



# Helping people encounter God in His Word



For use on Sunday, October 26, 2003

## Introduction

# 30

*Core Competencies  
of a follower  
of Christ*

### 10 Core Beliefs

TRINITY  
SALVATION BY GRACE  
AUTHORITY OF THE BIBLE  
PERSONAL GOD  
IDENTITY IN CHRIST  
CHURCH  
HUMANITY  
COMPASSION  
ETERNITY  
STEWARDSHIP

### 10 Core Practices

WORSHIP  
PRAYER  
BIBLE STUDY  
SINGLE-MINDEDNESS  
BIBLICAL COMMUNITY  
SPIRITUAL GIFTS  
GIVING AWAY MY TIME  
GIVING AWAY MY MONEY  
GIVING AWAY MY FAITH  
GIVING AWAY MY LIFE

### 10 Core Virtues

LOVE  
JOY  
PEACE  
PATIENCE  
KINDNESS/GOODNESS  
FAITHFULNESS  
GENTLENESS  
SELF-CONTROL  
HOPE  
HUMILITY

**This week's Core Competency:**

**Kindness/Goodness**

*I choose to do the right  
things in my  
relationships with  
others.*

## Reality Check: When Life Requires a Balance *Spiritual Intelligence . . . When Good Advice Isn't Enough*

"Look!" exclaimed ten-year old James, "There's Marcus. Let's go play catch with him and see if we can get him to run a pass pattern into a tree."  
Billy and Donovan, also ten-year olds, looked over at the Down's Syndrome boy playing in the sand.  
Donovan said, "Man, Marcus is so freaky. Look at him. His tongue is hanging out of his mouth. I just want to go over there and push it back in his mouth and slam it shut."  
"Why do you want to mess with Marcus?" asked Billy. "He's really nice and he's funny. Why would you want to hurt him?"  
James looked at Billy and said, "Why not? He's funny to watch when he runs and I bet we'd laugh hard if he caught the ball and smashed into a tree. You know he'd do it."  
Billy interjected, "Yeah, but that's not very nice."  
"Who cares?" said Donovan taunting, "Are you his mommy?"  
"No, I'm not his mommy!" exclaimed Billy. "Why pick on him? That's no fun."  
"Oh please. What are you, a sissy baby?" asked James.  
"No, I'm not a sissy baby," insisted Billy.  
"Billy's a baby! Billy's a baby! Waaaah!" cried Donovan acting like a baby.  
"I am not!" yelled Billy. "You stop it, Donovan!"  
"Make me, you baby," said Donovan who chanted, "Billy's a baby! Billy's a baby!"  
Just then Marcus walked up to the three boys and said, "Hi. What are you doing? Why is Billy a baby?"  
Donovan stopped chanting and said, "He won't do something we thought was fun."  
"What were you not going to do?" Marcus asked Billy.  
"Nothing," said Billy, "They are wrong, Marcus. It's not fun; it's mean."  
Marcus quickly said, "My mom told me that I should always be nice. She said 'Treat people the way you want to be treated.'"  
"You're mom is right, Marcus," said Billy. "That's why I'm not going to do what these guys want to do."  
"Oh," said Marcus. Then he asked, "You guys want to play?"  
"Donovan and I are going to play catch. You want to play, Billy? How about you, Marcus?" asked James with a mean glint in his eye.  
Before Marcus could say anything Billy said, "No, you guys go ahead and play. Marcus and I are going to play here in the sand. I think that is the *right* thing to do."  
James with disgust in his voice said, "Okay. You and your new friend can play dolls in the sand. Donovan and I are going to play football. See you, Baby." James and Donovan rode off on their bikes laughing at Billy and Marcus.  
Billy looked at Marcus and sighed, "Marcus, let's go play. We don't need those guys. Let's go down the slide."  
"Okay," said Marcus smiling as Billy and Marcus went running to the slide.

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**Observation**

What do you see?

**James 3:13-18**      *Two Kinds of Wisdom*

<sup>13</sup>Who is wise and understanding among you? Let him show it by his good life, by deeds done in the humility that comes from wisdom. <sup>14</sup>But if you harbor bitter envy and selfish ambition in your hearts, do not boast about it or deny the truth. <sup>15</sup>Such "wisdom" does not come down from heaven but is earthly, unspiritual, of the devil. <sup>16</sup>For where you have envy and selfish ambition, there you find disorder and every evil practice. <sup>17</sup>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. <sup>18</sup>Peacemakers who sow in peace raise a harvest of righteousness.

**Matthew 5:7-10**

- <sup>7</sup>Blessed are the merciful,  
for they will be shown mercy.
- <sup>8</sup>Blessed are the pure in heart,  
for they will see God.
- <sup>9</sup>Blessed are the peacemakers,  
for they will be called sons of God.
- <sup>10</sup>Blessed are those who are persecuted because of righteousness,  
for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

**Record your first impressions from what you read.**

 **Interact with the passages**

- Add the key information that comes from the James passage in the following chart.

	<b>Worldly Wisdom</b>	<b>Heavenly Wisdom</b>
<b>Heart Attitude</b>		
<b>Actions</b>		
<b>Results of</b>		

- In James 3:13 highlight “wise and understanding” and draw an arrow to “let him show it.”
- In Matthew highlight all the “blessed” and draw an arrow to each compliment. Then underline the reward each compliment will receive.

