

7. SOWING SEEDS OF PEACE

REFLECTION

Begin your study by sharing thoughts on this question.

1. Think of a time when you saw someone bring peace to a volatile situation. How did that person bring peace?

BIBLE READING

Read James 3:13–18 from the NCV or the NKJV

NCV

¹³Are there those among you who are truly wise and understanding? Then they should show it by living right and doing good things with a gentleness that comes from wisdom. ¹⁴But if you are selfish and have bitter jealousy in your hearts, do not brag. Your bragging is a lie that hides the truth. ¹⁵That kind of “wisdom” does not come from God but from the world. It is not spiritual; it is from the devil. ¹⁶Where jealousy and selfishness are, there will be confusion and every kind of evil. ¹⁷But the wisdom that comes from God is first of all pure, then peaceful, gentle, and easy to please. This wisdom is always ready to help those who are troubled and to do good for others. It is always fair and honest. ¹⁸People who work for peace in a peaceful way plant a good crop of right-living.

NKJV

¹³Who is wise and understanding among you? Let him show by good conduct that his works are done in the meekness of wisdom. ¹⁴But if you have bitter envy and self-seeking in your hearts, do not boast and lie against the truth. ¹⁵This wisdom does not descend from above, but is earthly, sensual, demonic. ¹⁶For where envy and self-seeking exist, confusion and every evil thing are there. ¹⁷But the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, willing to yield, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality and without hypocrisy. ¹⁸Now the fruit of righteousness is sown in peace by those who make peace.

DISCOVERY

Explore the Bible reading by discussing these questions.

2. How would you describe “worldly wisdom”?

3. How does Scripture describe God's wisdom?
4. Why do jealousy and selfishness cause confusion and evil things?
5. List some things that God's wisdom motivates people to do.
6. What happens when people work for peace?
7. How does a wise person resolve conflict?
8. What do you think it means to sow seeds of peace?
9. Why are people sometimes unwilling to work for peace?

PRAYER

Father, we don't always want to seek peace. Forgive us. Keep us from contributing to conflict instead of resolving it, for fanning flames of discord instead of spreading peace. Give us your wisdom, Father—wisdom to be submissive, merciful, and gentle.

JOURNALING

Take a few moments to record your personal insights from this lesson.

How can I bring peace to conflict at home, work, school, or church?

ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS

10. How does this passage challenge you to deal with conflicts in your relationships?
11. Why is it important for Christians to sow seeds of peace?

12. List some practical ways you can bring peace to a conflict.

For more Bible passages on wisdom and peace, see Psalm 29:11; 34:14; 119:165; Proverbs 2:6; 3:13; 4:7; Daniel 12:3; John 14:27; Romans 8:6; Philippians 4:7; Colossians 2:2, 3.