

**How Should Christians Engage in Politics?  
Engage with Godly Wisdom  
James 3:13 – 4:3**

*Grace Fellowship Church / Pastor Brad Bigney / August 4, 2024*

**I. You Need Godly Wisdom More Than You Need to Be Informed About The Issues**

God cares about how you talk about the issues and how you treat others who differ with you, because they are created in His image and should be treated with dignity and respect, even if they don't do the same for you.

**4x** in this short passage the word “wise” or “wisdom” is used because James wants us to get a hold of godly wisdom.

Knowledge is the accumulation of information and the ability to break things down, take things apart, and see what it's comprised of. Wisdom is the ability to put things together in light of God's truth in a way that can apply to everyday life.

Godly wisdom comes rushing into your life as you form the habit more and more of consistently saying, “If this is true, then this is what I should do.” You make connections and bring things together.

**II. The Wisdom You Embrace Will Determine How You Live**

We live in a day that acts like how you live doesn't matter. It's all about what you know. But that's not how the Bible talks. The Bible says the way you know someone is wise is not by what she knows, but by how she lives.

Godly wisdom translates into godly living.

**James 3:13** “Who is wise and understanding among you? By his good conduct let him show his works in the meekness of wisdom.”

The most common Greek word for “good” was “Agathos,” which meant good in the sense of morally correct and proper. But there was another Greek word, “Kalos,” that meant beautiful and lovely as opposed to ugly. That's what the Holy Spirit used in **v. 13** because you need to realize you can be morally correct – the Pharisees were – and still be obnoxious and ugly in way you treat other people.

The person with godly wisdom brings a sense of order, peace, and beauty to an ugly, chaotic situation. Godly wisdom never adds to the chaos and ugliness.

**A. Worldly Wisdom Leads to Ungodly Behavior**

Our passage describes this ungodly behavior as bitter jealousy, selfish ambition, earthly, unspiritual, demonic, and characterized by disorder and every vile practice.

**B. Godly Wisdom Leads to A Harvest Of Righteousness**

Our passage describes it as pure, peaceable, gentle, open to reason, full of mercy, impartial, and sincere.

**C. Godly Wisdom Is Never Out of Control**

The end of **v. 13** tells us one of the flagship characteristics of godly wisdom that sets it apart from worldly wisdom is meekness.

Meekness is not weakness, but it's strength under control. If you're out of control with your mouth, your actions, your attitudes, and the way you treat people around you, you're not walking in wisdom no matter how much information you think you have.

The top characteristics of worldly wisdom in **v. 16** are the complete opposite: selfish ambition, disorder, and every vile practice.

**James 3:14** "But if you have bitter jealousy and selfish ambition in your hearts, do not boast and be false to the truth."

When you stand for the truth in the wrong way, you're being false to the truth because that's not what it should look like.

**Matthew 5:5-12** "Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth. <sup>6</sup>Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall be satisfied. <sup>7</sup>Blessed are the merciful, for they shall receive mercy. <sup>8</sup>Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God. <sup>9</sup>Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called sons of God. <sup>10</sup>Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. <sup>11</sup>Blessed are you when others revile you and persecute you and utter all kinds of evil against you falsely on My account. <sup>12</sup>Rejoice and be glad, for your reward is great in heaven, for so they persecuted the prophets who were before you."

### III. The Wisdom You Embrace Will Determine Who You Serve

Godly wisdom keeps you focused on King Jesus more than any president. This is what Jesus Himself declared as soon as He launched His public ministry.

**Matthew 4:17** "From that time Jesus began to preach, saying, 'Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.'"

Jesus knew what He was doing, because just like today, emotions were high and people were tied to the political scene, hoping that someone could do for them what they thought needed to be done politically - set them free from Roman oppression and set up a new kingdom.

But Jesus focused on a much more substantial and impactful kingdom that involved a radical heart change. Jesus said to repent which means to completely change the orientation of your heart away from one thing so that you can fix it on something else.

#### A. You'll Think About His Kingdom More Than This Nation

What have you been focused on and obsessing over most? How much joy, peace, and hope have you had lately? These two things are related- your focus and your mental health. What you focus on fuels what you will feel. If you want to feel better, change what you focus on.

Nations come and nations go, but Jesus and His kingdom remain the same. His kingdom doesn't hang in the balance and He is never voted in or out of office. He rules and reigns every day.

Don't make the mistake of tying Jesus, the Gospel, and Christianity to any political party. That only hurts the cause of Christ and Christianity. Let it stand alone!

“Human life has always been lived on the edge of a precipice. Human culture has always had to exist under the shadow of something infinitely more important than itself.” Humans must recognize that they are on a pilgrimage toward “a permanent city satisfying the soul” and should not expect to build a Heaven on earth. So “a man may have to die for his country, but no man must, in any exclusive sense, live for his country. He who surrenders himself without reservation to the temporal claims of a nation, or a party, or a class is rendering to Caesar that which, of all things, belongs emphatically to God: himself.”

- C.S. Lewis, “Learning in Wartime”

Godly wisdom will determine your first allegiance.

#### **B. You’ll Think About His Calling More Than Your Political Convictions**

Have political convictions, but His calling on your life should overshadow that. He’s called us to get the Gospel into all the world and to make disciples, not make political converts who think like you do.