

James 26-08-30b

We're ready now to pick up our study here in James chapter 3. And what we're seeing is, like the pastoral epistles, I was so impressed, and I hope you were as well, at the way God, through His Holy Spirit and through the Apostle Paul, gave content and teaching in 1 Timothy and Titus and 2 Timothy, written in that order, with guidance for pastors that is exemplary. It is put for what all of us should do with our gift, the qualifications that all of us should have and should cultivate for service and function, the qualifications for elders, and the emphasis and the focus and the persistence when Paul tells Timothy, preach the word, be ready in season, out of season, rebuke, correct, exhort with all authority. That's great for pastors to hear, but all of us should have that level of dedication to implementing the will of God in our area.

Gift doesn't have to have a name. Teachers are prominent. It's an easy one to pick on and use as an example.

The same thing is happening here in James. This tongue that has an influence over the entire body, this rudder that can send the entire ship either in the right direction or the wrong direction, this tongue that can either inspire with the flame of the word of God in the soul that removes what is unnecessary and reveals what is eternal. That's what the wood, hay, and stubble fire and the gold, silver, and precious stones does.

The fire eliminates what doesn't need to be there and exposes what reflects the glory of God. That's what a good tongue can do. If it's unruly, if it's undisciplined, if it's out of control, if it forgets what it's supposed to be doing, it can set a great forest fire and destroy something that ought to be there.

The bridle for the horse. The bridle is useless unless it's on a horse. Bridles have no other function.

There are other things you can use as a doorstop if they're not useful anymore. I've had old engine parts. I had an engine blew.

Some things have multiple uses or you can repurpose them. But a bridle is only good for steering a horse. And it's only beneficial when it is steering the horse in the right direction.

All of these are examples dealing with communication, both in a group of believers and individually. Those believers and the circle of influence that our tongues have in our relationships, in our workplace, in our interactions with others on occasional bases. What are we observed to be talking about or interested in? To what extent does our speech reflect wisdom from God that is in our hearts and is giving us self-discipline, is enabling us to direct ourselves in the way God would have us walk and think and live? So that's what's going on here in chapter three.

And verse seven, every kind of beast and bird, reptile and creature of the sea is tamed and has

been tamed by mankind. Again, this is the Proverbs way of speaking. We're talking in general terms to make a point.

This is not a scientific treatise on have we tamed the minnows? Have we tamed the octopi? Have we tamed every single creature? We take this in the spirit in which it is delivered. So many times when it says every kind, it's every kind, not every single one or every single individual, but there are all different types of things that have been captured and controlled in birds, reptiles, creatures of sea. This is sky, land, and sea.

And representatively speaking, there are kinds of birds that have been domesticated. There are kinds of animals that have been domesticated. There are kinds of things that dwell in the sea that have been domesticated.

You can control them. You think of the fish that are caught in a net. You have taken them from free swimming and you've in a net and you've brought them under control.

They are now there to be sorted. Some you can throw back if they're too small, but we have been able to take control of things that are otherwise flying in the sky, swimming in the sea, or running away on the land. All kinds.

It has been tamed by mankind, but no man can tame the tongue. It is an unruly evil, full of deadly poison. Now, the Lord Jesus used his tongue to teach people with communication gifts in the church from the earliest days.

Is that an evil tongue burning down forests and poisoning things? Context. What are we talking about here? The tongue can do these things. The deadly force, unruly evil, a poison.

Now, verse nine, with it, we bless our God and father and with it, we curse men who have been made in the similitude of God. Again, it's helpful, I think, to see that what James has in his mind goes back to verse one, teachers in the assembly. Think about church.

Why is there so much deconstruction going on and the progressive type of Christianity that says we need to make progress away from the traditional church? Because the traditional church is so often characterized by lack of discipline when it comes to teaching. To the extent that there is a teaching service, sometimes it's just all praise and worship, or it's other kinds of entertainment. The message can often be something that is designed to stimulate emotion or give people a lift.

We'll play uplifting music, we'll say uplifting things, and it appeals to the emotion. We'll create an environment. I was tuning a piano, nothing against anybody, but I was bemused as I was tuning this grand piano in a large sanctuary, it is called.

It isn't sanctified, it's an auditorium. I just call it big room. It's an auditorium.

But in churches, they're called sanctuaries as though they are a sanctum. There's something

extra holy, take off thy shoes from off thy feet or something. But I glanced up in the rafters, and it looked like a movie studio.

