



# DIGGING DEEPER

James 3:13-4:12 – Faith and wisdom

**PLEASE READ** – James 3:13-4:12

## GETTING STARTED

Borrowing from what appeared on the *Listen Up* sheets this time!

- 1) What do you make of this summary?

**Wisdom:** the proper use of *knowledge*

**Humility (or meekness):** the proper use of *power*

- 2) And what do you make of these Bible-overview-level suggestions?

James isn't just teaching us how *we* should live. He's also pointing us to how *Jesus* lived. Jesus is the perfect Wise Man, and the perfect Humble Man. So James wants the followers of Jesus to be *like Jesus*, when he is teaching them to be wise and humble.

How do you interpret the more literal "the meekness of wisdom" (v13 ESV)? Is it wisdom or meekness that's more in the driving seat?

So where do we see Jesus' *wisdom* particularly evident, and where do we see his *humility*?

## Whose wisdom will we hear? (3:13-18)

**So-called wisdom** (14-16): James gives us the examples of "bitter envy and selfish ambition" ... but can you think of any other examples of "wisdom" that is "earthly, unspiritual, demonic"?

For "disorder", think not untidiness but more like "free-for-all" and "anarchy". How would that tie in with 1 Corinthians 14:40?

**True wisdom** (17-18): these are not just morally good, but, the nuance is, *beautiful* things.

What do you find attractive about this seven-fold description of wisdom?

How do you see these things in the character and actions of Jesus?

## Whose friendship do we want? (4:1-12)

Isn't James' stark statement in v4 a bit over the top? Is it really so black-and-white? Does he have to use those provocative words "adulterous people"? Doesn't that sound a bit like an OT prophet?

How does "the humility that comes from wisdom" play out as regards ...

### 1) Submitting to God's providence (1-3)

What's the answer to these dissatisfactions? What do we need to tell ourselves?  
But ... are "pleasures" always wrong?

### 2) Submitting to God's salvation (4-10)

Having to admit that we are sinners unable to save ourselves ... is that properly described as humiliating or humbling? What's the difference?

What do you make of this "resist the devil ..."?

A general principle for the Christian life: *humble yourself before the Lord, and he will lift you up?*

### 3) Submitting to God's justice (11-12)

"Slander" is literally "talking *down*" concerning a brother or sister – and therefore an implied attitude of superiority.

But "judging" ... how does this square with what you might call "discernment"? Check out Matthew 7:1-6 (read the whole section – doesn't *discernment* feature in the later verses?).