

Jesus Is Lord: Part 1

by Thaddeus Barnum

The sermon explores the necessity of seeking divine wisdom and recognizing Jesus' lordship during life's challenges.

Duration: 28:40

Scripture: James 3:13

Topics: "Lordship"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker focuses on the topic of wisdom from the Lord as discussed in the book of James. He contrasts the wisdom that comes from above with earthly wisdom that is filled with jealousy, ambition, and pride. The speaker acknowledges that many of us have experienced situations that are overwhelming and beyond our control, causing anxiety and stress. He emphasizes the importance of seeking God's wisdom in these moments and not allowing our emotions to control our thinking. The speaker also addresses the role of the devil in tormenting us during these times and encourages listeners to trust in God's goodness.

Transcript

Almighty God, Almighty Father, we come this morning into your presence by such great mercy and kindness that you have allowed access to us through your beloved Son, our Savior Jesus Christ, and that you have poured out the Comforter, the Counselor, to guide us into all truth and to preside over us in these days where the storms have raged, and how we now turn our eyes upon thee. Lord, grant us, we pray, by the grace of your Holy Spirit, to allow our eyes indeed to come upon you and to worship you with all our heart, mind, soul, and strength. Open your word, we pray to us, in Jesus' name.

Good morning. I would like it if you would turn to your Bibles to James and chapter 3 and the passage that we have just heard. And I would like to give special attention this morning to this dialogue that's given to us in James as he talks and speaks directly about wisdom from the Lord.

Wisdom from the Lord. And he compares and he contrasts this wisdom that comes from above from the wisdom that does not come from above, that comes earthly, unspiritual, unnatural, demonic, filled with bitter jealousy, selfish ambition, and pride. Why do I want to make my appeal to you this morning on this text? Well, it is this.

Many of us know what it's like to cry out for the wisdom of the Lord in a situation that's bigger than us. And that happens, doesn't it? Times when the ground shakes underneath us, the devil roars, the thunders roll, and our emotions just go tilt. The situation bigger than us, that cat four coming right at us, that flood map taking over our homes, our houses, our things.

Storms of life that come. And it sends sheer panic in the heart, does it not? Filling us with anxiety and with stress and with inability to handle, out of control, helpless, feeling we're under attack by the world, the flesh, the devil. What do we do at a time like that? And so often we cry out to the Lord that we need His wisdom.

And yet, if we're quite honest about things, everything we think about, everything, it's all our talk, it's all about the situation. Isn't it amazing how it consumes us? We want it over with, we want it fixed, we want it done with. And our emotions are just so wild sometimes that what happens is that they control our thinking.

We don't reason well. We don't think things out. We want to move to action, we want to do something.

We want that Hail Mary pass to win in the end zone, that last-ditch effort, we want to do something. Of course, we put our head in the pillow at night and try sleeping at a moment like that. And worry becomes our best friend.

Worry that begins to think about what isn't, but what will be, what could be, what might be, what if. And then what if stokes fear that makes it all bigger and bigger. And then we can't sleep, which also affects how we think and how we reason and how we go about life.

And then we've got the devil tormenting us, do we not? He's so good at this time. When we're off balance, when we're off kilter, and the lovely gift he gives us of stoking guilt inside of us. How many of you feel that? You're feeling anxious.

Well, if you were a strong Christian, you wouldn't be feeling anxious. If you were a good Christian, if you were wise, if you were mature, if you only trusted the Lord, really, you wouldn't be feeling these anxieties. No, no, no, no.

What kind of a Christian are you? Are you a Christian? And then out comes a bit of rebellion inside of us like that little child. Dad, do for us. It's your fault.

Why aren't you coming to our rescue? Is God really good? If he was good, why is this happening to me? We begin to doubt. We begin to have all those things circling around us. And then we go to our big default mode, original default mode, back to the beginning.

The finger comes out. The Eden finger. I've always called it that.

You know that. The Eden finger. It's not my fault.

