

# THE OPPOSITE OF WISDOM

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Daily devotions written by Pastor Thomas Smith

“But if ye have bitter envying and strife in your hearts, glory not, and lie not against the truth.”

James 3:14

Our text is not only giving us characteristics of true wisdom, it is also teaching us to identify the marks of false wisdom. True wisdom goes beyond the words of advice that one might offer; it will be embodied in a godly lifestyle. Here we see some of the evidences of THE OPPOSITE OF WISDOM. When there are “bitter envying and strife in your hearts,” this is not true wisdom. A spirit of pride, personal ambition, and contention are not consistent with true wisdom. We all have probably known those who claimed to possess great wisdom, but were contentious, rude, and unkind.

Our text mentions, “bitter envying.” Bitterness and jealousy should never be equated with wisdom. Those who possess God’s wisdom are not filled with “strife.” When one is in rivalry with others and exhibiting a divisive spirit, this should never be mistaken as true wisdom. When these kinds of attitudes and spiritual problems exist “in your hearts,” they will not continue to be confined to the heart. They will eventually surface in words and deeds. The Bible tells those who are in such a condition to “glory not, and lie not against the truth.” When a person boasts of his wisdom while demonstrating such poor character, he is lying against the truth. His spirit and words testify against him that his wisdom is not from God. There have been many, like those described in this verse, who claimed to be people of wisdom, yet their conduct and attitude have damaged relationships and churches.

God does not want us to be deceived by words and claims of wisdom that are delivered by a mean-spirited messenger. It is a wonderful thing when a person speaks the wisdom of God from a heart that is humble. This passage is teaching that God wants us to know how to recognize if the words we are given are to be seriously considered as God's wisdom. When the words are accompanied with bitterness, strife, and pride, we can know that they are not true words of wisdom. It should be obvious that when a person often reminds you of how wise he is, there is a serious problem in his spiritual life. God's wisdom points people to the Savior and to solutions, not to self. God wants us to be recipients and carriers of His wisdom, and to deliver that wisdom in godly humility.