

THRU THE BIBLE EXPOSITION
James: A Sermonic Call Unto Practical Godliness
Part VI: Godliness In Relation To Our Speech, James 3:1-18
B. Our Need To Check The Way We Express Ourselves As Teachers
(James 3:13-18)

I. Introduction

- A. God calls Christians who disciple others by teaching them to proclaim the Word of God, 2 Timothy 4:1-2.
- B. Yet, there is a **bad** as well as a **good way** to express ourselves in the teaching process, and we do well to discern these ways that we edify and not harm the discipling process as explained in James 3:13-18:

II. Our Need To Check The Way We Express Ourselves As Teachers, James 3:13-18.

- A. Returning to the theme begun in James 3:1 NIV about teachers, James urged his readers who wanted to be wise and understanding to show in action the humility that comes from true wisdom, James 3:13 NIV.
- B. In contrast to such wisdom and understanding, James warned that one can teach in a **bad** way, extensively describing this troublesome methodology of teaching in James 3:14-16 as follows:
 - 1. If a Christian teacher harbors "zealous jealousy" ("bitter envy" NIV) or "factious rivalry" ("selfish ambition" NIV), he is not to boast about it or deny the truth that such an attitude is evil, Jas. 3:14 NIV.
 - 2. This kind of "wisdom" in a Christian teacher does not come from God in heaven, James 3:15a, but it is evil as described in James 3:15b-16:
 - a. Such "zealous jealousy" and "factious rivalry" is *earthly* versus *heavenly*, James 3:15b NIV.
 - b. Such "zealous jealousy" and "factious rivalry" is *unspiritual* versus *spiritual*, James 3:15c NIV.
 - c. Such "zealous jealousy" and "factious rivalry" is *demonic (daimoniodas)* versus *godly*, James 3:15d NIV; Arndt & Gingrich, *A Greek -English Lexicon of the New Testament*, 1967, p. 168.
 - d. Such "zealous jealousy" and "factious rivalry" is typical of *disorderliness* and *disturbances (akatastatos)*, James 3:16a,b; *Ibid.*, p. 29.
 - e. Such "zealous jealousy" and "factious rivalry" is typical of *every worthless (phaulos) practice*, James 3:16c; *Ibid.*, p. 862.
- C. In contrast to such evil wisdom by a Christian teacher, the wisdom from God in heaven above has the following appealing, constructive characteristics listed in James 3:17 NIV:
 - 1. Godly wisdom in a Christian teacher is first of all *pure*, and in this context, it means pure from the sins described in the "zealous jealousy" and "factious rivalry" wisdom of bad teaching of James 3:14-16.
 - 2. Godly wisdom in a Christian teacher is then *peaceable* in its motive and effect upon others.
 - 3. Godly wisdom in a Christian teacher is then *considerate* of other people.
 - 4. Godly wisdom in a Christian teacher is then *submissive*, meaning *compliant* or *obedient* (*Ibid.*, p. 324) to the Lord and His Word in contrast to being selfishly competitive in jealousy and/or rivalry.
 - 5. Godly wisdom in a Christian teacher is *full of mercy and good fruits (effects)* in one's life.
 - 6. Godly wisdom in a teacher is then *impartial* versus promoting factious rivalry.
 - 7. Godly wisdom in a Christian teacher is then *sincere*, without hypocrisy (*anupokritos*), *Ibid.*, p. 76.
- D. If such godly wisdom is utilized by the Christian teacher, a wonderful discipling effect results from his teaching effort as described in James 3:18 (as follows):
 - 1. James 3:18 in the NIV reads: "Peacemakers who sow in peace raise a harvest of righteousness."
 - 2. In the context of making disciples, this means that if the teacher proclaims God's Word using godly wisdom with the characteristics described in James 3:17 NIV above, he has a peacemaking effect on the hearers, and they more readily accept what is taught and apply it to produce righteous living.
 - 3. Thus, the godly teacher using godly wisdom sees a harvest of righteousness in his ministry in the form of the lives of his hearers being increasingly changed from unrighteousness to righteousness!

Lesson: *Not only must we who disciple others present the TRUTH, but we must present it in the WAY of GODLY WISDOM, that the HEARERS might respond in PEACE and RIGHTEOUSNESS in living.*

Application: *May we who teach God's truth to others watch HOW we communicate it as our MEANS and METHODS largely affect how our HEARERS RESPOND and thus GROW in Christ!*