



WEEK OF PRAYER & SELF DENIAL MEDITATIONS 08 to 14 September 2024

“Renouncing Worldly Wisdom, Pursuing Godly Wisdom”
James 3:13-18



Meditations by TRAC WSCS † Scripture verses by GC WSCS

Renouncing Worldly Wisdom, Pursuing Godly Wisdom

James 3:13-18

Worldly Wisdom:

- 1) The Root – envy, self-centredness, pride.
- 2) The Nature – materialistic, temporal, unspiritual, sensual, demonic.
- 3) The Fruit – disorder, confusion, evil practice.

Godly Wisdom:

- 1) The Source – God (from heaven).
- 2) The Foundation – the fear of God, obedience to His Word.
- 3) The Qualities – pure, peaceable, humble, gentle, willing to yield, full of mercy, impartial, identified by good deeds, sincere.
- 4) The Reward – a harvest of righteousness.

The Week of Prayer and Self-Denial (PSD)

was started in 1887 and is observed during the second week of September. This observance calls WSCS women to spiritual growth, awareness and action. Through it, women are challenged to engage in prayer and to reflect upon stewardship as they respond to the needs in the home, church, community and the world at large to fulfil God's mission. PSD Meditations, prayer and giving have been its central focus. WSCS women are encouraged to increase their self-denial through sacrificial acts to bless others. The offerings collected from the 3 Conferences are placed in the PSD Fund for the above-mentioned needs.

Extracted from <https://wscs.methodist.org.sg>





Eradicating Evil Roots

(James 3:13-16)

James 3:16 “For where you have envy and selfish ambition there you find disorder and every evil practice.”

In the epistle of James, we are reminded of the insidious nature of envy and selfish ambition, which can take root in our hearts and bring about disorder and every evil. James 3:13-16 beckons us to cultivate wisdom from above—pure, peace-loving, considerate, and submissive—and to eradicate those toxic roots and nurture a harvest of righteousness and harmony in our lives.

Reflecting on the lives of Joseph, King Saul, and Jesus, we find exemplars of how different responses to envy and selfish ambition shape our journey of faith and influence our impact on others.

Joseph, the virtuous dreamer, faced the envy of his brothers but remained steadfast in his faith, relying on God's plan even in adversity. Through forgiveness and reconciliation, Joseph's story teaches us the power of overcoming envy with grace and trust in God's divine providence. His journey reminds us that even in the face of jealousy and betrayal, staying true to biblical values, trusting in God's sovereignty and seeking reconciliation can lead to greater blessings and opportunities for growth in Christlikeness.





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King Saul, on the other hand, succumbed to jealousy and selfish ambition by allowing these evil roots to poison his reign and lead him to downfall. His tragic tale serves as a cautionary reminder of the destructive consequences of envy and selfish ambition over righteousness and humility. Saul’s story illustrates the slippery slope that ensues when envy is left unchecked, leading to self-destruction and loss of God’s favour.

In the midst of the two narratives, we encounter a third – Jesus — the ultimate example of wisdom from above. His life, marked by selflessness, humility, and sacrificial love, is a beacon of light in a world darkened by envy and selfishness. Jesus' teachings and actions embody the essence of James 3:13-16, showing us the path to eradicating evil roots and cultivating a life of goodness and harmony.

Jesus, through His ministry and ultimate sacrifice on the cross, demonstrated the epitome of selfless love and submission to God's will. His rejection of worldly power and status in favor of serving others and obeying the Father's plan stands as a stark contrast to the destructive tendencies of envy and selfish ambition.





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Jesus’ life of humility, service and love provides us with a tangible model to follow in uprooting the seeds of envy and ambition in our own lives.

In addition to the mentioned biblical examples, our personal experiences often serve as mirrors reflecting the challenges and triumphs in navigating the intricacies of envy and selfish ambition. There might have been moments when our comparisons and desires for recognition have clouded our judgment, leading us to inner turmoil and discord. However, through reflective practices and prayers, seeking wisdom from above and by God’s grace, it becomes possible for us to embrace humility and gratitude as antidotes to those destructive tendencies.

As we meditate on the life and teachings of Jesus, we are called to emulate His example of selfless love, humility, and compassion. Following in His footsteps, we can uproot the evil seeds of envy and selfish ambition, replacing them with the fruits of the Spirit—love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control.