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**Interpretation**

What does it mean?

**Genuine godly wisdom and understanding is not so much what one intellectually knows, but it is how well one allows the Spirit to guide them to humbly interact and serve others.**

**Insights**

- In James 3:13 the term “wise” is the Jewish term for “teacher.” Jewish thought refers to someone who has a knowledge of practical, moral wisdom, based upon the knowledge of God. In Greek philosophy the word meant “theoretical wisdom.”

- The “show it” is a command.
- The term “bitter envy” is really “zeal” in Greek but refers to a fierce desire to promote one’s own opinion while excluding others.
- “Do not boast” is a command to not boast arrogantly and being a present negative command indicates a stopping of an action or prohibits the habit. “Do not deny,” is also a command and means “do not lie.”
- V. 15 the term “natural” means something that is unspiritual or pertaining to fallen human nature. (1 Corinthians 2:14)
- In v. 16 the term “disorder” can also mean “anarchy, instability, or disturbance.”
- “Pure” in v. 17 refers to “moral and spiritual wholeness or integrity.” “Sincere” also can be translated as “without hypocrisy.”
- In Matthew the “called” is a passive verb implying “being given a name.”
- The “who are persecuted” is a perfect passive participle and emphasizes the ongoing persecution and how it will continue.

### Answering Questions of Interpretation

How does one go about “sowing peace”? What does it really look like to be a peacemaker? Doesn’t it make sense that peacemakers would get peace back? Why or why not? How does peace raise up a “harvest of righteousness”? What does a “harvest of righteousness” mean?

Do the “deeds” reflect back to the deeds in James 2:14-26? James 3:13-18 implies “deeds” are being done, but are the people trying to draw attention to their own interests? How are the “deeds” currently being done in the church? What do we learn from the “but,” in v. 17?

If we compare the Beatitudes in Matthew 5 to the wording in James 3:13-18, what similarities do we find? What contrasts do we find? Are the words the same? Do they have the same meaning as Jesus’ meaning?

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### Application

What do I do?

Do I use “worldly wisdom” to promote my ideas or myself? What does it look like, a tantrum, bullying, bragging, etc.? When did I last use “worldly wisdom” to get my own selfish way? What is the outcome if I continue to use this ‘wisdom’ in dealing with other people? What does this use of manipulation do to my witness as a believer? How can I change my behavior and attitude to reflect Christ’s behavior and attitude? What do I sense the Spirit is asking me to do?

How do I become a peacemaker? Does being a peacemaker mean that I always need to compromise to make everyone happy? Why or why not? What does humility toward others and their ideas look like? What is the result of being a peacemaker? What role does the Spirit play in my becoming a peacemaker? What do I need to do to access “heaven’s wisdom” in my day-to-day interactions with others? What steps do I think the Spirit wants me to take?

## Correlation

How do we work this into our Home Group, Family, youth group, ministry, class, small group?

## Core Competency: Kindness/Goodness

**Creed:** I choose to do the right things in my relationships with others.

**Commentary:** When we were children we learned worldly ways pretty quickly. No one had to tell us how to try to get our own way. We all thought the world revolved around us and everything was created for our pleasure. Before we learned to speak we probably whined, threatened, or attempted to force others to do our bidding. Being children we found that if one way worked, keep on trying it until it didn't work any more. One of our favorite words was "Mine." Unfortunately, the worldly lessons we learned early in life tended to be ones we continued to use later in life, maybe with more sophistication, but similar. We learned new methods to achieve our selfish goals like using people's fears or lack of knowledge to our advantage. The more we manipulated the more we gained, or so we thought, until our relationship was damaged. One would think that the pain from the damaged relationship would make us rethink how we should interact with people.

To our great fortune Christ came to change our bedeviled obsession with seeing our selfish interests achieved. Through His selfless and humble sacrifice we were transformed to begin to love and seek the benefit of others. We were enlightened to begin to selflessly serve others and appreciate their unique and equal nature in Christ. Walking in the Spirit we can show genuine kindness and goodness even in the midst of disagreements between believers. This is truly a remarkable effect of the presence of the Spirit.

But even the most faithful of Christians can fall out of step with the Spirit and begin to seek their own way again. Upon doing so one sees a reversion to the same old tactics we used as a toddler, however more sophisticated, to get our way.

**Question:** Tell of a time that you used 'worldly wisdom' to try to obtain what you wanted. What behavior did you use to get what you wanted? What happened to the relationship when you did this? How do you plan to keep from using "worldly wisdom" in the future?

### **Kid's Corner – Kind and Good**

**Say:** We're going to talk about kindness and goodness. I'll read you something that happens and you tell me if it's kind or good, or if it's bad and mean.

1. **Someone takes your favorite toy and won't give it back.**
2. **Someone shares a candy bar with you.**
3. **Someone calls you a bad name.**
4. **Someone pushes you down to the ground.**
5. **You help someone clean up after playing with toys.**
6. **You let someone else choose what game to play instead of whining to play the game you want to play.**

God can help us be good and kind to others even when things don't go our way. We need to ask His Spirit to help us so we can act the way He would towards others. Jesus acted kind and good and so can we when we have His help.

**Song: God Helps Us (To the Tune of Mary Had a Little Lamb)**

God helps us be kind and good  
Kind and Good  
Kind and Good  
God helps us be kind and good  
So we can show His love.



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