There were all of these big lights with different colors on, and spotlights, and cameras, and big screens in all four corners of the thing. And the sound system, there are speakers and microphones everywhere. You've got to watch your step on the stage slash platform, because there are so many microphone cords and mixers.

The pianist has a mixer, the guitarist has a mixer, the person at the front has little mini mixers, personal mixers for their inputs. And if they want to hear somebody because they're doing accompanying, all of this equipment, thousands of dollars of equipment to put on this show. And every group gets to choose their priorities.

And I say, go be warm, be fed. And I hope you are warmed, and I hope you are fed. But I have to wonder in my own mind, whether the focus on the Lord Jesus, and on the Word of God, and on our place in the world, doesn't somehow get lost in the program.

And in watching others performing, singing, playing instruments, moving around, and presenting something that is outside ourselves, where all believers need the Word of God to go in. It is sharper than a two-edged sword for a reason. You don't wave it around and reflect light off of it up in the front.

You get cut apart with it, so that what is necessary to expose is revealed, the thoughts and intents of the heart. We want to be diligent to show ourselves approved by God. And subjectivity is so easy to slip into.

It doesn't mean that there aren't wonderful hymns, wonderful presentations of godly music. This goes back to the Old Testament days. We've got 150 hymns from the Israelite songbook.

It's wonderful, but it needs to contribute to what the Word of God is doing inside us, and not being a subjective presentation where it's just a distraction, and I don't have to think about how I'm living, or how I'm thinking, or how I'm behaving, or how I'm using my own tongue. So this is in view here. No man can tame the tongue.

It is an unruly evil full of deadly poison. It certainly can be. And anybody's tongue can be an unruly evil.

Anybody's tongue can be full of deadly poison. And I could take you to the Psalms. You can do New Treasury Scripture Knowledge.

You know this is true. Throughout the Psalms and the Proverbs, it talks about the dangers of the tongue and of unbridled speech. We've had it here in James as well.

We want to move forward. You can find those. You know that this is a biblical truth.

Disciplined conversation. Praying. Before we, remember they always said, engage your brain before you put your mouth in gear.

We want to remind ourselves of our spiritual resources. When we have an opportunity to converse, we're going to meet somebody for lunch or dinner. We're going to be interacting with someone in a workplace or in some other environment.

And we remain aware of how dangerous our tongue can be if it is unbridled. This is the unbridled tongue, the unruly tongue, evil and poison. Blessing God our Father and cursing men who have made the similitude of God.

Now this makes natural sense in a group worship setting, doesn't it? Where the teacher, the pastor, should be celebrating and explicating and expositing our God and Father. Everything that He's done. His plan of redemption and salvation.

His Son, His Spirit, His Word. Focusing on all of these things that originate with God the Father. It's so wonderful to think about the book of Revelation.

It comes from God the Father. It's the revelation of the Lord Jesus Christ, but God the Father sent it. And God the Father speaks at the beginning and the end of it.

And Jesus in 14.6 of John, you come to the Father through Him. If there was a way to be Patreons instead of Christians, you would almost like that designation. Because we want to be people of the Father.

Those who please the Father. Because that's what the Lord Jesus came to do, is to bring us to the Father. And we bless our God and Father, but with the same tongue.

And this implies in the same setting. You say, well, we've got a wonderful God. Here's our scripture reading for the morning.

Here's our passage. But look at what's happening on the political scene. Look at what these people are doing with their data centers, and their smelters, and their weapons, and their economic things, and their bitcoins, and their AI.

And here's what's happening. And starting to create fear, and loathing, and discontent, and criticism of people out in the world. And adopting a point of view about things, where each of us should adopt our own point of view, based on what the Word of God does inside us.

And first and foremost, the target of the Word is us. It's a deflection to look over the fence and find fault and failure with the billionaires of the world, with the corporate heads, with influential people in government, both domestic and foreign, with wars, and rumors of wars, and earthquakes, and famines, and responses, and who's doing what where. And it's all outward looking, where the Word of God needs to get inside me, and hammer the rocks, and burn away

the chaff, so that I am equipped.

If I'm a teacher, then I need to be a disciplined tongue. If I'm part of a group, I need to be a disciplined tongue. Because if my tongue is disciplined, my whole body has been brought into subjection.

And I have internalized that wisdom that I asked for back in chapter one. Not quite sure what to do. Not quite sure what the future holds.

Ask for wisdom. And trust God, nothing doubting, that He's going to provide it. And then listen to it.