Eradicating Evil Roots

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In our daily lives, may we constantly choose to embody the wisdom from above that Jesus exemplified, seeking to eradicate envy and selfish ambition and embracing a life of selfless service, love, and grace. By anchoring ourselves in the teachings of Christ and allowing His transformative power to work within us, may He enable us to cultivate a harvest of righteousness and unity, spreading the message of hope and redemption to a world in desperate need of God's transformative love.

As we navigate the complexities of our journey of faith, may we always look to Jesus as the supreme example of eradicating evil roots and nurturing the fruits of righteousness in our lives. Let His life be our guide, His love our motivation, and His grace our strength as we strive to cultivate goodness, embody harmony, and shine as beacons of light in a world yearning for the transformative power of God's love.

Shermaine Tang
Fairfield Methodist Church





Choosing the Right Friendship

(James 4:4)

James 4:4 “You adulterous people, don’t you know that friendship with the world means enmity against God? Therefore, anyone who chooses to be a friend of the world becomes an enemy of God.”

For those who choose to be a friend to the world, James 4:4 describes them as ‘adulterous people’. This description alludes to the Israelites who had forsaken God for other idols. The Israelites whom God loved were unfaithful to Him. They had defiled themselves with the ways of the world and disobeyed the law and statutes of God. This was also referenced in Hosea 3:1 when God called Hosea to love his adulteress wife again, just as the Lord would also love the Israelites again. God had longed for His people to seek Him so that they would be found in His blessings. Similarly, God is our faithful friend. But just like the Israelites, we often struggle with unfaithfulness towards him.

This black-white pattern that forces a choice between two things also appears in Luke 16:13, Deuteronomy 30:15 and in Galatians 5. Luke 16:13 states that *“No one can serve two masters. Either you will hate the one and love the other, or you will be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve both God and money.”* Or in Deuteronomy 30:15, when God said to the Israelites: *“I set before you today life and*





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prosperity, death and destruction.” There is no middle ground. Paul reiterated this truth in Galatians 5, exalting us to live by the Spirit, for the flesh desires what is contrary to the Spirit, and the Spirit what is contrary to the flesh.

Henceforth, let us serve only God, choose life, live in the Spirit and be a faithful friend to Jesus. To live by the Spirit is to keep in step with the Spirit moment by moment. To choose life is to love the Lord, listen to His voice and hold fast to Him (Deuteronomy 30:19). Friendship with God is therefore choosing the path that leads to life, ensuring that God’s blessings of His presence will follow. God does not want us to head towards the path of destruction.

How can we be a faithful friend to Jesus? Just as we spend time with our earthly friends, we also take time to have ‘tea’ with God, read His Word, pray to speak with Him and also to hear Him speak to us; learn to care more for God’s purposes and plans; give our heart, time and resources to spiritual matters





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rather than worldly pleasures and material wealth, and make choices that reflect godly values and beliefs. Know that greater love has no one than this, that Jesus laid down his life for you whom He calls as His friend (John 15:13).

May the friendship that Jesus gives to you inspire you to reciprocate and be a trusted friend to Him. Sing this hymn “What a friend we have in Jesus” to remember and make Jesus your forever best friend.

*What a friend we have in Jesus,
all our sins and griefs to bear!
What a privilege to carry
everything to God in prayer!
O what peace we often forfeit,
O what needless pain we bear,
all because we do not carry
everything to God in prayer!*





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*Have we trials and temptations?
Is there trouble anywhere?
We should never be discouraged;
Take it to the Lord in prayer!
Can we find a friend so faithful
Who will all our sorrows share?
Jesus knows our every weakness;
take it to the Lord in prayer!*

*Are we weak and heavy laden,
cumbered with a load of care?
Precious Savior, still our refuge
take it to the Lord in prayer!
Do your friends despise, forsake you?
Take it to the Lord in prayer!
In His arms he’ll take and shield you
you will find a solace there.*

Koh Ai Jin
Holland Village Methodist Church





Being Fools for God

(1 Corinthians 3:18-20)

1 Corinthians 3:18 “Do not deceive yourselves. If any of you think you are wise by the standards of this age, you should become “fools” so that you may become wise.”

The Oxford Dictionary explains fool or foolishness as “behaviour that shows a lack of good sense or judgement.” The synonym for “fool” is “stupidity” or “a person who acts unwisely or imprudently”.

