

**James 3:17** But **wisdom** which contains divine viewpoint is from above which keeps on being first and foremost **pure**: unalloyed, then (1) **peaceable**: inner tranquility of the soul, (2) **gentle**: equitable, impartial (3) **reasonable**: affable, (4) **full of mercy**: compassionate, (5) **good fruits**: divine-good production, and (6) **unwavering**: unbiased, impartial, **without hypocrisy**: with authenticity. (EXT)

**James 3:18** And the seed whose fruit is righteousness is sown in peace by those who make peace. (NASB)

1. This verse is an excellent summation of verse 17, but the English translation above does not provide the clarity that the Greek presents. Ergo, we must exegete.
2. In this context, the noun “fruit” is **καρπός** (*karpós*) which usually refers to the produce (pró-dyüs)<sup>10</sup> from plants or trees. However, it also has metaphorical meanings.
3. The one in this verse refers to the profit or advantage that one acquires from the production of fruit. Therefore, the meaning of fruit in this verse is illustrated by produce (pró-dyüs), which describes the agricultural products from the growth of fruits and vegetables.
4. Therefore, fruit may be defined as the effect or consequence of an action or operation, either literally or metaphorically, i.e., when a believer grows in grace that growth results in the accumulation of fruit, of divine thought from the Word of God.
5. The possession of doctrine in the soul becomes the soul’s capital for the exchange of ideas. Ergo, doctrine is the believer’s spiritual “coin of the realm.”<sup>11</sup>
6. The accumulation of a believer’s spiritual coin of the realm constructs, over time, an edification complex of the soul.

**Edify: to instruct or improve spiritually; to erect a house; to instruct and improve especially in moral and religious knowledge: enlighten, inform.**  
**Edification: the process of edifying.**<sup>12</sup>

<sup>10</sup> Produce (pró-dyüs): “Homograph: one of two or more words spelled alike but different in meaning or pronunciation” (*Merriam-Webster’s Collegiate Dictionary*, 11th ed. [2014], s.v. “produce.”)

<sup>11</sup> Ibid., “Coin of the realm. 1: the legal money of a country. 2: Something valued or used as if it were money in a particular sphere <information is the *coin of the realm* in the capital> (*Merriam-Webster’s Collegiate Dictionary*, 11th ed.).

<sup>12</sup> Ibid., s.vv. “edify,” “edification.”



7. Therefore, doctrine is produce that accumulates in the soul which results in an ever-increasing harvest of divine viewpoint that is classified by James as **δικαιοσύνη (dikaiosúnē)**: “righteousness.”

### **Principles on the Development of Capacity Righteousness in the Soul**

1. Capacity righteousness becomes available when the believer expresses faith alone in Christ alone. It is not operational at that point, but it is present in the soul for the purpose of its advancement.
2. The development of a believer’s capacity to acquire and retain the righteous standards of Scripture is accomplished by a system that includes this process:
  - (1) Confession alone to God alone of one’s personal sins.
  - (2) This results in the filling of the Holy Spirit Who is able to assist the believer in recalling his sins so they may be confessed to the Father Who forgives him of those sins.
  - (3) At this point the believer is qualified to listen to or study the Word of God under the Spirit’s teaching ministry.
  - (4) When consistently practiced, the believer’s soul is enlarged with an increasing inventory of biblical ideas that are gradually enlarged into eleven categories of systematic theology.
  - (5) As one’s doctrinal inventory enlarges, the capacity he possesses to retain and apply the Word of God to his life and circumstances occurs.
  - (6) This system, over time, results in the development of an advanced spiritual IQ and possession of capacity righteousness.
  - (7) Capacity righteousness is retained in the soul’s stream of consciousness in concert with construction of one’s edification complex of the soul.
3. The spiritual impact of capacity righteousness is emphasized by the ability to manage one’s relationship with other believers as well as unbelievers.
4. The mental attitude that is developed results in a relaxed mental attitude toward others with whom one is always fair, objective, tolerant, and respectful.
5. Capacity righteousness is the expression of one’s unconditional love toward others. Righteousness is one of the three components of one’s love for others.
6. Righteousness refers to the doctrinal inventory in the soul where immutable principles are located for recall and application.



