

Wisdom from Above: More Than Common Sense (Part 1)

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[0 : 00] I have us this morning in the book of James.

All the way back toward the back of your Bibles between Hebrews and 1 Peter sits the little book of James, the half-brother of Jesus.

Now, we'll read the text in a few moments, but for those of you who have come on Wednesday nights in the recent past, you'll recognize this passage because I've done a little work in it on the Wednesday night stuff that we've done, contrasting human wisdom with heavenly wisdom.

But I've never really dove into this and done an exposition on it. So that's what I want to start doing today. Now, another caveat. We won't finish the entire passage that I want to look at this morning and that we'll read.

I'll have to come back and do a part two, but let me go ahead and let you know Pastor Greg will be filling the pulpit over the next couple of Sundays. Ben will be leading the music for us, so we'll have the dynamic duo up here going at it strong and appreciate these brothers so much.

[1 : 21] So we'll have to wait for a couple of Sundays for me to circle back around and finish this up as a part two because it's really on my heart to deal with this in the way of the theme this morning.

And then my plan is once I do part two and a few Sundays from now, we'll jump right back into a verse-by-verse exposition of the book of Genesis where we left off with poor Noah.

Poor Noah getting ready for the great flood. I need to rescue Noah. Come on. He's been waiting for a long time building this ark while Jeff Jackson's been doing this other stuff.

So we'll get into that and see what God has in mind for our brother Noah. The title of my message for this morning, Wisdom from Above More Than Common Sense. Some of you will immediately pick up on where I'm going with that if you've been following the news.

Wisdom from Above More Than Common Sense. Now, in the way of some introductory remarks, I've been watching the news since just before the election.

[2 : 25] We were actually on vacation for a week up in Crozet when the week of the election. And I am one of these people who have avoided the news like the plague for the last four years.

Couldn't take it. I just couldn't take the nonsense. It incensed me just to listen to the kind of things that were happening. I'll give you some examples later.

But things began to change when that Tuesday last November came. And it has been a roller coaster of events.

It's almost like you don't want to turn the news off because you'll miss something that is historic. All right? It doesn't matter what political persuasion you're from. You are witnessing historic events right now.

But there's one thing that I want to zero in on today that goes past politics and past the different parties involved in politics and speaks to an issue that I'm concerned about as your pastor.

[3 : 29] So I'll begin this way. Apparently, given the last four years, particularly in our country and seemingly spreading around the world, apparently common sense isn't so common.

When we survey the laws and agencies, ideologies and practices applied as wisdom over the past four years within American life and government, we can safely conclude that a new common view has prevailed about what is quote-unquote sensible.

A new common view. In the past four years, in my estimation, as I look at it biblically, a degenerate, dark agenda of anti-God, anti-truth, anti-sense policies, propositions, perversions were promoted into mainstream life and even passed into law.

Programs promising unity. These are the things that are the highest levels of wisdom that we can come up with at the highest echelons of government.

in our nation. Here's what the wisest and brightest among us are trying to get passed into law and promoted into mainstream society.

[5 : 11] And all of these things promise they will unify our nation and bring together countries. Woke. Diversity, equity, and inclusion.

Critical race theory. Black lives matter. Transgenderism and the LGBTQXYZ agenda.

Even climate change has been politicized and polarized as a tool promising unity and delivering nothing. All of these things share and express this new common sense.

We might say it this way, given what we understand from Scripture, this new uncommon sense approach to life and relationships. Here's the issue. But it did not unify anyone.

Not even the people who espoused it. Confusion and not commonality reigned in our communities.

[6 : 21] And people today, people today feel even more fragmented. It's been a compounding, compromising effect over the last four years.

I would go so far as to say this. As Americans look in the mirror today, it's become increasingly difficult to define who we are, what we believe, and what we stand for.

Now, President Trump is calling the nation to what he and his cabinet members are calling a revolution of common sense.

A revolution of common sense. As a way of reversing the ills dividing our nation. Now, I think that we know what he means.

And if you've been following any of this, you catch the gist of what he's talking about. And we want to believe the best about President Trump, about his policies.

[7 : 23] We have hope that we will be able to support the efforts of this new administration as they seek to help our country move forward in what he's calling this revolution of common sense.

Now, I for one am glad that President Trump won the election. And while I work very hard not to politicize this pulpit, I'm not going to hide from you that your pastor has personal views as well.

I voted. So that means I voted for somebody and I can tell you it wasn't Mickey Mouse. I didn't write that in the ballot because I couldn't pick between the two. I landed and I picked somebody.

And I'm glad that my candidate won. I've been very proud of the things that I've heard from him on the whole. I've been proud of the fact that the man has enough integrity to try and keep his promises.