The Bible speaks about two kinds of fools – an unwise fool and a wise fool.

A wise fool is someone who believes in God and follows His Words, whereas the unwise fool is someone who follows his own will.

“The unwise fool”.

1) An agnostic Fool

Psalm 14:1 – *“The fool says in his heart, there is no God.”*

Psalm 53:1 – *“They are corrupt, their deeds are vile; there is no one who does good.”*

An atheist says in his heart that there is no God and lives his life as he deems fit.





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2) An ignorant Fool

Proverbs 1:7 – "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge but fools despise wisdom and discipline".

An ignorant fool is someone who rejects the teaching of the Word of God.

3) A mocking Fool

Proverbs 14:9 – "Fools mock at making amends for sin, but goodwill is found among the upright".

A fool is someone who keeps living in sin and is not willing to give up his sinful life and allow the blood of Christ to cleanse him. The Bible says the wages of sin is death and your sin will find you out. We can hide our sins from our loved ones but not from God.

4) A slandering Fool

Proverbs 10:18 – "He who conceals his hatred has lying lips, and whoever spreads slander is a fool."

God says we are foolish when we slander another person's character, gossip and murder others with our tongues. Therefore, let us be careful to always speak the truth and not spread lies.





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5) A covetous Fool

Luke 12:13-21 – In *Parable of the Rich Fool*, he stores up riches for his own enjoyment without realising that his life can be taken by God and he will not be able to enjoy all his wealth.

A fool is rich in the world’s eyes but not rich in God. Material wealth cannot bring us happiness and contentment. Only knowing Jesus and his purpose for our life can bring us contentment.

“The Wise Fool”

Fools for the Gospel’s sake

1 Corinthians 1:18 says, *“For the message of the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God.”*

Being fools for God means accepting and believing that Christ died for me on the cross.

He saved me from the power of darkness and brought me into His wonderful light.





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God has a plan for my life. Being fools for God means one is willing to forgo worldly fame or wealth to serve Him in any God-given ministry or to serve in the mission field and also to share His wealth to bless the work of God in the local church, the community or abroad. We are not afraid to share the Gospel despite the fact that people may reject, persecute or mock at us.

Our lives are purchased by the blood of Christ. Therefore, we should live a life pleasing to Him, acknowledging Him in all that we do by recognising that our talents, wealth and all that we have, comes from God.

Jim Elliot said, “He is no fool who gives what he cannot keep to gain that which he cannot lose.”

Therefore, let us search our hearts as we come before God and let us ask ourselves, “Which category of a fool am I ?” May God speak to us today.

Julie Alegesan
Kampong Kapor Methodist Church
Tamil Ministry





Renewing the Mind (Romans 12:2)

Romans 12:2 “Do not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God’s will is—His good, pleasing and perfect will.”

The pattern of this world makes us always to compare and not to be contented. How is this possible?

The eye is the lamp of the body (Matthew 6:22a). If our eyes keep taking in glossy, airbrushed advertisements, if our fingers wander to shopping sites or our feet to shopping malls, it will be hard to stave off the desire to buy things we don’t really need

Mothers of young children are particularly vulnerable to the pattern of this world. They shuttle between this enrichment class or that tuition, this activity or that competition. There is no end. If we are in chat groups or social groups where this is what is always talked about, we can end up feeling anxious, dissatisfied and guilty. A comparative spirit can make us focus on what our children are *doing* or what we are *doing* for our children and can rob us of the joy of just *being with* our children.





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Who will rescue us? Thanks be to God who delivers us through Jesus Christ our Lord! (Romans 7:24) Christians can be free from the pattern of this world! As followers of Jesus, purchased by His blood from slavery to sin, we have His Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit enables us to be transformed by the renewing of our minds... if we let Him. How do we do this?

One way is to seek out those who are following Jesus (1 Cor 11:1). We can ask God to open our eyes to see His humble saints and follow their example.

All around us, we can find women who love the Lord, who live simply and who are humble like Jesus. They follow Him in how they care for their family, extend kindness to others, use their gifts of administration, cooking, teaching and so on to bless others.

In my own experience, these God-loving women belong to a different generation – they are either younger or older than me.





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They may be single or married and may have different life experiences and all of them are also far from perfect. But every one of them has blessed me greatly simply because they live with their eyes on Jesus.

