

## SERMON TAKE HOME-James 4:13-17 If the Lord wills

Building on the truths we learned last week, namely that God is sovereign in all things small and great

**13 Come now, you who say, “Today or tomorrow we will go into such and such a town and spend a year there and trade and make a profit”**

- Is this verse teaching that we should not plan, or that it is wrong to have a goal to make a profit in business?
- There is nothing wrong with making plans and having goals. What is wrong is if we do not consider some very important realities about us and about God when we are making these plans.

For instance, how we say what we will be doing tomorrow in light of verse 14? **“yet you do not know what tomorrow will bring.”**

- What James is pointing out is this-How can mankind make adamant statements about tomorrow when we do not know what will happen tomorrow? (Consider Proverbs 27:1)
- Consider the arrogance in the bold statements made in v13
  - **Today or tomorrow**-Meaning what? I (not God) say when things will happen
  - **We will go into such and such a town**-I (not God) determine where I should go
  - **And spend a year there**-I (not God) determine my days
  - **And trade and make a profit**-I (not God) determine the outcome of events
  - This type of speaking comes from an arrogant heart and it is arrogant speech. This type of speaking does not consider God, His sovereignty, His will and His glory.
  - As the people of God, we make plans, but we are not trusting in our plans but looking to God and acknowledging Him (and His glory in all things).
  - The lost world thinks and speaks like v13-Their mindset is “What will make me most happy?” without considering the truth of God’s sovereignty and all things working together for His will and glory.
  - V13 is a self-determining way of thinking, we are dependent people on a sovereign God

Also, we must realize the reality regarding the frailty of our own lives: v14 **What is your life? For you are a mist that appears for a little time and then vanishes.**

- Psalm 102:3, Job 7:7, Ps 39:5
- The point James is making here is this, knowing our frailty should humble us and cause us to look to God, our Maker and Sustainer in all things. How foolish it is for man (who is so feeble), to just assume tomorrow, and plan for the future without acknowledging and considering the Lord?

How does James describe the proud arrogant thinking and speaking in v13? V16 **As it is, you boast in your arrogance, all such boasting is evil**

- To not acknowledge God in our planning and to be presumptuous in our thinking and speaking is arrogant. Then when we speak about our arrogant planning and presumption, we boast in our arrogance, and this is evil

What should we do? V15 **Instead you ought to say “if the Lord wills, we will live & do this or that”**

- Again, James is not teaching us it is wrong to plan, but it is evil if we plan without acknowledging our frailty, our lack of control of the future, and His sovereignty according to His will. We could sum all that up by saying “If the Lord wills”.
- Examples in scripture of planning and yet yielding to the Lord’s will: Acts 18:21, 1 Corinthians 4:19
- Warning: One of the biggest mistakes we could make here it to think “All I need to do is add the four little words, “If the Lord wills” to my life, planning and speaking and then all is well.”
  - That is religion-You might as well say 10 hail Mary’s as well!
  - This isn’t about repeating words but about a heart issue.
  - If you are heart sees its own frailty, it your heart acknowledges you do not know what tomorrow will bring, if you heart knows God is sovereign over all things, and if it is your heart’s desire for “Thy will be done”, then your mouth will be in accord with your heart.
  - Focus on the heart, the words will follow!

Final warning: v17 ***so whoever knows the right thing to do & fails to do it, for him it is sin.***

- This is true contextually but also for all of scripture truth
- If you have ears to hear, and you have heard, then obey. If you do not, it is sin!