It's your fault. Somebody's fault. It's the Weather Channel's fault.

No doubt about that. Not exactly Ed Piotrowski, but everybody else. It's everybody else's fault.

Somebody's got to blame for the torment I'm in. But where he really gets us is in despair. As I talked with a pastor this past week, who rose up in the morning and all he could feel as if God had left him because of

what he had done in life.

He felt utterly abandoned. He felt hopeless and helpless. Anxiety filling every pore of his body, sending strength through the core.

Anxiety to the brim. What good am I? This is exactly what the devil does with us. Sending blame and doubt and despair and guilt into us.

And so what we do is we get the Christians around us. We ask somebody, even unbelievers do this. Pray for us.

Will you pray for us? We need that gift of wisdom. We need to know what to do and when to do and how to do it. We've got to get out of the situation.

Do we not? Somehow we've got to get the shepherd into the valley of the shadow of death and bring comfort and bring peace and get us out of this situation. To be quite honest, we're very dead honest about it, we are not interested in the Lord. We're interested in what He can do for us.

Did you see the distinction I just made? We're not interested in Him. We're interested in what He can do for us because our eyes are always on the circumstance. We can't get them off.

Our eyes are on the situation and we need the Lord to do for us what we can't do for ourselves. But we're not interested in Him. We're interested in what He can do for us.

My friends, I want to talk about the wisdom of the Lord this morning because here's where wisdom absolutely 100% begins. This is where it begins. It's when the people of God who are filled with the Word of God, filled with the Spirit of God, come around us and get our eyes off the circumstance and declare over us and pronounce over us, Jesus is Lord.

Jesus, Jesus is Lord. Now that might sound insensitive and uncaring to your ears because all you want is fix it. All you want is remedy.

I know that. The last thing you want is a sermon. Last thing you want is somebody, oh my Lord, somebody's gonna come and say, give me a Bible verse or give me a Bible study and tell me why I shouldn't be fixed on the situation.

But actually in the gentleness, as it says here in James, in the meekness of wisdom, what the body of Christ does is we come around and we literally, it's a process, sometimes it's not easy, sometimes it has to be minute by minute, but we take our brothers, our sisters' eyes off the terror, off the panic, and on to the Lord. Why do I say it? Because He is Lord. He declared His Lordship.

All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. This is why Paul's going to argue in Romans 8 that nothing can separate us from the love of Christ, not tribulation, not distress, not persecution, not nakedness, not famine, not peril, not sword. He's going to go on and say in chapter 8 verse 39, I'm convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor things present, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor anything in all creation can separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

What's he saying? He's saying the storm, the storm, it's big, I'm bigger still. Storm may be deep, I'm deeper still. The storm may be wide, I'm wider still.

Jesus is Lord. He said it to us. In this world you're going to have trouble.

Take heart, take courage. I have overcome the world. You can have in me peace, not to do away with the storm, peace in the storm, peace when the storm is gone, peace when the storm is there.

It is him that becomes the focus. Why is that? Because he doesn't just have wisdom to give, he is wisdom. He doesn't just have it to give, he is it himself.

And that's what we do with each other. We move off of the of the storm and our eyes on it and find we are not on sand, we are standing upon the rock, the rock of his word in the spirit of God. We are the people of God that know how to help others.

That, my friends, is called healthy church. That's called healthy church. Let me talk about wisdom for a moment.

Many of us have, in the book of James, many of us know that this book in the New Testament is often called the Proverbs of the New Testament because it focuses on the wisdom that applies the things of the Lord into everyday life. And that's what wisdom is. I mean, forgive me, doctors, if you were the top of your class, I say, well, well done you.

But if you can't do a diagnosis, I've said this before, if you can't do a diagnostic, your A in class means nothing. What we need when we're sick is a diagnostician to come and rightly discern our story and then be able to treat that story. And that's what wisdom is, it's application.

