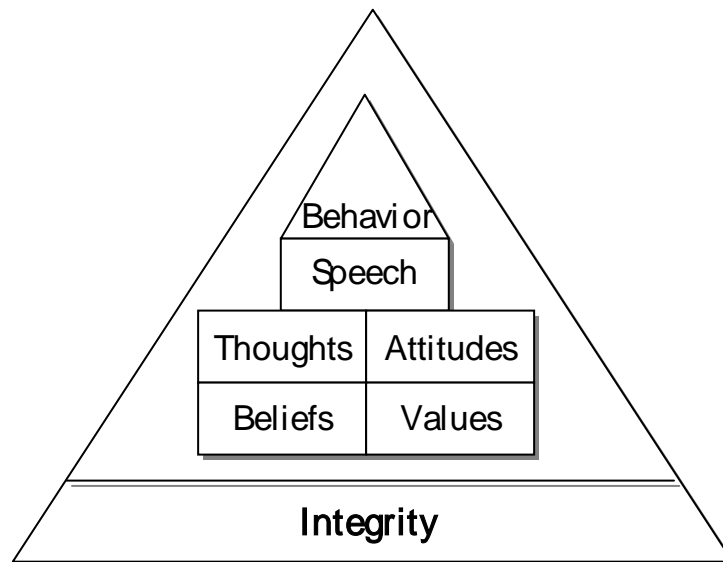


Introduction: How can we know if we're really changing for the better?

The Test: "Who is wise and understanding among you? Let him show it by his good life, by deeds done in the humility (gentleness), that comes (flows) from wisdom." (vs. 13)



Wisdom = Core Values + Beliefs We Hold About What Makes One "Successful" in Life

Summary: Lasting change demands we examine the source (core values and beliefs) of our attitudes and actions.

Man's Wisdom: "Me Centered" attempts to achieve and appear righteous to satisfy ego needs and fulfill private agendas.

¹⁴But if you harbor bitter envy and selfish ambition in your hearts, do not boast about it or deny the truth. ¹⁵Such 'wisdom' does not come down from heaven but is earthly, unspiritual, of the devil. ¹⁶For where you have envy and selfish ambition, there you find disorder and every evil practice."

James 3:14-16

- **Characteristics** of Man's Wisdom (vs. 14)
- **Source** of Man's Wisdom (vs. 15)
- **Results** of Man's Wisdom (vs. 16)

God's Wisdom: "Christ Centered" dependency that seeks to obey God and serve others to fulfill God's agenda.

"But the wisdom from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, reasonable, full of mercy and good fruits, unwavering, without hypocrisy." (James 3:17)

- **Characteristics of God's Wisdom**

- *Pure* – If I'm wise, I won't compromise my _____.
- *Peaceable* – If I'm wise, I won't antagonize your _____.
- *Gentle* – If I'm wise, I won't minimize other's _____.
- *Reasonable* – If I'm wise, I won't criticize other's _____.

Summary: God's wisdom will be revealed in lives characterized by personal holiness and relational oneness.

- **Results of God's Wisdom**

- *Full of mercy and good fruit* – If I'm wise, I won't emphasize other's _____.
- *Unwavering* – If I'm wise, I won't show _____.
- *Without hypocrisy* – If I'm wise, I won't disguise my _____.

Summary: God's wisdom will result in compassionate, authentic, and vulnerable relationships.

Application: How Do You Get God's Wisdom?

- **Action Step** – "In this way they will know God's secret, which is Christ himself. He is the key that opens all the hidden treasures of God's wisdom and knowledge." (Colossians 2:2-3 GN)
 1. Receive the Son – 1 John 5:11-12
 2. Pray – Ask God for Wisdom – James 1:5
 3. Dig for God's Wisdom Daily – Proverbs 2:1-5
 4. Get Around Wise People – Proverbs 13:20

Application/Discussion Questions:

1. What insights about "changing" have you gained from this series?
2. What progress have you seen occur in your life?
3. In what ways do you see man's wisdom operating in your life? God's wisdom?
4. What would "trusting God" look like in your life if lasting, Christ-like change were your goal?

Resources:

(1st Steps) – **The Fight** by John White
(Victory) – **Tired of Trying to Measure Up** by Jeffrey Vanvonderen
(Motives) – **Inside Out** by Larry Crabb, **Finding God** by Larry Crabb
(Wisdom) – **Knowing God** by J.I. Packard