

**James 4:13-17 Effectual:
God Governs the Details, Including Our Plans**

Introduction: Planning in Life

1. Planning is Essential in Everyday Life
2. It is not wrong to plan
3. Failing to Plan is Planning to Fail

Main Point: Humanity apart from God is proud, boastful, ignorant of the future, and presumptuous about life. God is omniscient, sovereignly in control over life and death, and sovereignly in control over our activities and successes.

You Who Say... Arrogant, Evil Planning (vv 13-14, 16)

1. Human Pride
 - a. Five Activities are Mentioned
 - i. Planning the Day – Today or Tomorrow
 - ii. Planning the Destination – A Specific Town
 - iii. Planning the Time – One Year
 - iv. Planning the Purpose – Business, Trade
 - v. Planning the Results – Profit
 - b. Is this Wrong? James says planning is legitimate in verse 15
 - c. God makes war on our attitudes toward the future, self-sufficiency, presumptuousness, and pride
 - d. These individuals make their plans as if they are already accomplished – it is a done deal!
 - i. James calls this conceited and wicked (**v 16**)
 - e. James does not say profit is evil, or doing business is morally wrong – the Bible is Pro-Profit/Business
 - f. The audience leaves out important godly truths
2. Human Ignorance
 - a. God is Omniscient, We are Not
 - b. We are ignorant of Tomorrow, let alone Next Year
 - c. In ignorance we put ourselves first, above God and this is sin (Opposite of the Gospel – Jesus put God first and served His neighbor)
 - d. God calls arrogant those who assume they know what tomorrow will bring (**Lk 12:16-21**)
3. Human Life and Death
 - a. The Brevity of Life – The dew in the morning, the flower that fades, the mist that vanishes
 - b. The Certainty of Death – Humanity is frail

- c. The Brevity of Life and the Certainty of Death *Should* Humble Us
- d. God graciously gives us this text to humble us in order to have grace on us and exalt us

You Ought to Say... Humble, Godward Planning (v 15, 17)

1. The Lord is Sovereignly in Control of Life and Death
 - a. This should refocus how we speak about our future plans and goals
 - b. Example: Paul (**Acts 18:21, 1 Corinthians 4:19**)
 - c. God appoints our death (**Mat 10:28-29, Heb 9:27**)
 - d. Every breath, Every heartbeat is a Gift from God!
 - e. Society: I can do what I want with my body and my life
 - f. Christians: God owns your body and your life, we do nothing with it except His will
2. The Lord is Sovereignly in Control of Our Planned Activities and Successes
 - a. God permits and restrains our activities, and the plans and successes of our life
 - b. Self-Sufficient Independence ignores God and the reality of existence
 - c. God alone is self-sufficient and governs what we do and what we accomplish
 - d. Ignoring this is boastful arrogance & evil (**verse 16**)
 - i. There is a way to boast – in lowly humility we boast in our exaltation (**James 1:9**)
3. James instructs us to be Doers of the Word and Not Hearers Only (**verse 17**)
 - a. We are responsible to do what is written here
 - b. To understand we are ignorant of tomorrow, life is brief, death is certain
 - c. To understand God is Omniscient, in control of our life & death, our deeds and activities, and successes
 - d. To do so makes war on pride with a lowly heart that exalts Jesus Christ as Lord
 - e. To fail to do so, we commit the sin of omission