And so what we find James saying to us is that wisdom does not come self-derivative. It's not inside us, it's derivative from above, which is exactly what the Proverbs of the Old Testament says. Probably some of you have memorized this verse, I don't know.

See if I'm right about that. Trust in the Lord with all your heart and do... Well, the right side got it. Do not lean on your own understanding.

What's it saying? Proverbs is saying it, the Bible says it. Wisdom is not self-derivative. You cannot go and get a scholastic degree and find this wisdom.

No, no. This is something that the Lord gives. And it's parsed out between natural wisdom, the wisdom of our own understanding, and also the wisdom of the world, which James argues here and Paul argues in 1 Corinthians chapter 2, chapter 1, sorry, where he calls it the wisdom of the world.

The wisdom of the world that does not know God. And that's really the distinction, which is why the wisdom described here in verse 17 is pure, peaceable, gentle, open to reason, full of mercy and good fruits, impartial, sincere. If you studied every one of these words, you would see the character of the Lord Himself.

In as much as you see the other wisdom, earthly, unspiritual, demonic, bitter jealousy, selfish ambition and pride are derivative of the devil himself. And so there comes in the pulse of Scripture this design to seek wisdom, to seek the wisdom from above, derivative wisdom that the Lord will meet us and show us in our situation what He's got in mind. It's derivative, which is why you've got King Solomon, for example, at the very beginning of his days as king.

He's asked by the Lord, what is it you're looking for? What is it I can give? What do you seek? And King Solomon, 1 Kings chapter 3 says, he says, I need a wise and discerning mind that I might discern between good and evil. I might know from right and wrong that I might lead this people. It's not in me.

No, no, it's in you. And the ESV is going to say a wise and discerning mind. The New American Standard Bible is going to call it, same, same interchangeable word, a wise and discerning heart.

It's wisdom that fills the mind, the soul, the whole being, derivative from the Lord. So it shouldn't surprise us that he is the author of Proverbs, Proverbs, which has just got this pulse inside of it, which says, my dear son, my dear daughter, if I could say it that way, if you want to know about life, here's life. Get wisdom.

Get insight. Attach it. Write it upon the tablet of the Lord.

Let her fill you. Let her know my wisdom inside of you. Get it.

Pursue it. Job 28 is one of my favorite passages because what Job says in chapter 28 is that we are people who will upturn mountains to look for gold. We'll upturn mountains to look for silver to fill our coffers, but who's going to upturn the world to find wisdom? And so he says in chapter 28, where shall wisdom be found and where is the place of understanding? Man does not know its worth.

The deep says, it's not in me. The sea says, it's not in me. The price of wisdom is above pearls.

From whence then does wisdom come and where is the place of understanding? Even Abaddon and Death say, we've heard a rumor of it with our ears. But here, says Job, says Proverbs, says the Scriptures, the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom. The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom.

Do you see what that says? Do you understand it? Do you know what that means? This is a most wonderful, a most gracious way to show us what the wisdom of the Lord is. Are you panicked right now? Are you full of stress right now? Are you in a storm right now? Well, here we are to escort you into the presence of the Lord, to worship Him. Eyes off the circumstance.

Come with me. Come with me into the presence of the Lord. Come with me.

For it is He who by wisdom created the heavens and the earth, and today He sits upon the throne of heaven. Come with me. This is exactly what happens in the book of Revelation.

It opens up in chapter 4 where John, suffering on the island of Patmos, he's brought into the courts of the Lord. And as Rob, you opened us this morning, out comes the cry, as we are before the Lord, holy, holy, holy is the Lord God, the Almighty, who was and who is and who is to come. Worthy art thou, our Lord and our God, to receive glory and honor and power.

For thou didst create all things, and because of thy will they existed and were created. He is Lord over the storm. And then in chapter 5, the Lord Jesus appears, the Lion of Judah.

He who is to judge the living and the dead. He whose government, administration, justice and righteousness, here, now, forever. And there He is.