If you are still searching for such friends, ask Jesus to send them into your life. Through the example and friendship of women who love the Lord, we will find that our minds are renewed and we experience what it is to know God’s good, pleasing and perfect will.

Lucy Toh
Living Waters Methodist Church





Listening First And Then Applying Wisdom (Proverbs 2:1-8)

Proverbs 2:8 "For He guards the course of the just and protects the way of His faithful ones."

The art of listening is something many of us may not be good at. We think we may be good at listening, especially when it comes to gossip or the hottest news. But many of us hear but do not truly listen. True listening requires understanding. In social contexts, some may call it reading between the lines. But Proverbs goes further to explain that we ought to listen and "tune (our) ear to wisdom" (Proverbs 2:2).

Tuning our ears towards God's wisdom means to filter out the noise of the world, to remove our own judgement and perception. Often, it also means that we need to hear the unpleasant things that we may not enjoy. When God reveals our shortfalls, our sin and our wrongdoings, we may find ourselves struggling to accept the truth.

Personally, I do not like it when my husband points out my shortfalls, even when he is right. At times, I might even find myself changing his words to fit my own narrative, just to prove a point. Over time, as I reflected, I was reminded that I ought not to jump to conclusions and respond in haste, but to prayerfully seek God and respond in a Christ-like manner. perhaps even keeping silent.





Listening First And Then Applying Wisdom (Proverbs 2:1-8)

Proverbs 2:8 “For He guards the course of the just and protects the way of His faithful ones.”

Even King Solomon, the author of Proverbs, acknowledged that true understanding may not come immediately to us. We need to seek godly wisdom to view situations through God’s eyes. When we struggle to understand something, we should turn to Christ. As we pursue Him fervently in our quiet moments, and in His word, we find clarity and wisdom.

When we perceive someone with wisdom, we see someone who is humble, slow to react, full of mercy and pure. These qualities are desired by many. But few of us live up to the mark. In a world that is filled with self-centredness, pride and evil thoughts, we find it hard to exercise godly wisdom, especially when it requires our actions and words to go against societal norms.

Have you ever done something that was out of the norm or not what you were used to? It might be as though something or someone compelled you to act out of character? I have had a few of such encounters, when I felt God leading me to do something that I normally would not do. It could be something small like making a detour to get something for a colleague or to send a word of





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encouragement to a friend.

We may not always know the outcome of our words and actions, but I believe that when we allow God to lead us, and we follow His directions, it is His way of protecting us and guiding our course. When we incline our ears to listen to God, He will certainly speak to us and direct our footsteps.

When our vision is clouded by our emotions, and when we act in a manner that is not Christ-like, may we turn to God and apply His wisdom. Similarly, we may sometimes see people, even fellow Christians, behaving in ways that are ungodly. It can be hard to understand why they would say hurtful words without careful consideration. This is when we extend grace and forgiveness. The church does not need people who are keeping scores and bearing grudges. The church, being filled with sinners, needs forgiveness, understanding and humility.

May we grow to rely on Christ, the source of all godly wisdom and truth to guide our course and protect us.

Amelia Koh

Methodist Church of the Incarnation





Benefitting from Wisdom

(Ecclesiastes 7:11-12)

Ecclesiastes 7:11 “Wisdom, like an inheritance, is a good thing and benefits those who see the sun.”

To inherit wealth and riches is a good thing. God is never against Christians becoming rich as in Deuteronomy 8:18, God said, ‘You shall remember the Lord your God, for it is he who gives you power to get wealth...’

But God is against those who pursue wealth at the expense of pursuing God, and their attachment to money and possessions, rather than their dependence on God.

In Ecclesiastes 7:11-12, both inheritance or wealth and Wisdom are considered good things to possess. Wisdom is described in the different scripture versions as follows:

1. Protection – protects you, knowledge with good sense will lead to life (CEV)
2. Defence – shields and preserves the life of him who has it (Amplified)
3. Shelter – preserves those who have it (NIV)

It is obvious that Wisdom is far superior to wealth. Wisdom protects, defends and preserves the life of him or her who has it. To desire for wealth alone is unwise. Without wisdom it is hard for one to preserve wealth.





Benefitting from Wisdom

(Ecclesiastes 7:11-12)

Ecclesiastes 7:11 "Wisdom, like an inheritance, is a good thing and benefits those who see the sun."

