

Two Kinds of Wisdom

Key Verse: *"The wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, and easy to be intreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality, and without hypocrisy."*
—James 3:17

Selected Scripture:
James 3:13-18

a greater understanding of the divine will. Hence, greater wisdom will accrue to their eternal benefit.

"The beginning of wisdom is the reverence of Jehovah." (Prov. 9:10, *Rotherham Emphasized Bible*) Without proper reverence for God, it is impossible to gain the wisdom "from above," for that wisdom is made evident by the Creator's loving character and his divine purposes for mankind's ultimate blessing. We see the wisdom of God exemplified in his Son, Christ Jesus. The Apostle Paul speaks of Christ as "the power of God, and the wisdom of God."—I Cor. 1:24

Divine wisdom is truthful, honest and sincere. It is not used as a garment to cover up selfishness, and it makes no compromise with sin or impurity in any form. The gaining of wisdom requires purity of intention and motive.

THE SCRIPTURES INSTRUCT

us: "Wisdom is the principal thing; therefore get wisdom: and with all thy getting get understanding." (Prov. 4:7) As our Key Verse points out, we should seek the pure wisdom that comes from our Heavenly Father. Indeed, it is that which we derive from considering the Word of God, and his divine counsel, that is the essence of wisdom. Those who have a condition of heart in which they desire to be instructed by the Lord will surely be blessed with

The child of God who seeks wisdom must strive to be guileless, honorable and sincere. He must be utterly opposed to secret whisperings, backbiting, or evil surmising. The combination of our fallen flesh and an improperly motivated heart can be “deceitful above all things.” (Jer. 17:9) Let us not mistakenly believe that self-wisdom and self-will equate to God’s wisdom and will. Seldom, if ever, will this be the case.

In our lesson, James tells us that earthly wisdom leads to “confusion and every evil work,” and is often the result of “envying and strife.” This kind of wisdom does not come from above, he says, but is “earthly, sensual, devilish.” (James 3:14-16) To this the Apostle Paul adds, “The wisdom of this world is foolishness with God.” (I Cor. 3:19) The more we see the increasing foolishness of this world’s wisdom, the greater should be our reliance only on the wisdom which comes from the Word of God. However much mankind may desire to have love, peace and unity reign supreme in the earth, the achievement of such conditions can only come as they are in harmony with God’s unchanging principles of righteousness, all of which form the basis of divine wisdom.

In today’s world, a majority of people live for present earthly pleasures and rewards. The focus of a child of God, however, should be along the lines of this testimony from Paul, “In holiness and godly sincerity, not in fleshly wisdom but in the grace of God, we have conducted ourselves in the world, and especially toward you.” (II Cor. 1:12, *New American Standard Bible*) We are to delight in the beauty of “holiness and godly sincerity,” because it will lead us always in the direction of divine wisdom.

Let us be ever thankful that our Heavenly Father, the only true and living God, has wisdom as one of his character attributes. “O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! ... For of him, and through him, and to him, are all things: to whom be glory for ever.”—Rom. 11:33,36 ■