Worthy is the Lamb who was slain to receive power and riches and wisdom and might and honor and glory and blessing. Before Him all peoples will stand upon the day of judgment. And whether they're in heaven

or on earth or under the earth, even from the pits of hell, they're going to have to bow their knee and say the word that belongs to all time, all creation.

Jesus is Lord to the glory of God the Father. Because He is to be worshipped. He is to be adored.

He is the one who reigns over and is supreme over all, who by His obedience to the Father has been bestowed the kingship of all. My dear friends, this is He. This is He who also says, are you heavy? Are you weighted down? Are you burdened? Come to Me.

Take My yoke upon you. Learn from Me. I am gentle.

I am humble in heart. And you're going to find rest for your souls. This is He who brings that invitation to us.

He's the one who pronounces over us, even in the face of death, do not be afraid. I am the first and the last and the living one. I was dead.

Behold, I'm alive forevermore. And I hold the keys to death and to Hades. He triumphs.

He's over us. He's over the storm. We're on solid ground.

We're on solid rock. This is why New Testament tells us He's not just got wisdom to give. He is wisdom.

1 Corinthians 1 verse 30, by His doing we are in Christ Jesus who became to us wisdom from God. Colossians chapter 2 verse 3, this is God's mystery. Christ Himself in whom are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge.

What does this mean? It means here our job is to escort us when we're down and cast down, when we're overwhelmed, our job is to escort into the presence of the Lord. Eyes off the circumstance. Eyes on the Lord.

And when our eyes are on the Lord, He gives us the authority in the name of Jesus to look at what the devil is doing to us and say, no more in the name of Jesus. As long as our eyes are on the circumstance, the devil's got us in his grip. He's got us so we can cast him out all we want, but we're holding on to him.

We're holding on to all the things he does to us. No, no. When we let Jesus preside over us, and that's why we need each other.

I can't do this on my own. When I'm in panic and distress, I need the body of Christ around me. I don't want to hide out.

I need to be together in the body of Christ. Would you help me see Jesus where we are in this situation? Would you help me see Jesus in this? Because I'm lost. My emotions have gone crazy.

I don't know what to do. I don't know where I am. Would you help me see Jesus in this? And that's where the body of Christ is so strong because we can come around.

You and I can escort into the presence of the Lord because that is the body of Christ, is it not? Where two or three are gathered. There he is in the midst, presiding over these things, releasing us from the bondage of the evil one who wants to spin us in guilt and doubt and blame and despair. He cannot have us.

Come on storm, you cannot have us. One greater than the storm is here. That's the promise.

That's the gift. That's what he does. And what we do with each other is we help then allow the emotions that we have to come under his lordship rather than our emotions controlling us.

That's huge because in the midst of it our emotions control. Did I lose you there? So many of us when we're in the midst of this kind of our fallback is to just wallow in self-pity. People come and get us up and lift us up and the moment they're gone we go right back.

And we kind of detach and we kind of isolate. We play the movie film over and over and just wallow in it. I'd ask you to raise your hands on that but I'm not going to.

Others of us are just stoic. The way we deal with emotion is we don't. Deny it.

Push it away. It's not so big. I've got this.

I'm in control. And even if I'm not, I'm the only one that doesn't know it. Some of you have to listen to the tape on that one.

I know that. The last one I would just mention is that some of us just burst out in anger because we don't know how to deal with the emotion. We're out of control.

We don't know how to deal with it. So somebody's going to get our discharge. Somebody's going to get it because somebody has to get it because I don't want it in me.

And it's always about somebody else and it's not about me because I'm always right and you're always not. So it works out just fine. Just live with it.

You see, these emotions can just overwhelm us and control us. And we can be no fun to live with. But when Jesus steps in, he wants to take us to the cross of Calvary and cleanse us.

And to begin to preside over our mind, over our heart, over our soul. To begin to know that no matter what's going on, no matter what the doctor has said, no matter how deep the disease, no matter how big the storm, no matter how big the trouble, the Lord Jesus Christ is here. The people of God are here.

