



# JAMES

“... the crown of life that the Lord has promised to those who love him”



# James

- Generally considered to be author: James (Yacob / Jacob): the half-brother of Jesus & leader of the council of Jerusalem
- full of instruction and command – much of which is inspired by the teaching of Jesus (notably the sermon on the mount) and by the wisdom of the book of Proverbs
- A ‘general letter’ written to the ‘12 Tribes’ – to all believers or at least, as some would argue, all Jewish Christians

# So Far...

- James 1
  - Perseverance Through Trials
  - Right Choiceness in Temptation
  - Lies Deceiving or Light Receiving
  - Bad Stuff Out, Good Stuff In
  - Reflection Reaction
  - Twisted Tongues or Faultless Faith
  - Oh Sit Down Next to Me
- James 2
  - Oh Sit Down Next to me
  - Faith Has to Work
- James 3
  - Power Steering the Tongue

Last Time...

## **JAMES 3:1-12**

Power Steering the Tongue



# **JAMES 3:13-18**

Heavenly Wisdom and the Harbour of the Heart



# Wise Words In Deeds

- To more fully understand what true heavenly wisdom and humility looks like
- To examine our hearts and lives in line with heavenly wisdom
- To resolve to grow in our expression of heavenly wisdom



# James 3

<sup>13</sup> Who is wise and understanding among you? Let them show it by their good life, by deeds done in the humility that comes from wisdom. <sup>14</sup> But if you harbour bitter envy and selfish ambition in your hearts, do not boast about it or deny the truth. <sup>15</sup> Such “wisdom” does not come down from heaven but is earthly, unspiritual, demonic. <sup>16</sup> For where you have envy and selfish ambition, there you find disorder and every evil practice.

<sup>17</sup> But the wisdom that comes from heaven is first of all pure; then peace-loving, considerate, submissive, full of mercy and good fruit, impartial and sincere. <sup>18</sup> Peacemakers who sow in peace reap a harvest of righteousness.



# Context

- James has just been talking about the power of the tongue – we all have immense power and must ensure it is being fuelled from the right place
- The devil wants us to use our tongues to bring, discord and destruction - darkness
- The Lord wants us to use our tongues to bring life love and liberty – light
- That which trips off the tongue starts in the heart





# Two Kinds of Wisdom

- Things are done differently in God's Kingdom
- The difference between men's pretending to be wise and their really being so, and the difference between the wisdom which is from beneath and that which is from above (Matthew Henry)
- There is earthly, unspiritual, demonic wisdom  
or
- There is wisdom that comes from heaven



# The Harbour of the Heart

- Above all guard your heart for from it flows the wellspring of life (Prov 4:3)
- Your 'heart' refers to the core of who you are
- To harbour is to dwell
- What are we allowing to be docked or anchored in our hearts?







A. W. Worthington



# The Harbour of the Heart

- What would we like to be kept in our harbour?



# The Harbour of the Heart



# Dangerous Things to Harbour

- James highlights several things that will bring demonic destruction if they are allowed to grow
  - Selfish Ambition
  - Pride
  - Envy
  - Denial of the Truth (Deceit)
- ‘Do not boast about it’ – as faith without works is not alive, so knowledge without action is not wise
- He shows that these can be a gateway to the explosions of ‘disorder and of every evil practice’



# Good Things to Harbour

- Purity
- Peace
- Consideration
- Submission
- Mercy
- Good fruit
- Impartiality
- Sincerity
- 'Meakness'



# The Harbour of the Heart

- <sup>18</sup> Peacemakers who sow in peace reap a harvest of righteousness.
  - An unrecorded proverb from Jesus?
- “Where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.” (Matt 6:21)





# The Harbour of the Heart

- So – what about your heart today?
  - What are we harbouring?
  - What needs unloading?
  - What can do we need to fill up with?



# Sowing and Reaping

- “Full of mercy and good fruit” (v17)
- Fruit grows naturally in the right conditions
- Fruit contains life for the next generation
- “Sow peace, reap righteousness” (v17)
- “Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God” (Matt 5:9)
- Gods way, not ours... Kingdom



# Who is Wise?

- Not the loudest or cleverest voice
  - Selfish ambition, deceit, boastfulness = demonic
- Those who's deeds reflect heavenly wisdom
  - Fruits of Peace, Mercy, Impartiality and so on...
  - The fruits of the Spirit
  - “Let them show it” (v13)
- All of which is cultivated through a growing relationship with the Lord
  - There is no healthy shortcut to bearing fruit



# Choose Heavenly Wisdom

- Change of behaviour (the good fruit of which is the evidence of heavenly wisdom) starts with change of heart
- Are we willing to let God be our harbourmaster?
- Is there any un-heavenly wisdom that needs dealing with?
- How are you going to cultivate a heavenly heart?



# Choose Heavenly Wisdom

- Reflect
  - What one thing am I going to do this week to improve the harbour of my heart?
- Commit
  - Who am I going to tell or how else am I going to ensure I put this into action?

