



Sunday, May 2, 2010: Epistle of James - "Two Kinds of Wisdom"

Scripture: James 3:13-18

Speaker: Joe Boot

Sermon Notes:

1. James gets now to matters of the heart, touching on the two kinds of wisdom which inform our lives.
2. James' primary concern is not just what the teachers say, but now he focuses on how they live.
3. Teachers have a particular obligation to set an example by their lives. How we live is critical to our Christian witness.
4. Meekness does not mean weakness or resignation, but it is the harnessing of godly strength.
5. We demonstrate our wisdom and godliness by meekness.
6. Meekness is the self-restraint of the strong.
7. Being confident in your cause and your victory through God, you can afford to be meek. If God be for us, who can be against us?
8. Doing apologetics is an offensive task, yet we must carry it out in a confident and calm manner, knowing the strength of our position.
9. There are ways of showing the truth and the strength of our position without causing unnecessary offense.
10. The meek person doesn't need to destroy their opponent because their strength is in God. It's God who is doing the work.
11. The objections of the unbeliever are not rational/intellectual but moral.
12. In presenting Christ, you're asking the person to make a total re-orientation of their lives.
13. Christ's claims are total, personal, and totally life-transforming.
14. The unbeliever is not neutral, they're hostile to Christ: "I don't want God to be Lord over me." (Romans 8:7)
15. The ultimate purpose of apologetics is to bring people face to face with Christ, not to destroy their positions intellectually.
16. The most strongly oppositional people are often closer to the kingdom because the Spirit of God is working on them convincing them of the truth, and they don't like it.

17. A direct attack often only strengthens the illusion the unbeliever is opposing. We need to be gracious and tactful, loving and serving the truth.
18. Even when you show people they are wrong, they will still cling to their position because of pride.
19. Unbelievers have a desire to escape reality, to escape from God and the ultimate issues of life.
20. We can afford to be humble and meek because our God reigns.
21. Self-seeking and bitter envy exists in the church because it's in our hearts.
22. Our society thinks it's evolved a superior sense of ethics, contradicting God's order.
23. A temper tantrum is considered an illness; we have sympathy for murderers.
24. James says the wisdom from above encompasses the present and the future; it is pure, it is not governed by a sinful motive.
25. The certainty of our faith is the triumph of Christ over all things; the victory of Christ gives us confidence in His promises.
26. The wisdom from above is marked out by a harvest of righteousness.
27. Though God may bring us through difficulty, we may still be hopeful in God.
28. When people of faith go through the valley they change the valley into a place of springs. (Psalm 84:5+)

Application Questions:

1. Do I see meekness as weakness? What is the biblical view of meekness?
2. Do I live confidently and boldly relying on the strength of our God?
3. Biblically is the unbeliever's mind neutral? Defend your position from Scripture.
4. Do I desire to defeat others in argument to make myself look superior?
5. Give examples of the false wisdom that is purveyed by the world.
6. Is righteousness, hope, peace and joy taking place in your life?
7. What are you sowing in your interactions with your friends and your children? What kind of harvest can you expect? of faith?