

GLAD TIDINGS

“And we bring you good tidings of the promise made unto the fathers...” (Acts 13:32)

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The Genuine

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Things of value usually have a counterfeit. Money, because of its purchasing power, attracts the criminal activity of counterfeiting. If one can print out 10's, 20's and 50's and pass them off as the real thing, some will give in to the enticement of making a quick buck. Our government tries to make it harder for counterfeiters by changing the characteristics of our currency. The genuine money will have colored fibers in the paper, certain watermarks, and various distinctive details to counteract the efforts of the counterfeiters. Retailers are constantly bringing their employees up to speed with the characteristics of the genuine money so they can spot the counterfeit.

If we are characterized as being wise and full of faith and love, we would consider such a comment a compliment. “A good name is better than precious oil” (*Ecclesiastes 7:1*). We, who understand this truth, see value in having a good name, desire it and diligently guard it.

These valuable characteristics have a counterfeit. James offers the following characteristics

of genuine wisdom: “*But the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, easy to be entreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without variance, without hypocrisy*” (*James 3:17-18*).

A person may appear wise in a worldly way. He may possess secular degrees from elite schools earning him coveted credentials. He assumes sagacity, but no one can criticize his ways are feel welcomed to question his views without a cold war. He is wiser than all, and you will be smart to just accept it as fact. James characterizes genuine wisdom as “*easy to be entreated*”. A truly wise person is someone you can easily approach and with whom you can peaceably reason.

A man may manifest a “political” wisdom by using others to his own advantage (*Jude 16*). A pat on the back, or a flattering remark may move one to remember the timely praise when rewarding the next deal. This “worldly” wisdom is counterfeit of genuine wisdom for Heaven’s wisdom is “*without variance*” or impartial.

Faith, like wisdom, can be counterfeited. God commands us

to possess a “*faith unfeigned*” (*I Timothy 1:5*). Timothy, receiving teaching and surrounded by godly influence possessed a “*unfeigned faith*” just like his mentoring mother and grandmother (*2 Timothy 1:5*).

Such a faith is totally focused upon Jesus Christ and the truth of his word. We can “believe” that God exists, but not trust in Him enough to follow His way. We can say we have “faith” but genuine faith will always show it by works of obedience (*James 2:18-22*).

Love is easily counterfeited through words. But genuine love is manifested in appropriate action. We can say we love the Lord, but if we do not do what He says, our “counterfeit love” is brought to light (*John 14:15, I John 2:5*). We can say we love our brethren, but if we do nothing to help them in their time of need, we have counterfeited genuine love (*I John 3:17*). Love for brethren is to “*be unfeigned*” and “*fervent*” (*I Peter 1:22*).

Is your wisdom, love and faith genuine?