This is wonderful. People are excited. You watch the news now and if you watch conservative channels, I laugh out loud. The anchors, the news anchors are giddy.

[8 : 28] They're giddy. And they say that. I'm giddy. For four years, they have done the news every day, day in and day out. And it's been nothing but bleakness and lies and darkness with these agendas.

But folks, listen. As enthusiastic as I am about what we see happening before our eyes as President Trump tries to bring common sense to bear on these issues that have been so uncommon sense and nonsensical, we have to understand that as God's people, as Jesus' followers, we must go beyond common sense.

It's not enough. It's not enough. Why? Because the past four years, if those years have shown us anything, if we're going to learn anything, they have shown us how fickle, how faulty, how fluid, and how futile common sense can be.

What do you mean, Jeff? Listen. An idea or belief can be common. It can be popular. It can be held to and embraced and enforced by millions of people.

And it can even make sense to those who hold to it. But, that doesn't make it wise or true. Man's wisdom is not our baseline.

[10 : 15] Man's wisdom and common sense are not the baseline for Christian living. We might be able to use that as a start. And I'm happy for it, folks.

Please don't hear me dissing on the fact that our president is trying to call us to common sense. What we need to understand as God's people is what makes it common sense. What makes it sensible?

Well, we know the origin of what is sensible. Don't we? And what do we know? Apart from the truth of Scripture, before I was saved, there were many things that were sensible to your pastor in his unbelief.

But, when I measured them against Scripture, there was no sense in them. It was all Jeff. And I was chasing my own pride. God's love and I was chasing God's love. Let's not forget that over the last four years, millions of people in America embraced the kinds of things that I mentioned earlier in my introduction and believed in them and passed them into law and insisted that you and I live by them.

And people who disagreed were punished. Some of them were put in jail. Some of them lost their jobs. man's wisdom is not our baseline.

[11 : 33] Let me give you some examples that you are all too painfully aware of if you've paid any attention over the last four years. Would you have ever thought under the banner of this new common sense we have been living under that much of it being promoted and passed into law by our own government that the whole of our society would be expected to accept that it makes perfect sense for children to be taught and encouraged to have life-altering irreversible mutilating operations to transition them from their biological sex to its opposite.

Law. We just heard on the news last week about a children's hospital in Texas who was performing these kind of operations and the Texas state government said stop it we're shutting that down it's illegal don't do it anymore and for one year they told the Texas legislature that they had stopped and then they had a doctor out of conscience step forward in that year and say they've been lying to you for a year and they're still doing it.

That man that doctor was villainized by the Biden administration and put out of practice for blowing the whistle on those lies would you have ever thought would you have ever thought that our military our military guys need to just take a chill pill right now because this is going to be hard for them alright what they've been living through is beyond understanding would you have ever thought that our military would be expected to accept as normal and legitimate this is a true story from a soldier that gave it to me personally from his mouth that we would accept as normal and legitimate a man showing up for formation made up like a woman complete with makeup and ponytail tucked under his cap and that this same man would deck himself out in a red sequined dress and high heels to attend an off duty function sponsored by his unit and at the same time while it was mandatory for each soldier in his unit to attend

DEI classes where they were all instructed about the correct ways to treat this person and about what would constitute infractions which if they committed they would be disciplined in their military career for their relationship to him so don't criticize him don't disagree with him don't call him out in public because this is what he identifies as that's a true story could you ever have conceived our nation being brought to the place of embracing mandates like feminine hygiene products in boys and men's bathrooms God help us and that is the prayer we're praying this morning God help us now I've kept my mouth shut about this for four years on the whole just keep preaching the truth Jeff it's not because I've been afraid it's not because I've been intimidated we have been praying and seeking the

Lord we have been asking God for wisdom and grace and I am saying to you that I believe God is using our current president and we have dodged a huge bullet and so pray for your president and pray that God will use him and I'll tell you if I had been given the opportunity to stand in the place of this female Anglican or whatever she was this female priest person who basically chided and scolded the president of the United States and vice president and his family took an opportunity in the pulpit to scold them in front of everybody if I'd been given that opportunity I would have loved to have at least preached something of a sermon like this looked him in the eye and said Mr.

