

James 3:17 (NLT2)

But the wisdom from above is first of all pure. It is also peace loving, gentle at all times, and willing to yield to others. It is full of mercy and good deeds. It shows no favoritism and is always sincere.

I love the following quote that I heard from Pastor Jack Hibbs.

“Wisdom is the proper application of knowledge.”

With that in mind, think about how we all want wisdom, yet how often do we want knowledge? We ask others what we should do, seeking their wisdom. But how do we know what is actually wisdom, versus someone’s opinion and not godly knowledge?

We know as a Christian, with any question we need to go to the source of all answers, God’s word. And as we do, we have a formula of sorts, or check off list right here in today’s verse to put someone’s advice, or wisdom to the test. Like Jack Hobbs quote *“Wisdom is the proper application of knowledge.”* So, what may sound like wise counsel, could be the person’s knowledge of worldly things, and not scripturally sound, and would not be wise counsel.

So, what have you been seeking others wisdom on lately? Take that question you have been asking others and put their answers against today’s devotional verse, which tells us what wisdom is ***“the wisdom from above is.”*** Today’s verse is from the NLT, but I will also include the NKJV as we will be using both.

† **James 3:17** *But 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.*

Ask yourself in regard to what you have been asking others about, and what their response is. Is it ***“first pure”*** or ***“Peace loving”*** not pure in our eyes or anyone else’s eyes, but in God’s eyes. Because a man or woman may think that they love someone and want to have sex with the person before marriage, because they think it is pure and right because of the so-called love that they have for one another, but in reality it is wrong and not pure in God’s eye’s, and it’s not love for that person, but rather lust.

So, if it passes that first test, then ask yourself, is it ***“peaceable, gentle”*** or ***“gentle at all times”*** or as the Message bible puts it, is it ***“gentle and reasonable.”*** Is it something that would happen naturally, or do you have to force it to happen, because you want it your way and not God’s way. When we want it our way, then we have to force it to make it happen, but when it’s God’s way, then it happens gently and you feel a peace about it, Godly peace.

Now ask yourself, is it, or am I ***“Willing to yield to others”*** Once again this would go along with ***“gentle and peaceable,”*** where you are not wanting to walk over others to get it. Maybe it’s a

promotion or even a new job you are seeking. Are you willing to let someone else get that job or promotion or are you wanting to do whatever it takes to get it, even if you have to push others out of the picture, usually by slandering him or her.

Next, is it “*Full of mercy and good fruits*” or “*Full of mercy and good deeds.*” The bible talks about good fruit, and Jesus even said.

† **Luke 6:43-45** *For a good tree does not bear bad fruit, nor does a bad tree bear good fruit. For every tree is known by its own fruit. For men do not gather figs from thorns, nor do they gather grapes from a bramble bush. A good man out of the good treasure of his heart brings forth good; and an evil man out of the evil treasure of his heart brings forth evil. For out of the abundance of the heart his mouth speaks.*

Will it produce good fruit, say in the instance of that promotion? Would you walk over others to get it, and how would that really bring glory to God, and with others knowing you did it this way, does it cause them to glorify God, or question your God?

Finally, is it “*without partiality and without hypocrisy*” or does it “*Shows no favoritism and is always sincere.*” Or as the Message bible puts it, “*not hot one day and cold the next, not two-faced.*”

James says earlier in his book in chapter one.

† **James 1:6-8** *But let him ask in faith, with no doubting, for he who doubts is like a wave of the sea driven and tossed by the wind. For let not that man suppose that he will receive anything from the Lord; he is a double-minded man, unstable in all his ways.*

If their counsel makes you go back and forth, wondering if they are right or not “*not hot one day and cold the next, not two-faced.*” How much wisdom is there in that? Usually it’s because the person giving you counsel could be looking for what they think is better for, or favoring you as a person, but not the entire outcome of what you are seeking counsel on. “*Shows no favoritism and is always sincere.*”

Maybe counsel you get is something like, “*Yea, do whatever you can do to get that promotion of whatever it is, because God loves you and wants the best for you.*” But notice their response is all about “you” and they say “you” three times in that little sentence. Sure we want counsel for “us”, but we should really be seeking counsel for the thing, issue, or request, because if we seek counsel for ourselves alone, we are not seeking Godly counsel, but rather what will benefit us as opposed to how God wants to be glorified and would really want to benefit someone else right now, because He has something better or different for you.

So, go ahead and ask others, but ask a Christian brother or sister, unless you want worldly wisdom, which is not from God. And before you even ask, why not stop and pray, seeking the

Lord, for He may give you the ultimate counsel or He may point you to someone He has appointed to give you His counsel.

† **1 Corinthians 3:18-20 (MSG)** *Don't fool yourself. Don't think that you can be wise merely by being up-to-date with the times. Be God's fool—that's the path to true wisdom. What the world calls smart, God calls stupid. It's written in Scripture, He exposes the chicanery of the chic. The Master sees through the smoke screens of the know-it-alls.*

† **1 Corinthians 1:26-31** *For you see your calling, brethren, that not many wise according to the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, are called. But God has chosen the foolish things of the world to put to shame the wise, and God has chosen the weak things of the world to put to shame the things which are mighty; and the base things of the world and the things which are despised God has chosen, and the things which are not, to bring to nothing the things that are, that no flesh should glory in His presence. But of Him you are in Christ Jesus, who became for us wisdom from God-- and righteousness and sanctification and redemption-- that, as it is written, "He who glories, let him glory in the LORD."*