“How To Relate Wisely To Others”, Developing a Faith That Works, Part 9 of 15 – March 3, 2013 at SBC

James 3:13-18

Every day, you encounter, many different, kinds of people. Some are, very delightful. Some are, very difficult. Some of them, are inspiring. Some of them, are irritating, fascinating, intimidating. The fact is, a lot of the problems, we have in life, . . . are because of, personality conflicts. We don't get along, with people.

When your relationships, are bad, . . . life stinks. Life is, miserable. You may have lots of money, and lots of opportunities, . . . but, if your relationships are bad, you're miserable. It's very important, that we learn, . . . how to get along, . . . with other people.

James gives some, practical advice. Today, we're going to look at, what he has to say about, “How do we relate wisely, . . . to other people”. James 3:18, is the key verse, *"And, those who are peacemakers, will plant seeds of peace, . . . and, reap a harvest, of goodness."*

James says, every day, in every relationship, you're planting seeds. Seeds of anger, jealousy, peace, confidence, insecurity, many different kinds of seeds. So, you will inevitably reap, . . . what you sow, in your relationships. How can I, plant seeds of peace? How can I, be a peacemaker? How can I, have peaceful relationships?

**Wisdom!** We need to learn, how to be wise, in the way we act, . . . toward people. Often, we treat people, in very foolish ways, and we provoke, the exact opposite behavior, of what we would normally, like to see, in them. Common sense, . . . is not, so common. A lot of smart people, are not, too wise. They may be educated, . . . but, they don't have wisdom. They may have, all kinds of degrees, . . . but, they're a washout, . . . with relationships.

\*\*\*\* James, in this passage, . . . does **three things**: He defines, real wisdom, . . . then, he shows how it differs, from human wisdom, . . . then, . . . he details, how it operates.

**The first thing**, he says, in James 3:13, . . . is that wisdom, . . . is **a lifestyle**. It has nothing to do, . . . with your intelligence. It has everything to do, . . . with your relationships, and your character. *"Who is wise, and understanding, among you. Let him show it, by his good life, by deeds done in humility, that comes from wisdom."*

Imagine James, coming into our church, and asking, . . "May I see the hands, of those, who are wise?" If you're dumb enough, to raise your hand, he would say, "Prove it! Show me. Show me, your wisdom, . . . by, your lifestyle."

It's not a matter, of what you say, with your lips, . . . but, a matter of what you live, with your life. Not a matter, of your words, . . . but, of your works. Not so much, the diplomas on the wall, . . . but, your disposition, that, really shows, . . . how wise, you are. How do you get along, . . . with other people? That shows, how wise, . . . you really are. It's, . . . a lifestyle.

Wisdom, has more to do, with character, in relationships, . . . than, it has to do, with education, and intelligence. Wisdom, creates, . . . humility. Knowledge, causes pride, . . . but, wisdom, . . . causes, humility.

In James 3:14-16, James says lack of wisdom, causes **problems** -- all kinds, of problems. v. 14 – *"If you harbor bitter envy, and selfish ambition in your heart, don't boast about it, and deny the truth. Such `wisdom', does not come down from heaven, . . . but is earthly, unspiritual, even of the devil. For where you have envy, and selfish ambition, there you find disorder, and every evil practice."*

Lack of wisdom, causes all kinds, of disorder, and problems, . . . chaos, and confusion. Do you have confusion, in your home? Do you have chaos, at work? Is your life, a mess? If you can't get it all together, . . . you lack, . . . wisdom. It causes, all kinds of problems, . . . in our lives.

\*\*\* How can I know, if I'm wise, . . . in how I relate, toward people? Today, we're going to take, . . . **a wisdom test**. We're going to test, . . . your wisdom -- see how wise, . . . you really are. James, in **v. 17**, . . . lists the characteristics, . . . of wise people. *"But, wisdom that comes from heaven, is first of all pure, . . then, peace loving, considerate, submissive, . . . full of mercy, and good fruit, . . . impartial, and sincere."*

**1. IF I'M WISE, . . . I WILL NOT COMPROMISE, . . . MY INTEGRITY.** (**Verse 17**, . . . here on out.)

v. 17 – *"The wisdom, that comes from heaven, is first of all pure, . . ."* Pure means, . . uncorrupted, . . authentic. In 1 John 3:3, this word is used, to refer to, Christ's character. Integrity. If I'm really genuine, . . . if I'm wise, . . . I'm not going to lie to you, I'm not going to cheat you, I'm not going to manipulate you, I'm not going to be deceitful. I'll be a person, . . . of integrity.