[15 : 40] President I'm calling all of evangelicalism to pray for you sir and here's the prayer I'd like to offer on your behalf sir common sense is a great first step but it's not enough what we need is to move from common sense to truth truth truth is what we need truth is going to set us free and unify us that is what we need would you have ever thought that biological boys and even grown adult men identifying as females would be given the legal right to compete on women's sports teams and in addition be given the right the right to use the intimate spaces and locker rooms and bathrooms of legitimate biological females would you have ever thought and that that's happening in our public school system as well how'd you like to send your little girl to school where boys are walking into the bathrooms with them well folks that's common sense for millions of people that's common sense for millions of people well this morning I'm taking us into a passage that

I hope will help me accomplish an important purpose in my shepherd's heart for you now here's the thing I want to help you discern the times spiritually what I mean by that is by the wisdom of the Holy Spirit as he applies God's truth in scripture to your heart to help you see what is behind all these perversions what does God tell us in scripture about the face and cause and root of these perversions passed off as the new common sense now James gives us a foundation for our understanding again some of you will recognize this passage today I'm going to try to take at least the first half of it apart for us and then we'll circle back around in a few weeks God willing and I'll give you the second part if you'll go to James chapter 3 beginning in verse 13

James asks a very important question that he used as a litmus test here for what he wants to say in the passage who among you is wise and understanding let him show by his good behavior his deeds in the gentleness of wisdom but if you have bitter jealousy and selfish ambition in your heart do not be arrogant and so lie against the truth the truth this wisdom is not that which comes down from above but is earthly natural demonic for where jealousy and selfish ambition exist there is notice disorder and every evil thing but the wisdom from above is first pure then peaceable gentle reasonable full of mercy and good fruits unwavering without hypocrisy that's important without hypocrisy and the seed that is godly wisdom whose fruit is righteousness godly wisdom births or bears righteousness that is right living before the lord that is all sown in peace by those who make peace the latter part of the passage is what we'll have to wait on i want to deal with these first few verses in this particular passage it contrasts heavenly wisdom with human wisdom and it talks to us about the origins of all of that so here's how we'll begin with our first point it is the test of true wisdom in verse 13 verse 13 is giving us what i'm calling god's baseline for wisdom you heard me in my introduction say that our baseline for wisdom is not human wisdom that's not our baseline god's baseline is his wisdom in truth in christ in his son so verse 13 reads this way who among you is wise and understanding let him show by his good behavior his deeds and those deeds need to be done in the gentleness of wisdom and there's a ton of wisdom packed in that little verse who among you is wise and understanding is the question that he is asking now that question is a let's set the record straight kind of a clarification for god's people you say you're wise you say you're understanding well let's set the record straight about what that looks like what the baseline for you stepping forward to say that's what you are or you acting in that way you know we have a lot of people who have stepped up over the last four years to talk about their wisdom we've had a ton of people coming on news shows and all kinds of different forums telling us the wisdom of these programs and stuff that I outlined for you earlier right identified for you lots of people speaking into that from a position like here is

Dr. from Harvard school of and he's got letters that long after his name and so he's all of a sudden an expert and so now he's going to tell you what's wise and James says for those of you who will step forward and say I'm wise and I have understanding let's do the test let's measure that according to God's standard and see where we come out James is telling us how we can use God's test to help us identify biblical godly heavenly wisdom that's why this is so important this is going to help us and what does he say he says look we will know all of this in the way of wisdom by its number one hallmark we will know whether or not it's godly wisdom or heavenly wisdom or human wisdom by its primary identifying recognizable feature what is that feature well it's right here in the verse that feature is meekness meekness you may have a different word translated there

I do in the gentleness of wisdom that is the meekness of wisdom the greek word that's used here translated gentleness or meekness is *prautes* and it means gentle mild or it can also be translated humble understood as being humble James marries it to the good behavior you see in what I'm calling godly wise people godly and wise yes but bring those together hyphenate them godly wise these are people who are seeking god they are trying to live in a godlike way and that is only possible for them by applying understanding and applying god's wisdom in their life so they're not just professing it they're living it so they're godly wise their lifestyle is that of godlikeness because they're living by god's wisdom they're discerning the times and the moments and situations of their life by god's wisdom you see this goes beyond common sense you can say common sense is a part of it but it goes beyond i'll show you that in just a minute how we come to that *prautes* james marries it to this good behavior you see in these people heavenly wisdom god's wisdom produces then folks listen a meek gentle tender approach to others and to life now for those of you in here who are my prophets all right you are my black and white friends you hear arguments and you immediately go for the juggler all right i understand that that's that can be fine and so some of you will hear this when i say it again heavenly wisdom god's wisdom produces a meek a gentle and a tender approach to others and to life and now some of you are going to hear that and say look i'm just not the touchy feely type all right i'm not the touchy feely type well this is not about personality personality so don't pull the e-jack candle on me yet this is not about personality this is truth for god's people irrespective of where you land on the graph of touchy feely and whatever else all right if you take this next word with me the word is *wise* who among you is wise that is the word *sophos* i'll put it up here for you *sophos* it means a special honed knowledge and then understanding is the word *epistemon* *epistemon* and it means the skillful application of wisdom and knowledge okay so we have a special skill honed knowledge that you you have disciplined your life to take in to understand to study to gain and then we have another element of that which is the skillful ability to apply that wisdom and that knowledge to your life to make what your knowledge is useful and workable in the everyday of life and so that's what it means taken together they reveal a person who acquires specific knowledge and knows how to skillfully apply it in life now when you hear that

