

## **Dr. David Bauer, Inductive Bible Study, Session 25, Segment Survey – James 3:13-18 Resources from NotebookLM**

1) Abstract, 2) Audio podcast, 3) Briefing Document, 4) Study Guide, and 5) FAQs

### **1. Abstract of Bauer, Inductive Bible Study, Session 25, James 3:13-18, Biblicalelearning.org, BeL**

**Dr. David Bauer's lecture** on Inductive Bible Study analyzes James 3:13-18, contrasting **heavenly wisdom** with **earthly wisdom**. The lecture highlights the **active, meek nature** of heavenly wisdom, which manifests in good works, versus the **passive, boastful, and self-centered** nature of earthly wisdom, rooted in jealousy and selfish ambition. Bauer explains that earthly wisdom is **unspiritual and even demonic**, leading to disorder and chaos, while heavenly wisdom produces righteousness and peace. The lecture uses a chiasmic structure to emphasize the contrast between these two types of wisdom, and connects the concepts to other passages in the book of James.

**2. 15 - minute Audio Podcast Created on the basis of Dr. Bauer, Inductive Bible Study, Session 25 – Double click icon to play in Windows media player or go to the Biblicalelearning.org [BeL] Site and click the audio podcast link there (Introduction & Languages → Introductory Series → Inductive Bible Study).**



**Bauer\_IBS\_Session2  
5.mp3**

### 3. Briefing Document: Bauer, Inductive Bible Study, Session 25, James 3:13-18

Okay, here is a detailed briefing document summarizing the key themes and ideas from the provided lecture on James 3:13-18 by Dr. David Bauer.

#### Briefing Document: Inductive Bible Study - James 3:13-18

##### Overview:

This lecture focuses on James 3:13-18, which Dr. Bauer argues is the heart of a larger section (3:1-4:12) in James. This passage contrasts two types of wisdom: heavenly wisdom and earthly wisdom. The structure is chiastic, beginning and ending with an emphasis on the positive (heavenly wisdom), while the negative (earthly wisdom) is discussed in a subordinate way. The passage explores not just the presence of wisdom but the *manifestation* of true wisdom, in contrast to false claims of wisdom which are ultimately exposed by their actions or lack thereof.

##### Key Themes and Ideas:

##### 1. Two Contrasting Wisdoms:

- **Wisdom from Above (Heavenly Wisdom):** Characterized by action, meekness, purity, peaceableness, gentleness, openness to reason, mercy, good fruit, and sincerity. It is ultimately oriented toward promoting peace within the community.
- **Wisdom from Below (Earthly Wisdom):** Characterized by verbalism, pride, boasting, jealousy, selfish ambition, disorder, and vile practices. This “wisdom” is described as earthly, unspiritual, and even demonic.

##### 1. Chiastic Structure:

- The passage is structured A-B-B-A, with the positive exhortation of heavenly wisdom (v.13) paired with its substantiation (v.17-18), and the negative exhortation of earthly wisdom (v.14) paired with its substantiation (v.15-16). This structure emphasizes that heavenly wisdom is primary.

##### 1. Exhortation and Substantiation:

- Verses 13-14 are exhortations regarding two kinds of "wisdom" which are then substantiated in verses 15-18 which describe each kind of wisdom in detail.

## 1. **Wisdom as More Than Words:**

- True wisdom is not merely verbal or based on claiming to have it. It is actively demonstrated through "good life" and "works" done in "meekness." Dr. Bauer emphasizes, "Even as faith without works is dead, so wisdom without works is dead." (allusion to James 2:18). This highlights the vital connection between wisdom and actions. The professor directly quotes the Bible by saying: "By his good life let him show his works in the meekness of wisdom."
- Earthly wisdom, by contrast, is characterized by "empty boasting," mere speech, and improper use of language.

## 1. **The Nature of Meekness:**

- Meekness is a crucial characteristic of heavenly wisdom, and it involves:
- A true and accurate perception of oneself, recognizing one's limitations in relation to God and others.
- A refusal to put forth one's own claims, or boast.
- Submission to and trust in God (also elaborated on in chapter 4).
- Peaceableness and gentleness towards others, rejecting harsh assertiveness.
- Meekness is essential to counter the pride and self-centeredness of earthly wisdom.
- He also suggests that meekness involves taking others more seriously than oneself.

