"FAITH WITH BOOTS ON"
BIG IDEA . . . Part 9: "Show Me Your Wisdom" (James 3:13-18)

INTRO: James demands a "show-me" Christian life. Faith with boots on. An encounter with the living Christ is life changing (2 Cor. 5:17). James said this change should be evident. If God gave you a blank check, what would you ask for? Genuine faith brings change that shows in our: works – obedience (2:14-26); words (3:1-12); and in our wisdom (3:13-18). James challenges his audience to show they possessed true Godly wisdom by how they live. James wants us to develop practical skill of obtaining and cultivating Godly wisdom. *In this message, I want to challenge us to show we possess true Godly wisdom by how we live*. James gives us three facts about wisdom:

I. THE *CONDUCT* OF WISDOM (v. 13)

A. (v. 13a) *A PROBING QUESTION* – James does not ask who is rich, educated, popular, etc., but who is wise? Why? Because true wisdom is more valuable than: money, power (Pro. 3:13-17), military protection (Eccl. 9:16-18), and mental prowess (Pro. 4:4-8). Do we really believe this? Solomon did (2 Chron. 1:10-12). James talks to us about true wisdom. Wisdom and understanding (knowledge) are different. Knowledge is factual; wisdom is practical. True wisdom knows the need for knowledge. We are never told to pray for knowledge, only for wisdom (1:5).

B. (v. 13b) *A PRACTICAL ANSWER* – don't just say it, more than theory, but SHOW it – in two practical ways – by your:

1. *Actions* - *GOOD* life (beautiful behavior, attractive activity, winsome walk, lovely lifestyle) – Wisdom is shown by a life filled with practical goodness, a lifestyle of consistent obedience. Packer explains wisdom is like learning to drive a car . . .
2. *Attitude* - *GENTLE* and *HUMBLE* attitude is behind all the good you do. A big difference from a wise person and a wise guy! God values the gentle and humble (Jam. 4:6; 1 Pet. 5:6).

II. THE *CONTRAST* OF WISDOM (vv. 14-18) - James now contrasts two kinds of wisdom: Man's-God's, divine-devilish, earthly-heavenly, true-false – he contrasts their origination, motivation, characterization and manifestation.

A. (vv. 14-16) FALSE, HUMAN, WORLDLY Wisdom:

1. Origination? (15a *does not come down from heaven*) – does not come from above, not from the Father (1:17).
2. Motivation? (14) man's wisdom is motivated by *bitter envy and selfish ambition in the heart.* Motivated by inner issues (source is issue). It is motivated by jealousy that demotes others so I can be promoted – filled with self-centeredness, pride, and lies. Motivated by advancing self. Remember, James writes to church folks!
3. Characterization? (15) described as:
   - *earthly* – makes decisions on worldly considerations only (Phil. 3:19) – strictly a horizontal perspective.
   - *unspiritual* – of the soul, the flesh, the natural senses and impulses only.
   - *of the devil* – demonic, evil (Ez. 28:12 "full of wisdom").
4. Results in only problems (16). *Disorder and evil practices* come. False wisdom is of the world, flesh, and devil.

ILLUS: nafu (situation normal, all fouled up) and Fubb (fouled up beyond belief) . . .

B. (vv. 17-18) TRUE, DIVINE, GODLY Wisdom:

1. Origination? (17 – *comes from heaven*). One of God's good gifts (1:17).
2. Motivation? (17 – *pure*). What it does and why is from a clean and authentic heart – integrity (1 Jn. 3:3), pure motives (not proud).
3. Characterization? The wisdom of God is:
   - *peace loving* – not antagonizing, looking to fight
   - *considerate* – is mindful of others' feelings, gentle
   - *submissive* – not defensive or stubborn, but open to reason
   - *full of mercy and good fruit* – doesn't jump people every time they blow it (Pro. 17:9; Jam. 2:12), quick to forgive
   - *impartial* – not prejudiced (2:1-13), consistent
   - *sincere* – without hypocrisy, straightforward, genuine
4. Results? (18 "You sow a life of *peace*, you'll reap a harvest of right living" – opposite of v.16).

ILLUS: Living Bible paraphrases . . .

III. THE *COMMITMENT* OF TRUE WISDOM – "How is true wisdom obtained?" Through four avenues:

A. By KNOWING God through relationship with Christ (1 Cor. 1:30; 2:3)

B. By FEARING God – Wisdom grows as worship grows (Prov. 2:1-7).

C. By OBEYING God (Ps. 111:10)

ILLUS: The test of wisdom chart . . .

D. By PRAYING to God "comes from heaven" (v. 17) (Jam. 1:5)

CONC: True wisdom has only one source – GOD! He has it and it is available. "Are you a wise person by God's standards?" Starts when receive Christ, who is our wisdom. Then you will cultivate it and it will show in how you live. The wisest thing I ever did was to give my life to Jesus Christ.