[26 : 26] I could see an unbeliever listening to this right now and they might say especially well that sounds like common sense alright let me show you why that's not common sense this is not common what we're talking about right now is not common to human beings this is God's wisdom being revealed to us in Christ through the scriptures so let me show you what I mean I'll give you a contrast if you look at 1 Corinthians with me now this is this is one of those anchor passages that you need to hang on to and remember this will help you as you talk to people in your workaday world about how to interpret the issues of life these issues that they want to politicize and all that how do you how do you work your way through all of the verbiage and the ideology behind all these things well here's a passage that will help you do that if you start with me in 1 Corinthians 2 and you look at verse 12 now here Paul is trying to help these people understand where the wisdom for scripture came from how did God use human beings to communicate the wisdom of heaven here it is now we we those who have been used by God to help author the truth we have received you see that not the spirit of the world but the capital S

Holy Spirit who is from God so that we may know the things freely given to us by God so he starts off in 12 saying God has made himself and his wisdom known to us we received it from the Holy Spirit we did not receive it from man this is not a spirit of man issue this is something given to us by God verse 13 which things we also speak so what God has given us to write and to say that's what we're communicating not in words taught by human wisdom no but in those taught by the Holy Spirit combining spiritual thoughts with spiritual words what is he saying we are combining the thoughts of the Holy Spirit that's what spiritual means the thoughts of the Holy Spirit that the Holy Spirit is making known to us combined with

Holy Spirit words and then what does he say in verse 14 but a natural man that is an unbelieving man a person who's not saved not born again does not accept the things of the Holy Spirit of God for they are foolishness to him and he cannot understand them because they are Holy Spirit appraised or understood or received if an unbeliever has not received by the gift of salvation this wisdom from on high implanted in their heart enlightened so their mind and their heart is opened to the truth of the Lord by the miracle of salvation they cannot understand the things of the Holy Spirit the wisdom of God they cannot do it in fact they'll go further and they'll label it foolishness and this is why dear dear friends this is why you see people on one side of the aisle right now in our government standing up and saying what you hear as the most ludicrous things but they believe them it's common sense to them and you're the one that needs to be corrected and they will call the truth of God foolishness we are foolish in their eyes the fact that we want to preserve human life in the womb is foolishness to them it is something that insults them and they think that you are so unintelligent and unsophisticated for believing something so simply wrong it is a woman's right to choose what she does to her body and so how dare you people deny that right these people are willing to put themselves out there believing that you understand that you've seen it you've heard it they just spit vitriol when they get around it

I've watched some of these people with the veins bulging and their eyes full of rage speaking about people like us who believe things that they think are absolutely nonsense what does the Bible say not what does common sense tell you what does the Bible say the Bible tells us that the unsaved man cannot understand the wisdom of God it is foolishness to him foolishness they will never accept it apart from the gospel you cannot argue an unbeliever into heaven it is a miracle of heaven it is a salvation miracle wrought by the Holy Spirit the best you can do is share the truth in love in meekness and pray pray pray that's how people come to know Christ that's how people move from this human wisdom to heavenly wisdom to live their lives this is what we need in our society we need a skillful application of wisdom and knowledge yes we need to have and acquire a specific truthful understanding of ourselves of life of our universe of God yes and then we need to know how to skillfully apply that knowledge to our lives absolutely and boy that takes us way beyond common sense and so the question begs then who among you is seeking to know

