



Fresh Start: Wise cracking?

James 3:2-6 and Matthew 7:24-28

Discipline: Choosing what we want most, over what we want now.

Theology of Trying

The reason most of us fail is because we've decided to try.

- Trying is based on emotion and hope.
- Training is based on commitment and expects and prepares for difficulty.

Training vs. Trying

When we try...

- We quit when we feel like it - or an excuse comes that seems big enough to let ourselves off the hook.

When we train...

- We don't quit because we are prepared for adversity and we expect that any goal worth achieving takes effort and self-discipline.
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24 "Therefore everyone who hears these words of mine and puts them into practice is like a wise man who built his house on the rock. 25 The rain came down, the streams rose, and the winds blew and beat against that house; yet it did not fall, because it had its foundation on the rock. 26 But everyone who hears these words of mine and does not put them into practice is like a foolish man who built his house on sand. 27 The rain came down, the streams rose, and the winds blew and beat against that house, and it fell with a great crash."

28 When Jesus had finished saying these things, the crowds were amazed at his teaching, 29 because he taught as one who had authority, and not as their teachers of the law.

Matthew 7:24-28

13 Who is wise and understanding among you? Let them show it by their good life, by deeds done in the humility that comes from wisdom. 14 But if you harbor bitter envy and selfish ambition in your hearts, do not boast about it or deny the truth. 15 Such “wisdom” does not come down from heaven but is earthly, unspiritual, demonic. 16 For where you have envy and selfish ambition, there you find disorder and every evil practice.

James 3:13-16

Wisdom: Seeing life from God’s perspective - and putting knowledge into right actions.

Who is wise?

Who is wise and understanding among you? Let them show it by their good life, by deeds done in the humility that comes from wisdom. (vs.13)

1. Life in general.
 2. Specific actions.
 3. Attitude of humility.
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What to watch out for?

But if you harbor bitter envy and selfish ambition in your hearts, do not boast about it or deny the truth. (vs 14)

1. Bitter envy (undrinkable water) a self focused world.
 - anyone who disagrees with me is my enemy.
2. Selfish ambition
 - Doing something to get something.
3. Do not boast
 - Stop bragging about who you are and what you know.

God’s wisdom is not: Bitter, ambitious and arrogant

What’s the big deal?

15 Such “wisdom” does not come down from heaven but is earthly, unspiritual, demonic.

1. Earthly - perspective is limited to here and now.
2. Unspiritual - actions all relate to here and now.
3. Demonic - like the devil and his demons.
 - just like they want you to be.

The world, the flesh and the devil.

15 Do not love the world or anything in the world. If anyone loves the world, love for the Father is not in them. 16 For everything in the world—the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life—comes not from the Father but from the world. 17 The world and its desires pass away, but whoever does the will of God lives forever.

1 John 1:15-17

Why should I care?

For where you have envy and selfish ambition, there you find disorder and every evil practice. (vs. 16)

Disorder: (confusion) *akatastasia* - instability, chaos and confusion.

- The same word is used in chapter 1:8 (impact of being double minded)
 - It's used in 3:8 (the impact of an uncontrolled tongue)
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What am I looking for?

17 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. 18 Peacemakers who sow in peace reap a harvest of righteousness.

James 3:17-18

Pure: A pure heart.

Spiritual integrity and moral sincerity.

Actions that are consistent with a pure heart:

1. Peace loving:
 - Willing to bridge a gap

2. Considerate:

- Sweet reasonableness

3. Submissive:

- Not stubborn and teachable

4. Full of mercy and good fruit:

- Concern for people who are hurting and actions that back it up

5. Impartial and sincere:

- Laser focused and unwavering without hypocrisy

Personal Notes