

Collateral Damage

Scripture Reading — James 3:13-4:3

Where you have envy and selfish ambition, there you find disorder and every evil practice.
James 3:16 —

In our world today, we don't have to look far to find pollution and all kinds of collateral damage from our modern "civilization." Besides making our water, land, and air hazardous for ourselves, we damage wetlands and fertile forests, threatening and destroying many species of plants and animals in God's world. Even in a place like Banff National Park in Canada, where special efforts are made to protect plant and animal life, the damage is alarming. Damage to creation tends to be a price of human "progress."

Today's passage from James speaks of the foolishness of worldly "wisdom," noting that wherever there is "envy and selfish ambition, there you find disorder and every evil practice." Abuse, broken relationships, economic woes, wars, pollution, and other damage to God's world—all find their root cause in selfish ambition.

What can we do to minimize these casualties? James points us to another wisdom, "the wisdom that comes from heaven." This wisdom is "first of all pure; then peace-loving, considerate, submissive, full of mercy and good fruit, impartial and sincere." With the mind of Christ we can grow in this wisdom.

Our world can be a much better place if we sincerely embrace the wisdom that comes from the Lord.

Prayer

Forgive us, Lord, for the selfish ambition that so often entangles our motives and actions. Help us to embrace the wisdom shown to us in your Son, our Savior, Jesus. Amen.

Devotion topics: [Life](#), [Christian Life](#), [Seeking God](#)

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