## 1. **The Source and Nature of Earthly Wisdom:**

- This type of wisdom is rooted in "bitter jealousy and selfish ambition," originating in the "heart" (will, thoughts, emotions).
- It is earthly, not divine, a poor copy of true heavenly wisdom.
- It is "unspiritual" ( *psukike*), not of the Holy Spirit but arising from fallen human nature and driven by self-centeredness.
- It is demonic, fueled by the "insidious personal power of darkness," leading to disorder and vile practices. It is an attempt to copy God's wisdom without true understanding.

- Dr. Bauer also quotes Paul Rees who states: "You are being governed by the psychic processes of the unconverted man, the more or less refined impulses of instinct, and not by the mind and spirit of Christ."

#### 1. **The Characteristics of Heavenly Wisdom (v. 17):**

- **Pure:** Purity of motive, reflecting the character of God, desire to follow God's will, and giving entirely to God and others.
- **Peaceable:** Promoting interpersonal harmony, as well as holistic well-being, not only between persons but within one's own self and mind. Dr. Bauer suggests that this peace may have originally referred to interpersonal harmony, and then extended to the concept of overall well-being. He further adds that "Interpersonal well-being lies at the center of holistic well-being."
- **Gentle:** Sensitive to the needs and feelings of others.
- **Open to Reason:** "Believing well" or "well-believing" - being easily persuaded to truth, not in a gullible way, but with careful discernment, listening to and taking seriously the perspective of others.
- **Full of Mercy and Good Fruits:** Practical concern and action for the poor and suffering.
- **Without Uncertainty/Impartial:** Treating all people equally, without regard to status or wealth.
- **Without Insincerity/Hypocrisy:** Presenting oneself honestly, with no division between the inner self and the public persona.

#### 1. **The Effect of Heavenly Wisdom:**

- "The harvest of righteousness is sown in peace by those who make peace" (v. 18).
  - Heavenly wisdom leads to peace, wholeness, and health, in contrast to the disorder and destruction of earthly wisdom.
- #### 1. **Implicit Exhortation:** The description of heavenly wisdom has an implicit exhortation, that these actions be undertaken in the service of peace, and that each characteristic of heavenly wisdom, in and of itself, should not be abstracted away from its overall effect.

2. **Connection to Later Chapters:** Dr. Bauer suggests that James 4:1-6 particularizes earthly wisdom, particularly regarding wars and fights within the community; James 4:7-10 particularizes heavenly wisdom, particularly regarding humility and submission to God, and James 4:11-12 returns to particularizing the wisdom from below.

### **Key Quotes:**

- "Even as faith without works is dead, so wisdom without works is dead."
- "By his good life, let him show his works in the meekness of wisdom."
- "You are being governed by the psychic processes of the unconverted man, the more or less refined impulses of instinct, and not by the mind and spirit of Christ."
- "Interpersonal well-being lies at the center of holistic well-being."
- "The harvest of righteousness is sown in peace by those who make peace."

### **Implications:**

- This passage calls for self-examination and a critical evaluation of one's motives and actions.
- True wisdom is not intellectual but involves a transformation of the heart and will, resulting in practical expressions of love and service.
- The church is cautioned against claiming divine wisdom while being motivated by selfish ambition, as that kind of behavior is in fact evidence of a lack of true wisdom.
- The passage implores believers to cultivate the characteristics of heavenly wisdom, working to promote peace, not division, and to live in a way that is congruent with truth.

This briefing document should provide a comprehensive overview of the key concepts discussed in Dr. Bauer's lecture on James 3:13-18.

## 4. Study Guide: Bauer, Inductive Bible Study, Session 25, James 3:13-18

### James 3:13-18: A Study Guide

#### Quiz

**Instructions:** Answer the following questions in 2-3 sentences each, based on Dr. Bauer's lecture.

1. According to Dr. Bauer, what is the central contrast in James 3:13-18?
2. How does Dr. Bauer describe the structure of the passage in 3:13-18?
3. What is the first key difference between the wisdom from above and the wisdom from below, according to the lecture?
4. How does Dr. Bauer define "meekness" in the context of this passage?
5. According to the lecture, what are the key characteristics of the wisdom from below?
6. What does Dr. Bauer say the Greek word *zelos* (jealousy) implies?
7. Why is the "wisdom from below" described as "earthly," "unspiritual," and "demonic"?
8. What is the primary characteristic of the wisdom from above, as highlighted in the lecture?
9. What does Dr. Bauer say about "peace" in the context of the passage?
10. How should the characteristics of wisdom from above be expressed, according to Dr. Bauer's interpretation of verse 18?

