

Women's Bible Study

James 4:13-17

Boasting About Tomorrow

September 25, 2019

James 4:13 Now listen, you who say, **"Today or tomorrow we will go to this or that city, spend a year there, carry on business and make money."**

Proverbs 27:1 Do not boast about tomorrow, for you do not know what a day may bring.

Luke 12:18 Then he said, "This is what I will do: I will tear down my barns and will build bigger ones, and there I will store up all my grain and my goods."

Q- What kind of planning for the future is right?

James is saying, "Ignoring God's will is not only foolish because you are ignorant of the future, but it's foolish because you're so vulnerable. So, this attitude James notes is the foolish attitude of ignoring God's will all together. People conduct their whole life as if there wasn't a God at all. They don't even acknowledge God. It's not that they're angry, it's just that they're indifferent."

Q- Can we know God's will?

1Timothy 2:3-4 This is good and acceptable in the sight God our Savior, who will have all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth.

"If you haven't come to Jesus Christ to receive salvation from Him, you haven't done God's will. You're disobedient. You're living in opposition and rebellion to what the Bible says is God's will." *John MacArthur's Commentary*

James 4:14 Why, you do not even know what will happen tomorrow. **What is your life? You are a mist that appears for a little while and then vanishes.**

Job 7:7 Remember that my life is a breath; my eye will never again see good.

Psalm 39:5 Behold, you have made my days a few handbreadths, and my lifetime is as nothing before you. Surely all mankind stands as a mere breath.

Psalm 102:3 For my days pass away like smoke, and my bones burn like a furnace.

Psalm 144: 4 Man is like a breath; his days are like a passing shadow.

Isaiah 2:22 Stop regarding man in whose nostrils is breath, for of what account is he?

“Life is too short no matter how many years we live. Don’t be deceived into thinking that you have lots of remaining time to live for Christ, to enjoy your loved ones, or to do what you know you should. Live for God today! Then no matter when your life ends, you will have fulfilled God’s plan.” NIV Study Notes

Q- Have you taken into account the shortness of your life and God’s right to direct your plans? What must you do?

James 4:15 Instead, you ought to say, “If it is the Lord’s will, we will live and do this or that.”

Strong’s New Concordance Greek Dictionary defines will (thelema) as determination, choice, desire, pleasure. What one wishes or has determined shall be done.

Ephesians 1:9-10 he made known to us the mystery of his will according to his good pleasure, which he purposed in Christ, to be put into effect when the times reach their fulfillment – to bring unity to all things in heaven and on earth under Christ.

Acts 18:21 But on taking leave of them he said, “I will return to you if God wills,” and he set sail from Ephesus.

Acts: 17: 24-28 The God who made the world and everything in it, being Lord of heaven and earth, does not live in temples made by man, nor is he served by human hands, as though he needed anything, since he himself gives to all mankind life and breath and everything. And he made from one man every nation of mankind to live on all the face of earth, having determined allotted periods and the boundaries of their dwelling place, that they should seek God, and perhaps feel their way toward him and find him. Yet he is actually not far from each one of us, for “In him we live and move and have our being; as even some of your own poets have said, “For we are indeed his offspring.”

Acts 22:14 Then he said: ‘The God of our ancestors has chosen you to know his will and to see the Righteous One and to hear words from his mouth.

Proverbs 16:33 The lot is cast into the lap, but its every decision is from the Lord.

1Samuel 2: 6-8 The Lord kills and brings to life; he brings down to Sheol and raises up. The Lord makes poor and makes rich; he brings low and he exalts. He raises up the poor from the dust; he lifts the needy from the ash heap to make them sit with princes and inherit a seat of honor. For the pillars of the earth are the Lord's, and on them he has set the world.

Ephesians 1:11-12 In him we were also chosen, having been predestined according to the plan of him who works out everything in conformity with the purpose of his will, in order that we, who were the first to put our hope in Christ, might be for the praise of his glory.

Romans 8:28 And we know that for those who love God all things work together for good, for those who are called according to his purpose.

Colossians 1:9 For this reason, since the day we heard about you, we have not stopped praying for you. We continually ask God to fill you with the knowledge of his will through all the wisdom and understanding that the Spirit gives.

Romans 12:2 Do not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is – his good, pleasing and perfect will.

Q – Is saying “God willing” about every plan a guarantee that we have the right attitude?

Q; Does your will agree with God's will?

“Your will agrees with God, but in your flesh there is a disposition which renders you powerless to do what you know you ought to do. When the Lord is presented to the conscience, the first thing the conscience does is rouse the will, and the will always agrees with God. Look to Jesus and you will find that your will and your conscience are in agreement with Him every time. God is the source of your will, therefore you are able to work out His will. God not only expects me to do His will, but He is in me to do it.” *Oswald Chambers/My Utmost For His Highest*

There is no point in making plans as though God does not exist because the future is in his hands. Put God's desires at the center of your planning; he will never disappoint you. *NIV Study Notes*

James 4:16 As it is, you boast and brag. All such boasting is evil.