Because, all relationships, are built, on trust, and respect. If you don't have honesty, . . who's going to trust you? If you don't have honesty, . . who's going to respect you? You have to, . . . have integrity, . . in your life. Dr. Leonard Keeler, the man who invented the lie detector, tested 25,000 people, . . . and, came to the conclusion, . . . that people, . . . are basically, . . . dishonest.

Proverbs 10:9, (There are two books, of wisdom, in the Bible. James, in the New Testament, Proverbs, in the Old. They both, talk about, wisdom.), *"The man of integrity, walks securely."* He's not afraid, of being found out, . . . because, he doesn't say one thing, to one group, . . . and, something else, to another group.

Someone said, "No man, has a good enough memory, . . . to be an habitual liar." Eventually, you're going to, slip up. If you've got integrity, . . . you've got confidence, . . . you walk securely, in your relationships. You know, you're not, . . . putting people on. If I am wise, . . . I will not compromise, . . . my integrity.

**2. IF I AM WISE, . . . I WILL NOT ANTAGONIZE, . . . YOUR ANGER.**

I won't, make you, angry. Wise people, work, at maintaining, harmony. They're not always, looking for a fight. *"Wisdom, is peace loving."* Have you ever met someone, who is always arguing, . . always looking, for a fight? I heard about one guy, who was so argumentative, he would only eat food, . . . that, disagreed with him.

If you're smart, you don't antagonize, people's anger. Proverbs 20:3 – *"Any fool, can start arguments. The wise thing, is to stay out of them."* What causes, arguments? Do you know? If you're wise, you know, . . . because, then, you can avoid them. **Three things, . . . that, cause arguments**. If you're wise, you'll avoid these:

1. Comparing. "You're just like, . . .", "Why can't you, be like, . . .", "When I was your age, . . ." You're asking, . . . for a fight. "My first husband, . . ." 2 Corinthians 10:12 says, . . . “It's unwise, to compare.”

2. Condemning. "It's all, your fault", "You should, be ashamed." You lay on, the guilt. "You always", "You never", "You ought to", "You should, . . .", "You shouldn't, . . ." Someone said, . . . "You can bury, a marriage, . . . with a lot, of little digs."

3. Contradicting. How do you like, to be interrupted, in the middle, of a sentence? It's irritating. James says, “If you are wise, you don't sweat, the small stuff.” William James says, "The secret of wisdom, is knowing, . . . what to overlook." Some things, are just not, worth the fight. Wisdom, is peace loving.

If I'm smart, if I'm wise, in relationships, I won't compromise, my integrity, and, I won't antagonize, your anger. Proverbs 14:29 – *"A wise man, controls, his temper. He knows, that anger, causes mistakes."* How many of you, . . . have ever done something stupid, . . . in anger? Anger, . . . causes, mistakes.

**3. IF I’M WISE, . . . I WON'T MINIMIZE, . . . YOUR FEELINGS.**

"Wisdom, is considerate", . . . and, "considerate" means, . . . "mindful, of the feelings, . . . of others". There is a common mistake, that if I don't feel the way you feel, . . . then, your feelings, must be invalid, or illogical, or irrational, or silly. James says, “Wise people, are considerate; they don't minimize, other people's feelings.” If I'm wise, I will not, . . . minimize your feelings. I don't have to accept them, but, I can understand them.

Proverbs 15:4 – *"Kind words, bring life, . . . but, cruel words, crush your spirit."* Typically, when we react, to people's emotions, . . . we say things, that hurt. Often, we belittle, the feeling. We put, people down, or, we play, psychologist. "I know why, you feel that way, . . ." We're condescending, . . . toward, people.

