

South Sub Church

February 15, 2026

Real Faith Seeks Wisdom

James 3:13-18 (NLT)

¹³ If you are wise and understand God's ways, prove it by living an honorable life, doing good works with the humility that comes from wisdom. ¹⁴ But if you are bitterly jealous and there is selfish ambition in your heart, don't cover up the truth with boasting and lying. ¹⁵ For jealousy and selfishness are not God's kind of wisdom. Such things are earthly, unspiritual, and demonic. ¹⁶ For wherever there is jealousy and selfish ambition, there you will find disorder and evil of every kind. ¹⁷ But the wisdom from above is first of all pure. It is also peace loving, gentle at all times, and willing to yield to others. It is full of mercy and the fruit of good deeds. It shows no favoritism and is always sincere. ¹⁸ And those who are peacemakers will plant seeds of peace and reap a harvest of righteousness.

Sermon Summary:

"Faith — IRL (In Real Life)" is an eight-week journey through the book of James, a letter that refuses to let faith remain theoretical, private, or passive. James insists that real faith shows up in the real world—shaping our responses, directing our actions, and transforming our relationships. In other words, genuine faith is always lived, never merely believed.

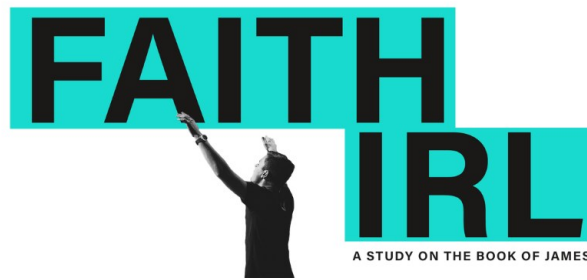
This series will challenge us and equip us to be doers of the Word, learning how a real, active faith navigates real-world trials, choices, relationships, and opportunities. Together, we will discover how faith lived in real life doesn't just talk—but truly walks.

Ice Breaker Questions:

1. What emoji best describes your week?
2. Are you more likely to overthink a text or send it without rereading?
3. Are you more of a talk-it-out person or a keep-it-to-yourself person?
4. When there's drama or conflict, are you more likely to step in or step back?
5. Are you more competitive or more cooperative by nature?

Scripture Study Questions:

1. According to verse 13, how does James describe a person who is wise and understanding?
2. In verse 13, what kind of conduct is said to accompany wisdom?
3. According to verse 14, what attitudes does James warn against in the heart?
4. In verse 14, what are believers told not to do if they have bitter jealousy and selfish ambition?



5. According to verse 15, where does this kind of “wisdom” not come from, and how is it described?
6. In verse 16, what results are said to occur where jealousy and selfish ambition exist?
7. According to verse 17, from where does true wisdom come?
8. In verse 17, what characteristics are listed to describe the wisdom from above?
9. According to verse 18, what is produced by those who sow in peace?
10. In verse 18, how are righteousness and peace connected?

Interpretive Questions:

1. How does James distinguish true wisdom from false wisdom based on conduct and character (v. 13)?
2. What does James mean by describing some wisdom as “earthly, unspiritual, demonic” (v. 15)?
3. Why does James connect jealousy and selfish ambition with disorder and every vile practice (v. 16)?
4. What is the significance of James emphasizing peace and gentleness as marks of true wisdom?
5. What does this passage suggest about how wisdom is revealed and recognized in everyday life?

Application Questions:

1. Where might jealousy or selfish ambition be shaping your decisions more than wisdom from above?
2. In what areas of your life do you pursue being right more than being peaceable?
3. What relationships might be experiencing disorder because of your words, motives, or competition?
4. What would it look like for you to intentionally “sow peace” in a tense or broken situation right now?
5. Which characteristic of wisdom from above (pure, peaceable, gentle, open to reason, full of mercy, impartial, sincere) challenges you the most—and why?