



**James 3:13-18** - Do you want to be counted wise, to build a reputation for wisdom? Here's what you do: Live well, live wisely, live humbly. It's the way you live, not the way you talk, that counts. Mean-spirited ambition isn't wisdom. Boasting that you are wise isn't wisdom. Twisting the truth to make yourselves sound wise isn't wisdom. It's the furthest thing from wisdom—it's animal cunning, devilish plotting. Whenever you're trying to look better than others or get the better of others, things fall apart and everyone ends up at the others' throats.

Real wisdom, God's wisdom, begins with a holy life and is characterized by getting along with others. It is gentle and reasonable, overflowing with mercy and blessings, not hot one day and cold the next, not two-faced. You can develop a healthy, robust community that lives right with God and enjoy its results *only* if you do the hard work of getting along with each other, treating each other with dignity and honor.

## Icebreaker

When we can travel freely again, where would you like to go?

## Conversation Starters

1. Do you have a "strategy" in your marriage for how you treat your spouse? If not, why not? If so, what is it? If you don't have one, you probably have one by default ... think about how you treat each other, talk to each other ... what would you say your strategy actually is?
2. Read James 3:13-18 above. Which of the pieces of worldly wisdom leading to toxic tension do you sometimes pick up and live out in your marriage, friendships or relationships with your kids or parents? IE. Mean-spirited ambition, Boasting, Twisting the truth to make yourself sound wise. Trying to look better than others.
  - a. Can you see a pattern to this?
  - b. Is there something that your spouse or kids or parents say or do that trips your trigger in this area and sets you off?
  - c. How could you change this pattern starting with yourself?
3. Where have you seen the pattern of wisdom that comes from God lived out? Have you had the opportunity to witness it in someone else's marriage? Describe that to your group.
4. What is one area of worldly wisdom you could practice letting go of, and one area of wisdom from God that you could pick up and practice, starting today?
5. Which of the following practices would you embrace to live in transformative tension?
  - not needing all the answers
  - sticking with commitments (even when they are hard)
  - acknowledging I might be wrong
  - holding multiple truths (at the same time)
  - accepting uncertainty
  - allowing cherished ideas to be challenged
  - being open to Mystery
  - living without resolution

- living in the gray
- giving away the last word
- trusting God with outcomes