James says, if I'm wise, in relationships, . . I will not minimize, your feelings. I'll be, considerate. Do you ever, play this game: My day, . . . can beat your day. Husband comes home worn out, and starts complaining, "The traffic was bad, my boss got upset, the air conditioning went out." Wife says, "Oh, yeah? Junior dunked the cat, down the toilet, the beans burned, . . . " The fact is, . . . they both, . . . had a tough day.

Wisdom, is considerate. Allow your spouse, to be tired, . . . without having to say, "I'm more tired, than you are." The fact is, . . . you're both tired. If you care, . . . you'll be, aware, . . . of others feelings.

**4. IF I’M WISE, . . . I WON'T CRITICIZE, . . . YOUR DECISIONS / SUGGESTIONS.**

A wise person, . . . can learn, from anybody. He's not, defensive. He's open, . . . to reason. He's not, stubborn. He's willing, to listen, and learn. *"Wisdom, is submissive"*. This word is used, only one time, in the New Testament. It doesn't really mean, submissive. It really means, reasonable, . . . willing to listen, willing to be open, to ideas, and suggestions. The Revised Standard Version says, . . *"It's open, . . . to reason."* The Living Bible says, . . . *"It allows, . . . discussion."*

Are you, . . . a reasonable person? Can your kids, . . . reason, with you? The Bible says, if you're wise, you're reasonable. You're open, . . . to suggestions. "Don't confuse me, with the facts. I've made up, my mind. When I want, . . . your opinion, . . . **I'll give it, . . . to you**."

A wise person, does not antagonize, your anger, . . . does not minimize your feelings, . . . and, does not criticize your suggestions. Don't be, . . . defensive. Most of us, are too, . . . oversensitive. If somebody makes a suggestion, . . . we take it as a personal criticism, and we're defensive. James says, that's dumb. A wise person, . . . can learn, . . . from anybody.

A new pastor, . . . preaches, the first day. When it's over, a guy walks out, and says, . . . "Pastor, that sermon stunk." The Pastor is trying, to be real open about it, reasonable, wise, "What didn't, you like about it?" "In the first place, it was too long. In the second place, it wasn’t that good. In the third place, it wasn't worth preaching, in the first place." Another guy, walks out right behind him, and says, . . . "Don't listen, to old Jim. He just repeats, . . . what he hears everybody else, say."

If you're wise, you'll be open, . . . to suggestions. Don't criticize. Don't get defensive. Proverbs 12:15 – *"A fool thinks, he needs, no advice. A wise man, listens to others."* If it's true, listen, . . . and, learn, from it. If it's false, ignore it, and forget it. If I'm wise, I'll be open, to reason. I won't criticize, your suggestions. I'll listen, to them.

**5. IF I'M WISE, . . . I WON'T EMPHASIZE, . . . YOUR MISTAKES.**

*"Wisdom, is full of mercy, and good fruit."* Do you jump on people, . . every time they blunder, every time they make a fault, and fumble it? Do you always, use everybody in your family, . . . as the butt, of your joke. That's dumb. Wisdom is, . . . full of mercy. I won't emphasize, . . . your mistakes.

Do you ever let people go, . . . or, do you keep hounding them, about their past mistakes? Do you hold them, in leverage, and they never can be set free, even if they have asked forgiveness? "Remember the time, you did, . . . . " You're always holding on, and bringing up the past, for leverage. That's dumb. If I'm wise, I won't emphasize, your mistake. I'll be full, of mercy. I'll give you what you need, not what you deserve.

Two guys, at a convention, . . . with their wives. They were, long-lost friends. They sat in the lobby, all night, talking. They knew, they would be in trouble, with their wives. They went back, to their rooms. The next day, they happened, to see each other. "What did your wife, think?" "I walked in the door, and my wife, got historical." "Don't you mean, hysterical?" "No, historical. She told me everything, I ever did wrong."

If I'm wise, . . I won't emphasize, your mistakes. Proverbs 17:9 – *"Love, forgets mistakes. Nagging about them, parts even, the best of friends."* If you're wise, you don't rub it in, . . . you rub it out. You don't hold it, over their heads. You forget it. When somebody stumbles, you don't judge them. You encourage them.