The Word of God stands. The Spirit of God is strong. He's been given to us as a counselor.

As he presides, he's going to teach us and show us how to walk through whatever we have to walk through in wisdom, in understanding. He's going to show us. He will show us.

But first he needs to be Lord over it. And when he's Lord over it and we've got our eyes off the circumstance and our eyes back on him, he will begin to administrate what we're to do, when we're to do, how we're to do. Do you believe that? You see, that's how Paul prayed for the Colossians.

That is his prayer in Colossians chapter 1, verses 9 to 12, where he says, Since the day I have not ceased to pray for you, to ask that you may be filled with the knowledge of his will, to know what his will is in for your life, that you might be filled with all spiritual wisdom and understanding. Well, what is spiritual wisdom? It's wisdom by the Holy Spirit. Not self-derivative, but the one who has been sent, this third person, to give us wisdom, to give us understanding, to be able to show us in the body of Christ, in the Word of Christ, by the Spirit of Christ, what we're to do here and now.

That's his gift to us, that we might be filled with the spiritual wisdom, Holy Spirit wisdom and understanding, that we might walk in a manner worthy of the Lord, that we might please him in all respect, that we might bear fruit in every good work, that we might increase in the knowledge of God, strengthen with all power according to his glorious might, for the attaining of all steadfastness and patience. That's the point of it. You and I, we can get through anything.

We can get through anything together in the body of Christ, when the Word of God is strong and the Spirit of God is upon us. Will he not counsel us? Will he not guide us into all truth? Will he not be with us? When the storm is gone, will we not still be standing? My friends, these are the promises given to us. One of the heartaches I have in my world, I talk to people all over the country, and one of the heartaches I have is I hear, I hear from time to time people saying, I've moved to such and such a community, I can't find a good church, I can't find a healthy church.

Not one where the Scriptures, the Word of God is held. Not where the Spirit of God is moving. Everything seems to be watered down in a culture that's lost its moorings, and so many of our churches have lost our moorings.

No, no, not us, please. No, no, we need to pray for the Christians all over this land, not to get swept up into the things that belong to the culture, but things that belong to the Lord. Why? Because He is Lord.

And the troubles that are coming upon the world are going to increase, but the church cannot decrease in moments like that. No! We must be rising up because we know what few know. The King of kings, the Lord of lords, the one who's over this trouble, the one who's going to bring all things into its perfect end, its perfect completion, until that day we enter into the glory that is soon to await us.

No, no, Jesus is indeed Lord. Oh, don't let the devil take us away. Don't get your eyes on the circumstances.

Don't think you can handle it on your own. None of us can. None of us can.

Go to seminary, get a doctorate, it won't help you. I'm not kidding. It will help you but it won't help you.

I'll tell you what helps. It's when the body of Christ becomes the body of Christ. And suddenly the gifts begin to arise.

And there in our troubles somebody's coming, my goodness, they've rolled up their hands, they're ready to help you. Somebody else has got a scripture. Somebody else has got prayer.

Somebody else is coming because they've cooked. Somebody else has come because all they know how to do is hug. Because the body of Christ knows how to encourage, how to lift up, because we have a Savior who is head of the body, head of the church, Lord of all things.

No, no, my friends, in the midst of the storms, let the devil rage, let the mountains tremble, let the earth shake, but we have a Lord who has seen past these storms already and promises us the same. Oh, death, death, where is your victory? Death, oh, death, where is your sting? The sting of sin is the law and the power of the law is sin, but thanks be to God, he gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. My friends, tell me, are you a believer in Christ? Have you been lost in the things that the devil has tormented you with? Oh, put your trust in him today because nobody sees us through the storm not like him.

Amen. Let's stand together. Let's recite the Nicene Creed together as we testify of our faith.

Together. We believe in one God. God, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name.

Thy kingdom come, thy will be done,

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