



# FAMILY DEVOTION :: PRIME :: BRAINSWEAT

## Lesson 4 :: Quite the Character

At a very early age, we are taught the concept of opposites. The opposite of loud is \_\_\_\_\_. The opposite of summer is \_\_\_\_\_. The opposite of north is \_\_\_\_\_. You get the picture. It might seem like a very simple concept now, but if we really think about it, it is a necessary lesson that we must learn and use throughout the rest of our lives. Can you imagine learning to drive without knowing left from right or forward from reverse? Sadly, that is the case with some drivers out there!

Consider this pair of opposites: Wisdom that comes from God and wisdom that comes from the world. Read James 3:13–18 together as a family. Most historians think that Jesus' brother, "James the Just," an early leader of the Jerusalem church, wrote the book of James. This book is direct and practical; it is not as hard to understand as it is to live out. It calls believers to not just listen to God's word but to apply it to daily life. In these verses, James addresses wisdom.

We might think of wisdom as something that scholars own or something that we'll attain when we get really old. But that is not the case here. James makes it clear that wisdom from God means applying knowledge to everyday living. It is not just intelligence but the practicality of living out our lives. The result of this type of wisdom is humility, pure living, gentleness, unselfishness, wholeheartedly trusting God, and peace. You cannot learn this in a class or earn a degree in it—it only comes from God.

The opposite of this would be self-centered, greedy, and selfish wisdom that produces confusion and chaos. This type of wisdom comes easily and naturally. It's the "all about me" attitude that we all have when we are born. But true wisdom puts God and others first. Whichever wisdom we possess will show itself in our everyday life. We might be able to fake it for a while, but eventually what is on the inside will come out.

Which wisdom do we prefer to guide our lives? The good news is that we have a choice. James 1:5 tells us that if we want wisdom, we can "ask God who gives to all generously without finding fault."

### CONNECTION QUESTIONS

1. How do you think that Godly wisdom is applied in your everyday living?
2. When you're faced with decisions in life, where do you turn for wisdom?
3. How do you measure the outcome of your decision-making? Does it ever cause you to wonder about how you made the decision in the first place?
4. What are some recent decisions you made that reflected worldly wisdom?
5. What are some recent decisions you made that reflected Godly wisdom?