests. With this in mind, be alert and always keep on praying for all the Lord's people."

Matthew 12:25 "Jesus knew their thoughts and said to them, 'Every kingdom divided against itself will be ruined, and every city or household divided against itself will not stand.'

Galatians 5:15 " If you bite and devour each other, watch out or you will be destroyed by each other." Selfish controversies/petty disagreements divide and harm our marriages, homes, churches, and relationships.

1Corinthians 14:33 "For God is not a God of disorder but of peace—as in all the congregations of the Lord's people." Disorder leads to indecision, frustration, passivity and lack of God's peace.

James 3:17-18 "But the wisdom that comes from heaven is first pure; then peace-loving, considerate, submissive, full of mercy and good fruit, impartial and sincere. **V18** Peace-makers who sow in peace reap a harvest of righteousness." **Romans 12:9-18** Love must be sincere. Hate what is evil; cling to what is good. **V10** Be devoted to one another in love. Honor one another above yourselves. **V11** Never be lacking in zeal, but keep your spiritual fervor, serving the Lord. **V12** Be joyful in hope, patient in affliction, faithful in prayer. **V13** Share with the Lord's people who are in need. Practice hospitality. **V14** bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse. **V15** Rejoice with those who rejoice; mourn with those who mourn. **V16** Live in harmony with one another. Do not be proud, but be willing to associate with people of low position. Do not be conceited. **V17** Do not repay anyone evil for evil. Be careful to do what is right in the eyes of everyone. **V18** If it is possible, as far as it depends on you, live at peace with everyone."

God does not hold people responsible for the outcome, but He does hold them responsible for doing what they can to live in and promote peace in whatever opportunities they may have.

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5) Jealousy and selfish ambition are not from God; they are earthly "wisdom".

Q: Why are jealousy and selfish ambition contrary to godly wisdom? **Philippians 2:1-5**

James 3:14-16 "But if you harbor bitter envy and selfish _____ in your hearts, do not boast about it or deny the truth **v15** Such "wisdom" does not come down from heaven but is _____ unspiritual, demonic. **V16** For where you have envy and selfish ambition, there you find disorder and every evil practice."

Selfish _____ is the opposite of a life of godly wisdom. It is the "wisdom" of the world. It comes from the demonic. Satan is the "prince of this world"--"_____ wisdom", comes from him. Our battle isn't against flesh and blood (*other people*), but against the powers and principalities of this present darkness and the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places. We must equip ourselves with the _____ of God (**Ephesians 6:10-14, 18**).

Remember, other PEOPLE are not the ENEMY, they are the VICTIMS of the ENEMY.

1) Satan loves to divide us because a house that is divided cannot stand (**Matthew 12:25**). Bitter jealousy; tearing other people down to make themselves look and feel better along with selfish ambition; stepping on others to climb to the top of the ladder, **divides us**. If we keep biting and _____ each other, we'll consume each other, all being _____ in the end. (**Galatians 5:15**)

2) The wisdom of God brings us together. It creates a cooperative world. Paul describes the humility of Jesus; counting others more significant than ourselves, looking out for the interests of _____, being of the _____ and accord (**Romans 12:3-5, Philippians 2:1-5**)
When we live in humility, we lift each other up so all can succeed.

3) Satan loves to divide us because it creates chaos, disorder, and every evil practice (**V16**). He loves to steal, kill, and destroy your life and relationships. He fuels a competitive world.

4) God is the God of order and _____ (**1 Corinthians 14:33**) and wants to give us abundant life (**John 10:10**). The key is humility and gentleness. Not thinking less of yourself but thinking of yourself. Jesus sacrificed Himself for us. He came not to be served but to serve. **Matt 20:24-28**

6) **Wisdom from above brings gentleness and peace. James 3:17-19, Romans 12:3, 9-18**

Wisdom from above is "_____"; "holy", or "sacred." In the NT it is a deeper spiritual purity that encompasses the heart and mind. Different from the way the world works. This wisdom is peaceable; creating a state of _____ and tranquility between those who share in it. Peace is not just the absence of conflict; it's a holistic sense of well-being, completeness and flourishing. This wisdom is "open to reason", not stubborn; willing to compromise and listen to others, not needing to have your own way all the time. It was "full of mercy" showing compassion to others, "_____", not showing favoritism. It is "_____" genuine, without pretense or deceit. It is full of the Fruit of the _____ which grows in the lives of those with godly wisdom.