Let wisdom have its perfect work. Talaos, mature, complete. That word keeps occurring over and over.

If anyone can bridle his tongue, he's a Talaos man. He's a perfect man, able to bridle the whole body back up in verse two. So, to bless in an assembly, in a worship service, to bless God, sing hymns of praise, read a scripture that extols God and the things of God, and then turn around and have a worldly-oriented, politically-minded, look at those people over there type of message, that's going to unleash evil.

That is going to be to the detriment of the hearers, not a benefit. And to curse men who have been made in the similitude of God. The thing to remember out of this, people get hung up on, well, image of God, is it there? Is it lost? When is it recovered? And so on.

A, this is not the word icon, image. This is a word that means similitude. And in Genesis, when God creates man, it is in his image and after his likeness.

This is the latter. This is the likeness. And this means that we are unique among living things on this planet.

We are most like God in that we have consciousness. We have the ability to choose. We have the ability to make plans and implement purposes.

We have dominion that has been conferred upon us by God. We have responsibilities that have been given to us by God. And they are in many ways, an echo of what God does.

So people have a responsibility for what they do with what God has given. And to spend our time cursing others, blessing God, cursing others, where are we in the equation? Where are we looking at us? I look at God. I bless him.

I look at man. I curse them. We skipped something.

What about me and the wisdom that is supposed to come inside me and the effect that it is supposed to have on me to renew me, to transform me by the renewing of my mind so that I will

understand God's good and acceptable and perfect will? Romans 12, 1 and 2. That is the main mast of the Christian ship is Romans 12, 1 and 2. Don't be conformed to the world. Anybody can look around and throw stones. We should bless God and we should let the word of God open us up, cleanse us and renew us.

Washing the water by the word, out of the same mouth proceed blessing and cursing my brethren, these things ought not to be so. In Christian fellowship, we shouldn't spend our time cursing others, whether it's individual or the assembly. We come together to bless God, to praise him, to thank him, to worship him, to better understand him and to let him accomplish his purpose in us individually and in our midst as a group.

Others are on their own. We hope that they will be drawn to the reflected light of the glory of God in our lives and in our fellowship. But to spend our time sharpshooting them, harping about this one or that one or the other one, it's hard not to with the media that we have blanketing us and fire hosing us with what everybody else is doing.

It's difficult, but we have the power of God. Same mouth, blessing and cursing my brethren, these things ought not to be so. Does a spring send forth fresh and bitter from the same opening? Can a fig tree, my brethren, bear olives or a grapevine bear figs? No spring yields both saltwater and fresh.

We want to be consistent, be predictable. This is a source that is always an encouragement. We've known people like this.

We know people like this in the present. You come away from a conversation or contact with them feeling blessed. It's never a downer.

They never drag you down some road of criticism and angst of others and all of the problems in the world. Not that we don't take note, not that we aren't aware, but there's a difference in understanding and perceiving. Even within a fellowship, we are commanded to perceive those who do not walk according to the truth and those that do.

Mark those who cause dissensions and divisions and separate from them. Cultivate fellowship with those who are clearly on the way and on the road and we build one another up. We forsake not the assembling of ourselves.

We come together and celebrate through songs and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in our hearts to the Lord. There is encouragement, but if somebody's got the unruly tongue and it drags us down a bad road, we don't want to be that person and we are commanded not to fellowship with such people. If the conversation isn't uplifting, upbuilding, if it doesn't draw us closer to our God and Father whom we bless, it winds up cursing people.

You got to limit that contact. We should be consistent. Verse 11 and 12 is all about consistency

and consistent goodness.

If you're a fig tree, always have figs and don't try to be what you're not. If you're a fig tree trying to be an olive branch, it's not going to work. If you're a freshwater spring, don't try to generate salty water.

If you are a grapevine, don't try to bear figs. The fig tree is there to bear figs. A lot of times we compare ourselves with others and say, well, they're doing this, that, and the other.

Why am I not doing that? Because you're a grapevine and they're a fig tree. Let them do the figs. You do the grapes and don't have sour grapes.

So that brings us to verse 13. Who is wise and understanding among you? This is such a beautifully woven presentation. We are back to chapter 1. We need wisdom.

If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God who gives liberally without reproach. It will be given to him. Ask in faith, nothing doubting.

And in that wisdom, when we are exalted, we glory. When we're humble, we glory. Because we understand things in that wisdom.