God's mind who among you are then seeking at that point to apply God's mind to living a godly life a godly life a Christ exalting life common sense will not bring you to the place of living a God exalting Christ exalting life you want to tell me I'll tell you why because as soon as heavy persecution hits common sense won't be enough it won't be enough of a foundation it won't only a heart for Jesus Christ will be enough to keep you persevering in faith if you love Jesus and you love his word and you can't get over what he's done for you and giving his life for you you will be willing to lay your life down for him in that moment and that's not common and that doesn't make sense to the unsaved man the cross doesn't make sense to hell but they know it's true the demons know it's true this is what we need this is more than having bible knowledge god's wisdom forms god's meekness in you do you see what i'm saying all right let me let me put let me put this up here and see what this meekness is inner man spiritual resolve or spiritual power it is an inner man it is a spiritual work a holy spirit work in you that he's doing in your inner man it is a it is a resolve it is a holy spirit resolve and power it is also shaped by biblical truth that power is shaped by biblical truth that resolve is defined by biblical truth and it is also kept under control by the holy spirit there's your tenderness there's your gentleness there's your humility that you can be a fire brand for Jesus but not burn so hot that you burn people up when they get around you you temper the flame see that's meekness that's meekness you temper the flame because of love god's wisdom then is his truth working in your heart to shape you into a gracious person god's wisdom is going to shape you into the character qualities of Jesus Christ that's what it's going to do knowledge then even biblical knowledge even knowledge of the bible is not the end game of godly wisdom it's not it's an important aspect of what you need to live a godly life it's critical but it's not the end game for you to have knowledge of the bible lots of unbelievers have a knowledge of the bible but they don't live in the gentleness of wisdom they don't they don't live in a submissive humility and meekness a power of the spirit under the control of the spirit they don't live like that but they know things about the bible they can quote it maybe better than you so meekness here's another way i can say it for us i'm just so desperate to get this across to you this morning meekness helps define and bridle your emotions

[37 : 00] because we can get pretty worked up about what we believe huh yeah so meekness helps define and bridle your emotions against outbursts and other excessive expressions that will that would could or might move you into a place of actually sinning even though you're right and even though the truth is in you what's coming out of you doesn't sound gracious kind loving it isn't reflecting the character of Jesus as you minister the truth you're not really ministering it you're you're hammering it and look we want to be righteous people we want to be excited people we want to be people who are given to the truth and ready to lay our lives down for that truth absolutely but we want to understand that wisdom wisdom meekness the gentleness of wisdom means that it's going to help you bridle it's going to help you temper these outbursts and these excessive expressions that will come out as self as pride they'll be expressed as pride it'll just sound prideful look prideful reek of pride anger and malice there is a very very fine line I can't preach on it today there is a very very fine line between righteous indignation or righteous anger in the

Lord and sinful anger and I can tell you now if your pastor had to put a percentage on how most of us deal with anger it's 99.9% self and sin and maybe a 0.1% righteous okay come on help me here yeah yeah now I think we can grow so that that percentage changes I think we can grow in that that's exactly what I'm preaching on this morning because Satan has a counterfeit for every truth established in God's word you understand that every single one of them this quality of meekness then becomes God's test to help us measure the purity of our own wisdom and understanding can I can I can I minister this knowledge and apply this understanding in a meek way in a gentle way I can I can be I can be riled up I can be emotional you've seen me up here preaching with passion man spit flying you've seen that in me but can we do that in a way that as we encounter people with a different view than we have who are as equally passionate about what we understand to be the lie we see them in a tenderness that says we understand that you are captured to the lie

I used to be that person too I used to be captured to the lie and I was very sincere about what I believed but I was sincerely wrong can we be tender can we be kind can we be patient can we walk away from that encounter willing to be wounded willing to be mocked criticized spit on made to look stupid and foolish are we willing to be made to look foolish for Christ what an example he set for us Jesus was the most meek man who's ever lived what a meekness in our Lord now sadly James's readers were succumbing to Satan's counterfeit so James exposes the ugly impure poisonous elements of worldly wisdom that's where he goes next and this is where I'll spend the remainder of my time and then we'll come back and pick up the positive aspect of this next time look at this this is worldly wisdom he gives you the test and lays out and lays out all of the ways that you can understand this meekness or gentleness of wisdom as it's applied in your life and now he wants to contrast it with worldly wisdom who among you then is wise and understanding there's the test let him show by his good behavior good according to God his deeds the outworkings of your daily life in a meekness or gentleness of that wisdom let that wisdom define how you do it but if you have bitter jealousy and selfish ambition in your heart do not be arrogant and so lie against the truth do you see what's happening here the outworking of verse 14 is that you will be lying against the truth this wisdom is not that which comes down from above it's not heavenly it's not godly in fact it is earthly natural demonic for where jealousy and selfish ambition exist there is disorder in every evil thing which is the result but he gives us in this passage the origin doesn't doesn't he and so this is the way

I'll characterize that for you worldly wisdom he gives us its face he puts a face to wisdom in these verses James describes the character and the origins of man's wisdom the character and origins of man's wisdom so in contrast to the heavenly motive of meekness selfish ambition and bitter jealousy drive worldly wisdom and they're the opposite of this meekness this hard attitude of meekness so look at selfish ambition with me selfish ambition I'll put it up here for you selfish ambition speaks of a self seeking attitude that is an attitude of the heart bent on gaining advantage and prestige for oneself or one's group now you've seen that haven't you you've seen that lately expressed in all kinds of ways in the news media and all that kind of thing bitter jealousy is selfish zeal or a selfish passion a selfish driving force within you that wants to see your agenda fulfilled at any cost all right now look it's important for us to understand do you see that up there these are motives this selfish ambition and bitter jealousy these are motives of your heart and I put up here they are grown guarded and guided by your pride all of us battle this each of us battle this stuff selfish ambition and jealousy bitter jealousy give power to the lie work against the truth and keep you deceived about the true nature of your character why because you're going to self justify worldly wisdom is self justifying and controlling that's what it is it's not selfless it's selfish and so we find you defending your cause we find you putting out bullet points to argue your cause and again you've seen this haven't you and at the end of the day you've listened to some of these people