#### Answer Key

1. The central contrast is between **heavenly wisdom** and **wisdom from below**. The passage highlights how these two types of wisdom manifest differently in a person's life and actions.
2. Dr. Bauer states that the passage is structured as a **chiasm (A-B-B-A)**, with positive exhortations about wisdom from above at the beginning and end and the negative contrasting description of earthly wisdom in the middle.

3. The first key difference is that wisdom from above is **active** and involves works, while wisdom from below is merely **verbal** and involves empty boasting.
4. Dr. Bauer defines meekness as a **true and accurate perception of oneself**, especially in relation to one's limitations in relation to God and others, and a refusal to assert one's own claims.
5. The wisdom from below is characterized by **bitter jealousy, selfish ambition, pride, and empty boasting** which leads to disorder, chaos, and vile practices.
6. Dr. Bauer says that *ze/los* (jealousy) implies **self-centered zeal**, or a zeal that is focused on the individual's own interests and prerogatives.
7. It's described this way because it doesn't come from God, but arises from **fallen human nature** and is influenced by the insidious personal power of darkness, rather than the Holy Spirit.
8. The primary characteristic of the wisdom from above is **purity**, which Dr. Bauer defines in context as purity of motive that reflects God's character.
9. Dr. Bauer states that "peace" has to do with more than interpersonal concord, it has to do with **holistic well-being** and a type of harmony that involves peace within oneself as well as peace with others.
10. The characteristics of wisdom from above should be expressed in the context of **promoting peace within the community** and with a concern for truth and right doctrine.

## Essay Questions

**Instructions:** Develop a well-reasoned essay addressing one of the following prompts, drawing upon the information presented in the source material.

1. Analyze the concept of "meekness" as presented in James 3:13-18, discussing its theological significance and practical implications for Christian living.
2. Compare and contrast the characteristics of the "wisdom from above" and the "wisdom from below," exploring how these different kinds of wisdom impact human relationships and community life.
3. Discuss the role of "action" or "works" in authentic wisdom, as presented in James 3:13-18, connecting this theme to other parts of the Book of James.
4. Examine the connection between the "wisdom from below" and its resulting negative consequences, such as jealousy, selfish ambition, and disorder, considering the root of these behaviors within a biblical worldview.
5. Explore the relationship between purity, peace, and other characteristics of "wisdom from above," explaining how these qualities can lead to a harvest of righteousness in individuals and communities.



## Glossary of Key Terms

**Chiasm:** A literary device where words, grammatical constructions, or concepts are repeated in reverse order (A-B-B-A).

**Meekness (prautei):** A true and accurate perception of oneself, especially regarding one's limitations; an attitude of submission to God and others.

**Zelos:** The Greek word for "jealousy," which implies self-centered zeal or zeal focused on personal interests.

**Eritheia:** Selfish ambition or a desire for acquisition driven by the need to get ahead in reputation or possessions.

**Akatastasia:** Disorder, chaos; the opposite of God's intended order and peace.

**Psyche (psukike):** Unspiritual; related to the natural human realm, not the Holy Spirit.

**Demonic (daimoniodes):** Devilish, influenced by dark powers, and destructive.

**Purity:** In context, primarily purity of motive and of heart, reflective of God's pure character.

**Peace (eirene):** Holistic well-being, encompassing interpersonal concord, internal peace, and overall flourishing; related to the Old Testament idea of *shalom*.

**Gentle (epieikes):** Sensitive to the needs, feelings, and emotions of others; non-combative.

**Open to reason (eupeithes):** Well-believing or easily persuaded; an attitude that is willing to listen, consider different perspectives, and draw reasonable conclusions.

**Impartial (adiakritos):** Without doubting or making distinctions based on status, position, wealth, or the lack thereof.

**Insincerity (anupokritos):** Without hypocrisy; genuine and authentic in both internal motivation and outward expression.

