

## **Putting Wisdom to Work**

February 19, 2006

Captain Chuck Fowler

### **INTRODUCTION**

- Background Information:

- No ordination process, seminary training, etc.
- Good thing? Intense discipleship was required
- Bad thing? Anyone who studied enough could proclaim he/she was a teacher based on the knowledge acquired
- To be “learned” was to be powerful
- Does this ever happen today?

Illustration: Henry Ford’s generators as built by Charles Steinmetz. One day generator’s stopped. Ford’s people couldn’t determine why. Called Steinmetz. Steinmetz tinkered with generators and a few hours later flipped the switch. Steinmetz sent Ford a bill for \$10,000. For questions the high bill. The response was “For tinkering with generator, \$10.00. For knowing where to tinker \$9,990.” Ford paid the bill.

- In many ways, knowledge still yields power.
- No matter how little knowledge you have, you will always find someone with less.
- Using knowledge properly is wisdom. Today’s focus.

### **TRUE WISDOM V. FALSE WISDOM (v 13-14)**

- True wisdom is shown by good behavior and humility. (v13)
  - James is all about putting faith to work.
  - No different when it comes to wisdom.
  - Wisdom should be used to promote the welfare of others.
  - NASB: “the gentle use of wisdom”
  - Gentleness does not Lord over, but is helpful.
  - True wisdom is a gift from God and it is to be used for the benefit of the body.
- False wisdom shows itself through jealousy and selfishness (v14)
  - Wisdom used improperly is only used for selfish gains.
  - To Lord it over, to increase one’s perceived personal worth
  - To gain advantage over another person for personal gain or standing

### **ORIGINS OF FALSE WISDOM (v 15-16)**

- False wisdom is worldly and demonic (v15)
  - God does not grant wisdom that is used for personal gain
  - All of God’s gifts are given for building the body of Christ
    - For helping brothers/sisters to grow and mature
    - For bringing others to salvation
  - If wisdom is not from God, it is from the world and therefore demonic
    - The world grants all kinds of knowledge.
    - The knowledge gained is often used for other than noble purposes.
- It results in disorder and evil (v16)
  - James says, (read v. 16)
  - This is true isn’t it.
  - Whenever one’s soul purpose is for selfish gains, trouble arises.
  - James is going to tell is in Chapter 4 that selfishness is really the root of arguments and discord.

- When we want something so bad (selfishly), we don't often consider how it will affect others.

#### **CHARACTERISTICS OF TRUE WISDOM (v 17-18)**

- A list of 8 characteristics in v. 17
- If peace is sought after it will result in righteousness. (v18)
  - In other words, if wisdom is used properly, it will glorify God and lead to a greater righteousness of God's people.
  - Peace is about building strong and healthy relationships.
  - It is within the context of a healthy relationship that mutual growth can occur.

#### **CONCLUSION**

- You may think, "Well, God hasn't given me the gift of wisdom"
- While you may not have the spiritual gift of wisdom, God has granted all of us some knowledge.
  - This knowledge comes from a variety of sources:
    - Our upbringing
    - Our education
    - Our experiences
- The question is: Are you able to turn that knowledge into wisdom and harness the power it contains for God's glory?
- The thing about wisdom is that God will give it to us if we ask.
- Throughout the Bible there are examples of this.
- With all the knowledge God has given you, you can pray, "God grant me wisdom to correctly use the knowledge you have give me to bring glory to you."