I do and I just keep doing the paper or plastic moment you know my head just keeps I just I can't have you ever had that at the grocery store paper or plastic and you go I don't know just something to put my grocery I just want to get to the car whatever will help me get to the car you decide you decide don't do that to me you watch these people on the TV defend these positions that are man's wisdom and you just continue to listen and listen and you're trying you're trying so hard to follow and you just get to a place where you go yeah I don't know I got nothing I I can't I can't I cannot make that happen I want you to understand what are what am I seeing there what am I hearing there and I also even more today want you to understand that whatever you're seeing and hearing there as you discern it the answer for it is not common sense you can start there but where you need to go from there is truth you say well Jeff can truth and common sense be the same all right uh oh uh oh if we want to get to the place where we say let me give you an example where we say things like this because I heard him say it and I stood up in my living room asked my wife and clapped just like that when he told the entire economic world the United

[46 : 12] States of America recognizes only two genders male and female I got up out of my seat why because it's truth it's not common sense millions of people it's not common sense to them but it is truth it's God's truth that he set forth in Genesis so we applaud it we embrace it we carry it we pray it we encourage it we go to our president and hug his neck and say keep saying stuff like that but let me let me help you with one thing in that sir if I could take another step and help people understand where that was first established it was in the mind of almighty God and it was given as a gift to humanity it's not common sense sir it's a gift of God's heavenly wisdom to keep us from evil and all the perversions that come as a result of that evil right homosexuality lesbianism transgenderism etc this that's an example of what

I'm saying it's truth that we want to stand for because truth is in Christ and we want Jesus to get the glory I don't want to take credit for being a guy of common sense boy look how much common sense we have I don't want a political party to go forward and take all the glory that belongs to Jesus by saying we're the party of common sense we're going to fix these ills I want to look at him and say I'll tell you what will fix these ills Jesus Christ and his gospel will fix these ills and when we subscribe to that he'll get the glory and he deserves it that's what we're about that's this sermon I'm not dissing on Donald Trump man I'm make sure that Jesus is getting the glory for these things if it is truly common sense it's only common sense because God's wisdom has made it so to men his common grace has helped us embrace what should be sensible to us and it works against our heart man because our heart doesn't want to take this stuff

I said worldly wisdom is self justifying and controlling now I told you about the godly wise well the worldly wise the worldly wise display their wisdom they look for venues and opportunities to express their erudition and how paradigmatically they are able to express themselves and what they want to do is they want to intimidate they want to intimidate by what they know for them knowledge is power and so they weaponize it and so you see this in certain circles right now I'm using the tv and news right now because it's just so in your face the dividing line has become so now clear about where people stand now look if you know what to listen for you'll recognize these motives displayed in people in the political arena in church life marriage family life your work invite if you know what to listen for you will because the mouth speaks from the overflow of the heart that's why that's why so if any of you come to me for counseling

I already let you in on my bag of tricks it's a one string banjo bring bring and it's one I just want to keep you talking just keep you talking because if I can keep you talking it's only a matter of time before you're going to help me understand what's going on in your heart I just got to keep your mouth running you're going to help me you're going to help me understand you because I can't see into your heart and then I'm going to take God's word and I'm going to put it right in front of you and I'm going to lovingly walk you through the wisdom of scripture to help you see areas in your life where even you are deceived and don't know what's in your heart and God's going to give you freedom that's what we do here that's what counseling is coming alongside and trying to help people into the freedom of Jesus Christ through his gospel wisdom that's what we're all about this kind of thing with selfish ambition and bitter jealousy fosters hypocrisy and what does James say about it if you have this bitter jealousy and selfish ambition notice in your heart these are heart attitudes don't be arrogant because here's what will happen these things will make you lie against the truth you will be deceived they will deceive you and you will live a lie and yet go to your grave defending that lie you'll come to believe your own lies this is very dangerous verse 15 this wisdom is not that which comes down from above can it be any more clear he doesn't just leave it there then he says it is earthly it is natural it is demonic the truth is this wisdom is not from God its origin is earthly natural and demonic and I want to put this up here just to spell it out for you what I've done is I've actually brought this over from Dr. MacArthur's commentary