Who is the wise and understanding among you? Let him show by good conduct that his works are done in the humility, the meekness of wisdom. So our works now are tied to two things. Faith.

That was chapter 2. Last half of chapter 2, faith without works. I will show you my faith by my works. Our works should reflect faith.

But faith is not an abstraction. It's not just a blind, I am somewhere over the rainbow. Bluebirds fly.

It'll all be okay by and by. Faith has content. We aim our faith at the word of God, at the truth of God, at the wisdom of God.

Wisdom says this is the way, walk ye in it. And we have faith to walk. We have faith to act in accordance with that wisdom.

It is reflected in two primary areas. If you just step back from James, just step for a minute. What's he talking about? There is a God in heaven that we bless.

We are his children and we can ask him for wisdom and he will give it like a good father. He doesn't reproach us. He doesn't limit how much he gives.

As much as we can handle, he is going to give us, liberally and without reproach. That wisdom should be internalized and it's going to have two effects. We are going to change our attitudes and that will be reflected in what we say and in what we do.

Our works will reflect our faith. They will reflect the humility. We're back to an attitude.

Humility. We won't think too much of ourselves. We won't think that we are set up as judge and jury on others.

We're going to curse men. We'll point out all of their flaws and absurdities and inconsistencies and badnesses of various kinds. We're not going to do that.

We have genuine wisdom from God produces in us humility. What do I have that I did not receive? I am the place where God needs to do his first and best work of renovation, rejuvenation, restoration, renewal. I am the construction project that the wisdom of God needs to work on first and foremost.

I am not in a position to curse others. Even if maybe they're cursed by God, let God do the cursing. It's along the same parallel line as vengeance is mine, I will repay, saith the Lord.

If somebody's malfunctioning, let the Lord deal with them. To the extent that it affects me, I've got to have the humility of wisdom and that will condition what I say and what I do. So who is wise and understanding among you? Why does James ask this question? Pretend you're looking at the group, we're all of us in the same room for this purpose, and somebody stands up and says, all right, which ones of y'all are wise and understanding? How many of y'all have had like years of Bible class, been in church, you know a lot about the Lord Jesus, you know a lot about the Father, you know about the plan and purpose, you've got the Israel of the church figured out, you know the kingdom of the Son, kingdom of the Father, you've got all of this knowledge of the scripture.

Now, which of y'all are wise and understanding? That's what James is doing. He's standing up in front of us and saying, do you think you're wise and understanding? Would you say, I think I qualify, I'm not trying to be a fathead here, but I've heard the teaching of the word of God and I understand quite a bit and I know where things are found in scripture and I'm pretty much endeavoring to stay on the narrow road through the straight gate. So you're wise and understanding? Okay, let's say you are, if and it's true.

Who is wise and understanding among you? And you say, well, I think that's me, in all fairness. I mean, by now I should be wise and understanding. Look how long I've been, you know, in the word of God.

If you are wise and understanding, show by good conduct that your works are done in the meekness of wisdom. Once again, the elegance and the tact with which James presents this, he's put this back in the third person. He's back in the third person here.

This whole presentation in chapter three, we all stumble in many things back in verse two. We put bits in horses mouths in verse three, but we talk about the beasts and birds and reptiles. We talk

about man taming the tongue in verse eight, but then in verse nine, with the tongue, we bless our God and father.

He says, you certainly bless God and father, right? But are we cursing people? Ouch. I need to, I need to step back. I can observe, I can perceive, I can be aware, I can identify error and problems and malfunction, but I don't curse.

I don't call it out and denigrate people with my tongue. I can note it. I can act accordingly in terms of how much fellowship I allow, but I'm not bad-mouthing, cursing because I'm blessing God with my, we, with our mouth, bless God.

So who is wise and understanding among you? Let him show by good conduct, good behavior, that his works are done in the meekness of wisdom, humility. But if you have bitter envy and self-seeking in your hearts, do not boast and lie against the truth. Remember the boasting that we had about the tongue earlier on, the boasting in verse five, the tongue is a little member and boasts great things.

We're back to boasting. Do not boast because that boasting is to lie against the truth. You obfuscate the truth.

You set your presentation up against what is actually true. It's against, it's contra the truth. This wisdom, so this is a different kind of wisdom.

We're back to chapter one. We need wisdom. If we lack it, we ask of God.

He will give liberally and without reproach, or we can adopt a different kind of wisdom, a pseudo wisdom, an anti-wisdom like the antichrist. This wisdom that boasts and lies against the truth, that is self-seeking and bitter against others, jealous against others. This wisdom does not descend from above.