The New Strong's Concordance Greek Dictionary defines boasting (alazoneia/alazon) as pride, quackery; hence, arrogant display. Alazon means boaster and primarily signifies a wanderer about the country, a vagabond; hence, an impostor, one who is full of empty and boastful professions and only while in the company of others.

From a sermon by *C.H. Spurgeon* entitled: Boastings about the future are evil. "One man says about a certain matter, 'I will do it, I have made up my mind,' and he thinks, 'you cannot turn me; I am a man who, when he has once put his foot down, is not to be shifted from his place.'" Then he laughs and prides himself upon the strength of his will; but his boasting is sheer arrogance. Yet he rejoices in it; and the Word of God is true of such a one: "All such rejoicing is evil."

1Corinthians 5:6 Your boasting is not good. Don't you know that a little yeast leavens the whole batch of dough? Get rid of the old yeast that you may be a new batch without yeast - as you really are. For Christ, our Passover lamb, has been sacrificed. Therefore, let us keep the Festival, not with the old bread leavened, the yeast with malice and wickedness, but with the unleavened bread, the bread of sincerity and truth.

New Strong's Concordance Greek Dictionary defines leaven (zume) as sour dough in a high state of fermentation and was used in making bread. It required time to fulfill the process. Leaven paints the picture of being bred of corruption, coming from previous evil, and spreading through the mass of that in which it is mixed; and therefore, symbolizing the pervasive character of evil. It is used metaphorically of corrupt doctrine, of error as mixed with the truth.

"Paul was writing to those who wanted to ignore this church problem. They didn't realize that allowing public sin to exist in the church affects all its members. Paul does not expect anyone to be sinless-all believers struggle with

sin daily. Instead, he is speaking against those who deliberately sin, feel no guilt, and refuse to repent. This type of sin cannot be tolerated in the church because it affects others. We have a responsibility to other believers. Yeast makes bread dough rise. A little bit affects the whole batch. Blatant sins, left uncorrected, confuse and divide the congregation." *NIV Notes*

Q- How can we help those who deliberately sin, feel no guilt or refuse to repent? While believers should encourage, pray for, and build up one another, they must also be intolerant of sin that jeopardizes the spiritual health of the church. **Matthew 18:15** If your brother or sister sins, go and point out their fault, just between the two of you. If they listen to you, you have won them over. But if they will not listen, take one or two or three witnesses. If they still refuse to listen, tell it to the church; and if they refuse to listen even to the church, treat them as you would a pagan or a tax collector.

2Timothy 3:2 People will be lovers of themselves, lovers of money, boastful, proud, abusive, disobedient to their parents, ungrateful, unholy,

Luke 12:16 And He spoke a parable to them saying, "The ground of a certain rich man yielded an abundant harvest. He thought to himself, "What shall I do? I have no place to store my crops?" Then he said, "This is what I will do. I will tear down my barns and build bigger ones, and there I will store my surplus grain. And I'll say to myself, "You have plenty of grain laid up for many years. Take life easy; eat, drink and be merry

The word "wicked" is used of Satan who is *ponēros*, the Wicked One, the original sinner who sought to replace God. When you exalt your will over God's will, then you are like the wicked one. That's what God thinks of your boasting. *John McArthur's Commentary*

James 4:17 Anyone, then, who knows the good he ought to do and doesn't do it, sins.

1John 2:16 For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride, is not of the Father, but is of the world.

Luke 12: 47 And that servant who knew his master's will but did not get ready or act according to his will, will receive a severe beating.

John 9:41 Jesus said to them, "If you were blind, you would not be guilty of sin; but now that you claim you can see, your guilt remains."

The knowledge of good, without its practice, causes even the absence of the work which one could have performed to be a positive sin. *Darby's Commentary*

Yet the neglect of that which is in our hand to do-which we, perhaps, do not realize our capacity for, and that only through a spirit of self-indulgence or a timidity (lacking in self-confidence) which is not far removed from this- such neglect, how hard it is to free ourselves of it, and how much do we miss in this way of that which would be fruitful in blessing for ourselves as well as for others! *Gaebelein's Commentary*

"We tend to think that doing wrong is sin. But James tells us that sin is also not doing right (these two kinds of sin are sometimes referred to as sins of commission and omission). It is a sin to lie; it can also be a sin to know the truth and not tell it. It is a sin to speak evil of someone; it is also a sin to avoid him or her when you know he or she needs your friendship. We should be willing to help as the Holy Spirit guides us. If God has directed us to do a kind act, to render a service, or to restore a relationship, do it. You will experience a renewed and refreshed vitality to your Christian faith." *NIV notes*

Q- In what area of your life are you struggling to make the most of your time and leave the future to God?

Things to consider: attitude, time, money, marriage, children and health.

Heavenly Father, I pray for clarity and wisdom in what I say and do. Help us to surrender to your will, not ours, for you and your glory. Give us boldness and a serving heart that we be confident and willing to help others as the Holy Spirit guides us. Keep us ever mindful of our walk, confessing our sins and not giving in to a world of pride and boasting, but trusting in you alone. Father, thank you for your grace and mercy, in Jesus name I pray.