I couldn't say it any better and it sure ministered to my heart I thought let me just put this up there and let them read it with me so here's what we're going to deal with three characteristics of man's wisdom which contrasts conflict and compete with God's gentle wisdom and here they are he spells it out right here for us look this first one earthly here's what Dr. MacArthur says it's of the world it is restricted to things that man can theorize discover and accomplish by himself see so who gets all the glory it has no place for God or the things of God it has no place for spiritual truth or illumination illumination is what God does when he opens your mind to understand his word it is a closed system a circumscribed box as it were of man's own making and choosing under satanic prompting you see that under satanic prompting the second the second part of this earthly wisdom pervades philosophy education politics economics sociology psychology and every other dimension and aspect every other dimension and aspect of contemporary human life wow natural he's just he's just bringing this out for us extrapolating on these concepts from scripture it's of the flesh the first one of the world the second one of the flesh those who rely on this wisdom are worldly minded devoid of the spirit jude 19 devoid of the spirit they don't have the holy spirit all of their feelings desires appetites standards and impulses are grounded in a humanistic view of the world and of man who understandably becomes the measure of all things you see who gets the glory we do we become the measure the standard of all things such wisdom not only feeds the flesh it's also foolish it's foolish to base your life on this you have to go beyond common sense and then finally demonic of the devil although false wisdom is human earthbound and fleshly its root source is satan himself the wisdom from below is nothing more than the foolishness of demons that ought to sober us appealing to men's natural fallenness and sinful inclination to arrogant self-interest that's the key in that phrase arrogant self-interest that's your selfish ambition this wisdom deceives them into believing satan's lies rather than god's truth what they believe to be their own wisdom is really the devil's that's terrifying we don't want anybody to live in that democrat republican libertarian or whatever we don't want anybody living in that look the source of all error or falsehood false wisdom is demonic that's what the bible says period if it goes against the truth it's of the devil period no matter who's espousing it it's coming from the devil false wisdom is applied without any reference to heart change now that's important because we are told that heavenly wisdom creates in us nurtures cultivates in us a gentle wisdom heavenly wisdom cultivates in us a meekness that seeks to apply that wisdom in humility deference kindness gentleness right that's that's the product that's what heavenly wisdom is working that in you not not human wisdom false wisdom or human wisdom doesn't have any change

[56 : 07] on the heart toward the lord all it does is educate your heart in how to be more selfish which you already are it just takes the foundation of unbelief and explodes it again not a very promising picture huh and then finally look at this one worldly wisdom in terms of its goal is self centered it has nothing to do with gentleness or with pleasing the lord in all respects according to Colossians 1 9 and 10 so this is something that we need to guard against not embrace I'll say it this way common sense might be a good starting place okay but it's not where we want to end or travel we need to go beyond that common sense will not give us the foundation that we need for dealing with the trials of life at some point it's going to fail you you're going to sense the weakness that's when the Holy

Spirit becomes so tangibly real to you the peace of God the hope of God the power of God where people look at you and say how in the world are you holding up how in the world are you doing this I'll tell you Bob and Camille right now my brother Bob is wasting away and Camille bless her heart is right there with him how are they doing it you know it's it's the Holy Spirit living in them it's the power of God to do what he promised and people look at it and they recognize that's not common that's not common we have a hospital full of people that we see all the time these nurses and doctors we don't see this kind of peace and what in the world you see what I'm saying we have to go beyond common sense finally let me give you it's fruit it's fruit

I've given you it's face what's what's the fruit well he tells us for where jealousy and selfish ambition exists there is here's the fruit disorder in every evil thing this is what man's wisdom always produces in every every context of life where it dominates disorder in every evil thing all right synonyms a synonym for disorder confusion instability did you see all these programs unify did you see all these programs clarify or did it leave people in confusion where people scratching their heads and stepping away and going what what and to take a little child a little child who's already dealing with hormones and the changes in their body and they're confused and all that do you remember when that time started happening to you if you didn't have an adult if you didn't have a parent or somebody in your life speaking into your life to help you realize that these changes taking place in your body didn't mean that you something crazy was happening to you right you needed somebody to tell you it's okay calm down take a breath all of us go through this right you're not gonna die