## 5. FAQs on Bauer, Inductive Bible Study, Session 25, James 3:13-18, Biblicalelearning.org (BeL)

### Frequently Asked Questions About Wisdom in James 3:13-18

- **What is the main contrast presented in James 3:13-18?**
- The passage primarily contrasts two types of wisdom: "wisdom from above" (heavenly wisdom) and "wisdom from below" (earthly or demonic wisdom). This contrast is structured in a chiastic form (A-B-B-A), with the passage beginning and ending by focusing on the positive characteristics of heavenly wisdom. The contrast is not merely about intellectual knowledge but is characterized by the way it manifests in one's life and actions, particularly regarding meekness, humility, and concern for others.
- **How is 'wisdom from above' characterized?**
- Wisdom from above is characterized by several key traits. First, it is **active**, demonstrated by good works in meekness, not just empty words or boasting. It is also characterized by **meekness**, a humble and accurate self-perception that recognizes one's limitations in relation to God and others. This manifests as submission and trust towards God and peaceableness and gentleness toward others. Furthermore, it's described as **pure**, with unmixed motives reflecting God's own character, **peaceable**, promoting harmony and reconciliation, **gentle**, sensitive to others' needs and feelings, **open to reason** (or "well-believing"), and **full of mercy and good fruits**. This wisdom is marked by **impartiality**, treating everyone with equal respect, and is **sincere**, with no hypocrisy between one's inner self and public persona. Finally, it leads to a **harvest of righteousness sown in peace**—wholeness and health in the community.

- **How is 'wisdom from below' characterized?**
- Wisdom from below is characterized by negative traits and harmful effects. It is **merely verbal**, expressed through empty boasting and claims to knowledge without corresponding actions. It is driven by **bitter jealousy** (self-centered zeal) and **selfish ambition** (acquiring things for oneself). This wisdom is described as **earthly**, not coming from God but a copy of true wisdom, and a bad one at that. It is also deemed **unspiritual** (governed by the impulses of the unconverted person rather than by the Holy Spirit), and ultimately **demonic**, indicating the insidious influence of personal darkness at work within it. This type of wisdom results in **disorder, chaos and vile practices**, both personally and within the community.
- **What is the significance of 'meekness' in this passage?**
- Meekness, according to this passage, involves a true and accurate perception of oneself, especially in terms of recognizing one's limitations and boundaries, and seeing the greatness and sufficiency of God. It's not weakness but rather a humble refusal to put forth one's own claims or establish one's reputation. Meekness manifests itself as submission and trust toward God and a peaceful, gentle and non-assertive approach toward others. It's an attitude that prioritizes God and others over oneself and avoids the pitfalls of self-reliance and grasping for power and possessions.
- **What is the relationship between the tongue and wisdom in James 3?**
- While the tongue is a formal instrument of teaching, wisdom is the material content of teaching. The use of the tongue is an expression of one's wisdom (or lack thereof). James has previously identified the tongue as a source of great evil and uses it as an example of the way that wisdom can manifest itself. Boasting and improper speech can be indicators of the lack of true wisdom from above. While the problem isn't *ultimately* with the tongue, as James makes clear the problems originate in the heart, the tongue demonstrates the state of the heart and the type of wisdom to which one adheres. True wisdom, however, isn't primarily expressed through words but actions.

- **What does James mean by 'jealousy' and 'selfish ambition' in this context?**
- Jealousy (Greek: *zelos*) is not merely envy but a self-centered zeal. It's a preoccupation with the self and the desire for one's own prerogatives. It manifests as rivalry, linked to personalities and the drive to promote the interests of the self even while claiming transcendent, divine wisdom. Selfish ambition (Greek: *eritheia*) involves the acquisition of things for oneself, driven by a desire to get ahead, whether in terms of reputation or possessions. These two are heart problems and not merely surface-level behaviors, and need a radical change in one's character and will.
- **How does this passage connect to the broader themes of the book of James?**
- This passage on wisdom is closely connected to other themes in James. It reinforces the emphasis on the relationship between faith and works, as wisdom without good works is seen as inauthentic, similar to faith without works being dead. It highlights the importance of humility, which is seen as integral to wisdom. Additionally, it connects to James' concern for community harmony and peace, as the wisdom from above is described in terms of its peace-making qualities, while the wisdom from below is identified as a cause of conflict and chaos. Finally, it reflects James' focus on holistic, sincere, and wholehearted living where one's internal state reflects one's external behavior.
- **What are some practical applications of these teachings on wisdom?**
- Practically, this passage calls for self-examination, challenging individuals to consider whether their actions and motivations are guided by heavenly or earthly wisdom. It encourages active pursuit of good works, acts of mercy, and seeking peace in relationships. It also challenges the believer to be humble in attitude, not seeking personal gain or recognition, but rather focusing on serving God and others. Furthermore, it encourages believers to be open to reason and to approach every situation with impartiality and sincerity, aiming at true righteousness and wholeness, both internally and externally.