This is in complete contrast with the chapter one wisdom that should be inside us, transforming us, changing the way we have attitudes, the way we talk and the way we act. This wisdom is not descending from above. It is earthly.

It is sensual and demonic. It is a feel-good wisdom. And this is icing on something poisonous.

It tastes good. It looks good. But like the whitewashed sepulcher, it is full of dead men's bones.

This wisdom is demonic, but it is sensual. It appeals to feelings. And this is why we are cautious about things that purport to be worship services and gatherings of believers that appeal to the senses.

It's one thing to appreciate the beauty of the Word of God, to appreciate it when it is set to music, when it is put to poetry, when the focus is appreciation of God. We are blessing God and we are

appreciating His Son and His Spirit and His Word as passing through something transparent and getting to that destination, not a triumph of form over content. And we stop looking at the form of the presentation and the content isn't there.

It doesn't take me to and through to arrive at the Father, to bless Him, and so on. It is sensual and ultimately demonic. The demonic enterprise is to distract, deflect, and deceive.

Distract. Turn your eyes away. Wonderful song.

Turn your eyes upon Jesus. Look full in His wonderful face. The things of this earth will grow strangely dim in the light of His glory and grace.

Turn your eyes upon Jesus. Looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, I quoted earlier, looking at Jesus. Demons want to pull your gaze away.

When Peter was walking on the water, when did he start sinking? When he took his eyes off Jesus. To distract is a demonic tactic. To deceive is a demonic tactic.

To put something for wisdom that isn't wise at all. And to deflect. You are trying to remember promises, principles, and doctrines from the Word, but there's another voice talking, deflecting you away from the truth of the Word.

So, this is earthly, sensual, and demonic. Earthly. What's the opposite of earthly? What's the polar alternative? Heavenly.

Lay up for yourself treasure in heaven. Think of the future. Think of the implications of what I think and do and believe now in the future.

Otherwise, I'm earthly, short-term, immediate. Earthly, sensual, and demonic. For where envy and self-seeking—notice, *exist* is in italics.

It's just where there is envy and self-seeking, confusion and every evil thing there. I think it reads better without the italicized words. Where envy and self-seeking, confusion and every evil thing there.

It's very tight, very punchy. It's got a sharp point. I'm busy.

The only way to have envy is to be looking at somebody else. Self-seeking is looking at me. Where should my eyes be? The Lord Jesus Christ, through Him, God the Father, the Spirit and the Word, the means by which we maintain that spiritual environment.

Envy, eyes on people. Self-seeking, eyes on self. Confusion and every evil thing are going to be the result.

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. This word, partiality, is not the big long word we talked about before. This is the two-minded word.

The double-minded man. It would be better without double-mindedness and without hypocrisy. It's a better translation.

So, how do I know if I am perhaps unconsciously operating with the wrong kind of wisdom, the wrong mindset? Wisdom is what I think is the best course of action in this situation. What are my practical options? What should I do? What should I prioritize? What is my goal? How can I reflect biblical values, goals, values, priorities? This is our way of thinking in spiritual terms. This is what should be infused with and permeated by wisdom.

So, you will know them by their fruits. What is the fruit of the wisdom that I am operating on? If it's the wisdom that lies against the truth, and I have got my eyes on people, bitter envy is just a placeholder for the subjective occupation with others. I keep thinking about them.

Bitter envy is one of many things that results from too much time looking at others for any number of reasons. Bitter envy and jealousy, I am looking at somebody for those to be occupying my mind. Most in lying against the truth, this wisdom does not descend from above.

The wisdom that is from above, verse 17, is first pure. It's not mixed with other stuff. I don't have to listen to a lot of social commentary, political opinion, or anecdotal amelioration and incorporation of extra ingredients that don't need to be there.

The word should be pure. We should be looking at the word, grasping its meaning, looking for illustrations and affirmations and emphasis elsewhere in the word for that particular thing. It ought to be pure.

Remember earlier, you used the same word, pure and undefiled religion is to look out for the orphans and keep oneself unstained from the world. That's pure. When you're looking at others, how can I help them? Widows and orphans, again, these things are put for a whole category.

Pure and undefiled religion is looking at others in order to help them. Widows and orphans are the immediate example. Keep myself unspotted from the world.

The wisdom of the world has just been described. So pure wisdom from above is peaceable. I'm not going to be crossing swords and having arguments and heated exchanges and disagreements, disunity, disharmony, division if I'm implementing this wisdom.