I promise all of us everybody but they exploit it now they take it and they build on that confusion and the next thing you know you've got a child going into a hospital under his parents tutelage and with the blessing of these doctors who took an oath to heal and help and not to harm and now they're gonna do something to this child irreversible irreversible yeah that's not common sense is it well it's certainly not true how did we get here now this is the heart of man it's confusion it's instability this word for disorder here was most often applied to get this political turmoil isn't that interesting in in the ancient world when they used this word it was most often associated with political upheaval we see this in the examples of the new common sense I talked about in my intro every evil thing every evil thing would be translated every worthless vile wicked foul deed so here are your deeds this is this is all that would be revealed as an anti-god anti-truth agenda that's that's how we measure it so friends look selfish ambition and bitter jealousy work against what is valuable what is truthful what is helpful to humanity it doesn't look anything like meekness it doesn't look anything like gentleness or sincerity in other words remember this is a counterfeit this is a counterfeit it disguises itself it camouflages itself to sound look I have in my notes here these arguments can sometimes sound very sophisticated look I've listened to a couple of these people argue these programs in congress and I've listened carefully and I've watched them and the level of sophistication and articulation that they bring is very convincing if you don't know what to listen for if you're not dedicated to the truth and they swayed a lot of people they bullied a lot of people into believing this or at least going along with them it can sound very sophisticated but all of it is based on lies

James says they are dangerous and destructive because they originate in the mind of Satan so there's no such thing please hear your pastors Greg and I lockstep in this listen there is no such thing as transgenderism no such thing you understand it is not viable it is a false construct a false construct it is a satanic ideology perpetrated on the human race it is a baseless lie designed to deceive you into following false wisdom and many many many people have fallen victim to it the ideology behind man's belief in his ability to remake himself into whatever image he wants to be is false I cannot be my own God and work my way into the favor of the

[63 : 47] God I cannot do that I cannot make myself joyful happy and fulfilled and full of purpose and meaning by being my own God and trying to remake myself into my own image of what God should be for me that will never work that's the garden that's how we got in this mess in the first place you will be like God what a lie they were already made in his image without sin it's hypocritical to its core it's not just common sense to say there are two genders male and female it's biblical wisdom from the mind of God and so he gets the glory democrats republicans doesn't matter whichever political party listen doesn't matter whether you're democrat or republican you aren't wrong about your policies simply because they defy common sense you see we can't look across the aisle to the other political party and say that doesn't even make sense you're wrong and leave it at that and then try to out argue them for one they're not listening and the bible says don't argue with a fool no that's not why they're not wrong because they're acting in the opposite ways of what makes sense to their opponents that's not simply why they're wrong that's not the measure if you look behind what they're saying and doing and measure it by the truth of God's word now now we have something to stand on if it refutes God's wisdom and truth if it exalts self if it counterfeits meekness and gentleness then it's birthed by the devil and carried out from human motives of self favoring self seeking and self centered zeal period now doesn't that help doesn't that help cut through the fog and help you say you know what that's right when I listen to these things I need to listen discerningly biblically I need to listen for what's going on behind that in the way of truth or lie is what I'm hearing based on the wisdom of almighty God and what he's revealed about himself for our good in his glory and if the answer is no you know the origin you know where it's coming from all right here's how I'll end last paragraph here God has not left us to live with the limitations of common sense our Lord

Jesus knows the thoughts and wisdom of God the Father Paul tells us that we have the mind of the Lord Jesus that's 1st Corinthians 2 where I took you we can know God's thoughts amazing we can apply God's wisdom to our lives as he opens our minds to understand his truth and wisdom in scripture so we will either live together in the gentleness of Jesus wisdom or we will live in the selfish ambition and bitter jealousy of pride and I know that what we want to do here at Grace is let's follow Jesus follow the wisdom of Jesus let's pray for our president and his cabinet members as they seek a revolution of common sense and pray that as they talk about God they really will understand in their heart who God is who Christ is and they'll embrace the truth and move forward in it let's pray together dear friends father we are seeking now to honor your heart to give you glory to exalt you in the truth of your word and God

I'm as zealous as anybody in here for the truth I'm as eager as anybody in here to see the truth prevail I'm as tempted as anybody in here to be disgusted and turned off with the lies that come out of the mouths of some of the people that I've seen trying to tell our country what it needs to do and the direction it needs to go in but Lord you told us that it would be like this and you told us that what we need is a savior and so you sent him you sent Jesus to the cross for us and so help us as your people to embrace him and to embrace his truth help us to be mindful of 1st Timothy 2 telling us that we are to pray for our leaders we are to pray for those in authority over us that's a command and I pray that you'll help us to get on our knees we'll entreat you to work through our president our vice president his cabinet members all of the different people involved in government as we see these things happening on television and these policies being put in place others dismantled that our leaders will rely on your wisdom at least even if they don't recognize it's happening

I pray you would minister that wisdom to them in common grace and that we will find in our country a wonderful turnaround of joy and hope God and more of a footing for people like us to go into our workaday world and express the hope of the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ that you might receive all the glory it's in your name that we pray amen thank you for your kind of a way