We don't need, . . . judgment. We need encouragement, . . . when we stumble. Are you, that way, . . . at home? If somebody, forgets something -- forgets to fill the car with gas, and you run out, on the freeway, . . . somebody, forgets to bring the mail in -- how are you? Do you rub it in, . . . or, do you rub it out? The wise thing, . . . is to not, emphasize, . . . the mistake.

Wisdom is full of mercy, and good fruit. "Good fruit, is kind actions, . . . it's something, you do. You don't just, . . . show sympathy. You don't, just say, . . . "I feel for you, . . . you brought it all, on yourself." You do something, . . . about it. You, . . . take action. It's a kindness. It's being, . . . a doer, . . . of the Word.

James 2:12 – *"Mercy triumphs, over judgment."*  Mercy, is a greater principle, than judging. James says, “If I'm wise, . . . I won't emphasize, your mistakes, . . . I won't criticize, your suggestions, . . . I won't minimize, your feelings, . . . I won't antagonize, your anger.”

**6. IF I'M WISE, . . . I WON'T DISGUISE, . . . MY OWN WEAKNESSES.**

A mark of a wise person, is they don't try to hide, and disguise, . . their own weaknesses. *"Wisdom is impartial, and sincere."* These two words, in Greek, sound similar. They sound like "hypocrite", . . . and, that, is where we get the word from. It means, . . . "without hypocrisy" -- straightforward, right on.

In the Greek theater, they often, would have just, a couple or three actors, playing an entire play. These people, would change parts. They would hold masks, in front of their face. One person, would have five or six different masks, and parts, and that person, that actor, . . . was called, a hypocrite.

James says, if you're smart, and wise, . . . you're not phoney. You don't wear masks, . . and, try to be something, you're not. I've said before, if you're perfect, . . . this is not, the church for you. If you're going to wear masks, . . . this isn't, the church for you. This is for real people, with real sins, real hang ups, real faults, real emotional problems, . . . real family problems.

Real wise people, . . . are honest, and open. They're not, phoney. They're genuine. They're real, and authentic. "What you see, is what you get", . . . with a really, wise person. They don't attain, or pretend, perfection.

If I'm wise, I'm not, . . . going to disguise, my weaknesses. There are so many, . . . phony relationships, today. People try to be something, they're not. Phoney relationships! Trying to be something, . . . you're not.

Proverbs 28:13 – *"You will never, succeed in life, if you try to hide, your sins."* It's dumb, to pretend, that you're perfect, . . . that, you've got it all together, . . . because, nobody does.

When you start telling people, what your weaknesses are, they're not going to be shocked, because, they already know. Everybody knows, your weakness. You're the only one, who won't admit it. We see each other's weaknesses, . . . all the time. Why do we walk around, . . . pretending, . . . that, we don't know? We do. It's obvious, to everybody. But, we don't want, . . . to admit it.

If I'm wise, I won't disguise, . . . my weaknesses. People appreciate honesty, being gut level, and sharing, where they are. It also, helps them, . . . to be more open. They might be struggling, . . . with it, too.

\*\* How do you rate, on the wisdom test? Do you compromise, your integrity? Do you use people, manipulate them, and use them, for the things, you want? Do you tend, to antagonize anger, always saying things, that, tick people off? You know, if you say it, it will press, their hot button, . . . but, you say it, anyway.

James says, that's dumb. It's not, being wise. If I'm wise, I will not antagonize, your anger. If I'm wise, I won't minimize, your feelings. Feelings are neither, right nor wrong, they're just feelings. When my wife, has a feeling, it's valid. Whether it's logical, whether it makes sense, . . . the fact is, she feels it.

If I'm wise, I'm not, . . . going to minimize that. If I'm wise, I won't criticize, your suggestions. Can your kids, make suggestions, to you? Can your husband, make suggestions to you, . . . or, your wife? If I'm wise, I won't emphasize, your mistakes. I don't rub it in, I rub it out. If I'm wise, I don't try to disguise, my feelings.