This is a healing, uniting, pacific wisdom. The water gets calmer. It doesn't become more roiled and churned.

Temperatures are falling, not rising. There is warmth, not fire. Peaceable, gentle.

I'm not pushing. I'm not going to back you into a corner and make you understand my point. It's gentle.

I will offer a thought. See what you think of it. I'm not pushy.

I'm not sucking all the air out of the room. I'm not waiting for you to stop talking so that I can occupy the next 15 minutes with my view. And because it seems so right to me, it makes so much sense to me, as long as I can talk about it enough, you will see it my way.

Gentle, willing to yield. If you're not going to agree, fine. I will pray.

I don't even have to tell somebody, well, I'll pray for you. You don't see it my way. I'll pray for you that you'll come around.

But back off, yield. You got your position. I will go home.

And in the privacy of my prayers, I will ask God to grant light that perhaps you can see it another way. If it is indeed error, I might be the one in error. It's nice if I'm gentle and peaceable and I turn out to be wrong.

I sure glad I didn't push that point and make a bigger fool out of myself than I needed to. Willing to yield, full of mercy and good fruits. This conversation should end up being a benefit to the person with whom I'm conversing.

It ought to yield good fruit. I'm offering a thought. Maybe it's a seed that God will plant.

You've seen seeds get into the cracks of a rock, and when they start to germinate and grow and expand, the pressure will crack the rock. This little, seemingly harmless seed, when it begins to grow, it's got great power. Paul says, I planted, Apollos watered, and God gave the increase.

We can just be seed planters. I see it differently. Here's my understanding.

Not pushy, not confrontational, not argumentative, not cross, not divisive, not abrasive, not bitter, peaceable, gentle, full of mercy and good fruit, without double-mindedness. I'm not thinking about how anything can happen other than the progress of the plan and purpose of God. I am single-minded in the implementation of divine wisdom that is from above.

Without double-mindedness, and without hypocrisy, if I'm going to present ideas that represent divine wisdom to someone else, I need to be living in that light. Woe unto a pastor how embarrassing to go over a passage of scripture and present the application, and I myself am a complete and total failure at that. I need to go find something to talk about where I'm not the worst possible example of how to fail.

The fruit of righteousness is sown in peace. Notice, what's our goal? Righteousness. The

righteousness of God.

Remember back in chapter 2, the wrath of man does not produce the righteousness of God. Chapter 1, verse 20, that is. Wrath of man, anger, bitterness, jealousy, confrontational, argumentation, it's not going to get the righteousness of God.

The fruit of righteousness is sown in peace by those who make peace. I've got to cultivate peace in my own life, then I can talk about peace and talk peaceably to others. See how beautifully this whole thing has been woven together from the wisdom of God, under pressure.

What does it produce attitude-wise? What does it produce conversation-wise? What does it produce works-wise? I can tell whether that's working or not just by looking at these descriptions. Is it peaceable and gentle, or is it envious and bitter and divisive? Quick test, easy to tell. The communicator, the tongue for the body is put as the example, and it is very applicable in a worship and assembly context.

It is equally applicable to us as individuals. Read this chapter. It's not deep, it's wide.

It's easy to understand. We don't have to do a lot of translational work here or interpretational work. What we have to do is absorption.

Read it, think about it, read it again. Pray over it. Ask God for wisdom.

Watch for the generous, non-rebuking supply of that wisdom, and watch for the fruit of righteousness as its effect, so that we can be seed sowers. Paul and his companions were once accused of being spermatologos, seed pickers in the book of Acts, by their opponents. Sperma is the word for seed.

We want to be seed sowers. We want to sow peace, and we want to make peace. And this is the James, I'm telling you, this is the James that heard the Lord Jesus in the Sermon on the Mount talk about blessed are the peacemakers.

He combined it into one word there. It's two words here, but it's the same two words, making peace, poia o airene, making peace, sponsoring peace, surrounding and creating an environment of peace, where the wisdom of God can have full sway and produce the fruit of righteousness. What a wonderful chapter.

We will pick up next time in chapter four. We'll close here in a word of prayer. Father, thank you for this wonderful exhortation from the Apostle James.

We pray that God, the Holy Spirit, will help us to see its pertinence and application in the hours and days that remain to us in this life. We pray that in all things, the Lord Jesus will be glorified, and we will be those who, as he did, make for peace. We pray it in Jesus' name.

Amen.