7. Justice is a divine attribute, but for the believer it is incorporated into the soul as one's conscience. The Greek word is **συνείδησις** (*suneidēsis*): The mental faculty by which one distinguishes between right and wrong. For the believer, it is the mental faculty that determines the quality of one's thoughts, intentions, decisions, and actions.
8. These concepts in the soul of the believer must originate from the inculcation of Bible doctrine and retained in its norms and standards. In concert with one's volition, the believer transforms his decision-making process by allowing doctrine to reject previously held worldly ideas and replacing them with divine standards from Scripture.
9. As one's doctrinal vocabulary develops, the norms and standards of the soul are gradually altered by expunging negative ideas while aggrandizing positive ones.
10. This process is why I refer to the conscience as the Soul's Police Department. No believer is ever able to reach the level of absolute perfection in his decision making—that is why we have the problem-solving device of rebound.
11. Yet, as one's spiritual inventory advances, the stream of consciousness more efficiently selects doctrinal applications instead of cosmic ones.
12. As this process moves forward during one's spiritual growth, he eventually advances to the summum bonum of wisdom.
13. I would like to illustrate this advance by borrowing a phrase from James 2:8, "... the royal law according to Scripture, 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.'"
14. James points out that the Royal Law is dependent upon Scripture. And the primary Scripture he cites is, "You shall love your neighbor as yourself."
15. The verb "love" is the imperatival future active indicative of **ἀγαπάω** (*agapáō*). The future tense of this verb refers to a system of thinking which has to be developed over time by the refurbishment of the soul. "Love" gradually replaces human-, cosmic-, and egocentric-viewpoint with divine viewpoint.
16. Observe that *agapáō* is an imperatival future tense, thus a command to begin a process during which the soul is reorganized to emphasize grace-oriented standards from an inventory of doctrinal integrity.
17. This is a process by which the believer takes on the obligation to think externally rather than internally; to transform the soul away from being egocentric over to becoming altruistic.

18. The key doctrine to illustrate this transformation is to compare the process to that which eternally defines the mentality of God, i.e., His divine integrity.
19. The integrity of God is the love of God; the love of God is the integrity of God. His integrity consists of His righteousness which is inflexible and eternal. His standards are never altered and thus dependable, trustworthy, and therefore reliable.
20. In James's quote of Moses in James 2:8, he uses the phrase "love your neighbor." Again, it is an imperatival future that points the believer to a system that must be adopted, enhanced, practiced, and pursued to the point of achieving its intended objective which is wisdom.
21. Along the way through this process, the believer must maintain the policy of teachability. He must be willing to inhibit wheel-tracks of wickedness by replacing them through facilitation of wheel-tracks of righteousness.
22. Since we are fallen, with functional sin natures, and functioning in a fallen environment, we must also aggrandize our integrity with a police department, i.e., the principle of justice which for man is the invisible asset of a conscience.
23. When circumstances dictate, the believer must recall doctrinal principles, evaluate the idea from the conscience in light of the situation, and then apply the biblical solution.
24. It is this process that ultimately enables the believer to systematically apply the Royal Law: "to love your neighbor as yourself." "The verb *agapáō* is a mental attitude based on righteous standards in the stream of consciousness while the conscience critiques the idea from its inventory of norms and standards.
25. The end result is that one's decisions influenced by personal integrity in his stream of consciousness is certified by the norms and standards of his conscience.
26. This fulfills the obligations associated with the Royal Law: "You are to function with integrity toward others from the resources of divine viewpoint resident in the soul."
27. From this system, the believer advances in his capacity to apply righteous standards from his *kardía*. Consistent spiritual growth enlarges one's inventory of divine viewpoint under the supervision of the soul's conscience which functions as its justice department.
28. When applied toward others, this is referred to as the Royal Law.

(End JAS3-97. See JAS3-98 for continuation of study at p. 431.)

