



**“But the wisdom from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, open to reason, full of mercy and good fruits, without uncertainty or insincerity.”**

**James 3:17**

## Reflection:

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The words of the service technician kept resounding in my ears. “Father, the OS of your laptop has crashed. Perhaps some files have become corrupted or some software bug or malware infection has caused the crash. So can you come and collect it tomorrow?” His comments made me aware of the need to keep not only my laptop but also the operating system of my heart clean and uncorrupted.

What is our OS (operating system)? St. James suggests that if our internal operating system (OS) is heavenly wisdom, qualities such as purity, peaceability, mercy etc., will reflect in our actions. It is when life’s challenges squeeze us that the essence of our internal OS is revealed. If bitterness, jealousy, division, or discord surfaces, it indicates the need to reinstall our OS and time for preparation for Pentecost is just apt for that.

The early Christian Church faced internal friction in Acts 6:1-7 when a dispute arose between Greek-speaking Jews and Hebrew-speaking Jews regarding the distribution of food. The apostles’ response to this internal problem provides valuable lessons on handling challenges through the use of wisdom. As we know, the gift of wisdom helps a person to see things from a godly perspective and choose godly solutions to problems.

Lesson one involves addressing the issue directly. The apostles didn’t avoid conflict, sit on it or ignore it but confronted it assertively, displaying courage and wisdom. They “summoned the body of the disciples and said it is not right that we should give up preaching the word of God to serve the tables.” This proactive approach prevented potential division and disharmony within the community.

Lesson two emphasizes knowing priorities. While addressing the problem, the apostles recognized their primary focus on prayer and preaching the word. Serving at the tables is also an important ministry but wisdom helps them to make the better choice. This awareness allowed them to delegate the task of serving tables to others, demonstrating the importance of aligning actions with heavenly priorities.

Lesson three involves wise delegation. The apostles said, “choose seven men who are filled with the Holy Spirit who are men of honour and reputation, that we may appoint this task to them.” Wisdom helps them not just to make a solution but an excellent one. This not only resolved the immediate issue but also provided opportunities for others to grow in leadership.

Lesson four underscores the significance of guarding one’s prime calling. The apostles delegated various responsibilities but knew the importance of the ministry of prayer and the Word in their lives. This principle highlights the importance of preserving time for personal communion with God, indispensable for effective leadership. It is this communion that helps them to grow in the mind of God. How focused we are in guarding our prime calling when innumerable demands are made for our time?

Lesson five explores the willingness to change structures for ministry. The apostles, ready for change, altered the structure to accommodate growth. This flexibility in response to challenges allowed the Church to flourish and disciples to multiply.

See how a potential discord gave way to peace and good fruits through the wise intervention of the apostles. The book of Acts goes on to describe how disciples like Stephen and Philip, chosen to serve at the tables, emerge as mighty missionaries later on.

As we prepare for the feast of Pentecost, let us earnestly desire a deeper experience of the seven gifts, especially the gift of wisdom. Our problems, when handled with the OS of heavenly wisdom, will, (to adapt a quote from Rick Warren) “turn our mess into a message, our tests into a testimony and our miseries into ministry.”

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