

James 3:17

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

But the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, and easy to be intreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality, and without hypocrisy.

Analysis

But the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, and easy to be intreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality, and without hypocrisy. Wisdom from above is first pure (hagnē, ἁγνή), then peaceable (eirēnikē, εἰρηνική), gentle (epieikēs, ἐπεικής), open to reason (eupeithēs, εὐπειθής), full of mercy and good fruits, impartial (adiakritos, ἀδιάκριτος), and sincere (anypokritos, ἀνυπόκριτος). James offers a checklist of heavenly wisdom's fruit.

Reformed believers view Christ as embodiment of this wisdom (1 Corinthians 1:30). The list informs spiritual formation and leadership evaluation.

Historical Context

Jewish wisdom literature described virtues similar to these; James reinterprets them Christologically. Diaspora churches needed positive vision after negative warnings. Paul's description of Spirit fruit parallels this list."

Related Passages

1 Corinthians 13:4 — Characteristics of love

John 15:13 — Greatest form of love

Study Questions

1. Which attribute of heavenly wisdom do you most lack?
2. How can your community cultivate these qualities together?
3. How might this checklist inform leadership selection?

Interlinear Text

ἡ	δὲ	ἄνωθεν	σοφία	πρῶτον	μὲν	ἀγνή	ἐστὶν
G3588	But	that is from above	the wisdom	first	pure	G53	is
	G1161	G509	G4678	G4412	G3303		G2076
ἔπειτα	εἰρηνική	ἐπαική	εὐπειθής	μεστὴ	ἐλέους		
then	peaceable	gentle	and easy to be intreated	full	of mercy		
G1899	G1516	G1933	G2138	G3324	G1656		
καὶ	καρπῶν	ἀγαθῶν	ἀδιάκριτος	καὶ	ἀνυπόκριτος		
and	fruits	good	without partiality	and	without hypocrisy		
G2532	G2590	G18	G87	G2532	G505		

Additional Cross-References

Proverbs 2:6 (Parallel theme): For the LORD giveth wisdom: out of his mouth cometh knowledge and understanding.

Romans 12:9 (Good): Let love be without dissimulation. Abhor that which is evil; cleave to that which is good.

James 3:15 (Parallel theme): This wisdom descendeth not from above, but is earthly, sensual, devilish.

James 1:17 (Good): Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning.

James 1:5 (Parallel theme): If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him.

1 John 3:18 (Parallel theme): My little children, let us not love in word, neither in tongue; but in deed and in truth.

1 Peter 1:22 (Parallel theme): Seeing ye have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit unto unfeigned love of the brethren, see that ye love one another with a pure heart fervently:

Luke 21:15 (Parallel theme): For I will give you a mouth and wisdom, which all your adversaries shall not be able to gainsay nor resist.

1 John 3:3 (Parallel theme): And every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he is pure.

Matthew 5:8 (Parallel theme): Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God.

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