How do I, get wisdom? How do I become, one of those wise people, in relationships, so that I have that peace, that, everybody is talking about? Do I just make, a New Year's Resolution – today, I'm going to be wise! No.

This is the difference, between knowledge, and wisdom. Knowledge comes, from education. Wisdom comes, from God. To get knowledge, you look around. To get wisdom, . . . you look up. Knowledge comes, from reason. Wisdom comes, from revelation. Knowledge is something, you learn. Wisdom is, a gift.

James 1:5 – *"If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask of God."* Wisdom is a gift, from God. We should ask, 50 times a day, . . . "God, give me, wisdom." I want to be wise, more than anything else. If I'm loving, and I'm wise, I'm going to make it in life. If you're loving, and wise, you're going to make it in life. *"Ask of God, who gives generously."* He loves, . . . to give.

Colossians 2:3 – *"The secret is Christ, Himself. In Him, lie hidden, all God's treasures, of wisdom."* It's all wrapped up, . . . in a person, Jesus Christ. If you want God's wisdom, . . . get Jesus, in your life. You invite Him, into your life, and say, "Christ, think Your thoughts, through my mind, . . . and, say Your words, through my mouth. Help people, through my hands. Love people, . . . with my heart. And, put Your wisdom, . . . in my mind."

The wisest thing, we ever did, . . . was give our life, to Jesus Christ. Why didn't we, do it sooner? That's where wisdom, . . . comes from. When you get God's wisdom, in your life, day by day, as you allow Him, into your life, and develop your character, . . . you'll find your relationships, . . . getting better, and better.

Even if, the person, on the other end, . . . isn't making any improvement, . . . they'll get better, . . because, you're getting better. You know how, to relate wisely, . . . instead, of stupidly, to people.

“How To Relate Wisely To Others”, Developing a Faith That Works - Part 9 of 15

James 3:13-18

*"And those who are peacemakers will plant seeds of peace and reap a harvest of goodness."* vs. 18

\* Wisdom is \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ (vs. 13)

*"Who is wise and understanding among you? Let him show it by his good life, by deeds done in humility, that comes from wisdom."*

\* Lack of wisdom causes \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ (vs. 14- 16)

*"... disharmony and all other kinds of evil ..."*

**HOW TO RELATE WISELY TO OTHERS**

(All six points are from verse 17)

**1. IF I'M WISE, I WON'T COMPROMISE \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ .**

*"The wisdom that comes from heaven is first of all pure."*

Proverbs 10:9 – “*The man of integrity walks securely”*

**2. IF I'M WISE, I WON'T ANTAGONIZE \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ .**

*"Wisdom is ... peace loving"*

Proverbs 20:3 – “*Any fool can start arguments" the wise thing is to stay out of them.”*

Proverbs 14:29 – “*A wise man controls his temper. He knows that anger causes mistakes.”*

**3. IF I'M WISE, I WON'T MINIMIZE \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ .**

*"Wisdom is ... considerate" "gentle"*  *"courteous"*

Proverbs 15:4 – “*Kind words bring life, but cruel words crush your spirit.”*

**4. IF I'M WISE, I WON'T CRITICIZE \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ .**

*"Wisdom is ... submissive"* Greek: "eupelthes"

*"open to reason"*  *"it allows discussion"*

Proverbs 12:15 – “*A fool thinks he needs no advice. A wise man listens to others.”*

**5. IF I'M WISE, I WON'T EMPHASIZE \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ .**

*"Wisdom is ... full of mercy and good fruit"*

Proverbs 17:9 – “*Love forgets mistakes; nagging about them parts the best of friends.”*

Gal. 6:1, Rom. 15:1, Mt. 7:3

**6. IF I'M WISE, I WON'T DISGUISE \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ .**

*"Wisdom is ... impartial and sincere"*

Greek: adiakritos & anypokritos straightforward and without hypocrisy

Proverbs 28:13 – “*You will never succeed in life if you try to hide your sins.”*

Colossians 2:3 – “*The secret is Christ himself; in him lie hidden all God's treasures of wisdom.”*