Have we not heard stories of those who suddenly became millionaires, either by inheriting millions or by striking a lottery? They feel much pressure to share their newfound wealth as suddenly they discover they have many newfound friends and distant relatives. You may have also heard stories of how some were swindled out of their wealth. It becomes a burden for those who strike rich suddenly as they do not know how to handle it. This wealth might bring them much grief instead of blessing. Without the wisdom to hold onto such wealth, they might squander it along the way. Their end may be worse off than their beginning.

How do we preserve wealth, you may ask? Godly Wisdom is the key. When you pair up Wisdom with wealth, you are a sure winner.

"The beginning of Wisdom is the fear of the LORD; the knowledge of the holy one is understanding" (Proverbs 9:10). Godly wisdom is the greatest treasure and is infinitely better than an inheritance.





Benefitting from Wisdom

(Ecclesiastes 7:11-12)

Ecclesiastes 7:11 “Wisdom, like an inheritance, is a good thing and benefits those who see the sun.”

When Solomon became King, God appeared in a dream to him and told him to ask for anything he wanted. God was so pleased that Solomon asked for wisdom to rule over God’s people that He gave King Solomon both riches and honour that he did not ask for.

If any of you lacks wisdom [to guide him through a decision or circumstance], he is to ask of [our benevolent] God, who gives to everyone generously and without rebuke or blame, and it will be given to him” (James 1:5).

Pursue after Godly Wisdom. It will not only preserve your life and your wealth, but Wisdom can guide you to create more wealth as you follow God. Wealth may follow after wisdom, just like how our shadows follow us wherever we go.

Suzie Quek
Paya Lebar Methodist Church





The Prerequisites For Building A Home, A Ministry Or A Church

(Proverbs 24:3-4)

Proverbs 24:3 “By wisdom a house is built, and through understanding it is established.”

Let us begin with a definition of wisdom. The Oxford Dictionary defines wisdom as the quality of having experience, knowledge, and good judgment; the quality of being wise. But what is wisdom in the Bible? What are the prerequisites to build a home, a ministry, or a church? Our foundation must come from the Word of God before we can begin to build, layer by layer, with the bricks of wisdom. We persevere through the building process with our daily relationship with Christ Jesus, who is our wise and authoritative Architect. We can seek knowledge from the world and its fundamental building principles, but our house must be anchored on the solid Rock of Christ Jesus. Wisdom is distinct from knowledge; one can possess knowledge without wisdom. However, through wisdom, a home is built, and by understanding, it is established.

It takes wisdom to lead and build a united, loving home that embraces the presence of the Holy Spirit. It requires





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much understanding, patience, and abundant love and forgiveness to make our homes strong. It takes knowledge to fill a home with rare and beautiful treasures. But it takes godly wisdom to integrate various sources of knowledge and experiences, in order to strengthen our vertical relationship with God, and our horizontal relationships with members of our family, ministry, or church.

James 3:17 describes the seven pillars of wisdom that God gives generously to those who ask: "But the *wisdom* that *comes from heaven* is first of all pure; then peace-loving, considerate, submissive, full of mercy and good fruit, impartial and sincere." In the Bible, the number seven often symbolizes fullness and completeness.

Juliet Ng
Pentecost Methodist Church



Attention: All Ladies

Please join us. To register please contact your local WSCS or click link: <https://tinyurl.com/2xca63xm>



TRAC WSCS WEEK OF PRAYER AND SELF DENIAL
CLOSING SERVICE

"Renouncing Worldly Wisdom, Pursuing Godly Wisdom" James 3:13-18

Date: 14 September 2024 (Saturday)

Time: 2.00 – 4.00 pm

Venue:

Living Hope Methodist Church
Level 3 Chapel
20 Tampines Street 33 (529259)

Speaker: Jemima Ooi

Jemima is a full-time missionary, currently working in East Africa (Congo, Rwanda, Kenya and Uganda); rebuilding refugee communities affected by war. Her heart is to see the afflicted experience the kindness of God.



With God's help the ministry has facilitated access to clean water and food security for thousands of destitute families. They have also constructed over 400 refugee homes and enabled education to over 1,500 youth



Giving has been the central focus of WSCS WPSD. WSCS women are encouraged to increase their self-denial through sacrificial acts to bless others. The offerings collected from the 3 Conferences are placed in the PSD Fund

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