

The First Baptist Church of Columbus

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**Sermon Notes Outline
August 1, 2021**

T I T L E: PRACTICAL ATHEISM IN THE LIFE OF A CHRISTIAN

T E X T: James 4:13-17

The Christian life was never intended to be lived independently of the Lord, i.e. His will, in-put, consideration, etc.

However, practical atheism in the life of a Christian does the very thing that James says is sinful, i.e. attempting to live the Christian life without subjecting our plans to His will and ways. When we know the right thing to do and fail to do it, i.e. subject our plans to His consideration we sin.

I.THE PRACTICAL ATHEIST OFTEN PRESUMES UPON THE GRACIOUS NATURE OF THE LORD. V. 13

Such activity is presumptuous sin. Presuming upon the fact that God is gracious, kind, patient, or longsuffering and loving, etc.

- A. Such theology regarding the nature of God is correct in that God is loving, patient, kind, etc. but it is inadequate reflecting only a partial understanding of the nature of God.**

Perhaps the most dangerous expression of sinning presumptuously is presuming upon the fact that God loves mankind and concluding therefore man will be saved universally.

Or God loves me therefore I will be saved.

- B. The practical atheist fails to understand that God dispenses His grace not because Christians are “special in His sight” (they are –John 1:12) but because He is gracious and does not necessarily owe us anything except that which He has promised us but will dispense His grace toward us only because of who He is not because of who we are; thus His gracious response to our plans are not always guaranteed.**

Grace is not God responding to us favorably because He owes us something.

II. THE PRACTICAL ATHEIST OFTEN REFLECTS A SUBTLE KIND OF ARROGANCE ROOTED PERHAPS IN NATURAL ABILITY OR GIFTEDNESS FROM THE LORD THAT FAILS TO RECOGNIZE THAT HE/SHE ULTIMATELY IS NOT IN CONTROL. VV. 13 & 14

- A. There is a biblical truth that teaches that although God’s permissive will may be broad in scope and application it does not necessarily mean that the fulfillment of our daily plan is guaranteed.**

Proverbs 16:9 ---- The mind of man plans his way, But the LORD directs his steps.

Proverbs 20:24 ---- Man's steps are ordained by the Lord; How then can man understand his way?

Some of the believers to whom this epistle was written apparently believed that they and they alone would make their life plans. They would determine when they would go ("Today or tomorrow"), where they would go ("into such a city"), and why they would go (to "sell, and get gain"). Instead of looking to God for guidance in the process of planning, they acted as though God did not exist.

B. The transient nature of life this side of heaven should remind us that no one has the assurance of a long life therefore, "now" is the time frame for subjecting all our plans to the will of the Lord.

Throughout the Scriptures figures of speech are used indicating the brevity of life. It is like a "handbreadth" (Psalm 39:5), a "dream" (Psalm 73:20), "a shadow that declineth" (Psalm 102:11), "a flower" (Job 14:2), and like "grass" (1 Peter 1:24). James compared life to a "vapor," something that is visible for just a brief period.

III. THE PRACTICAL ATHEIST TENDS TO COMPARTMENTALIZE HIS PLANS SUBJECTING THE "BIGGIES" TO THE WILL OF THE LORD WHILE CIRCUMVENTING THE WILL OF THE LORD REGARDING THE "SMALL STUFF" NOT REALIZING THAT

GOD'S WILL IS NEEDED JUST AS MUCH IN THE MUNDANE AS IT IS IN THE EXTRAORDINARY.

- A. Trusting in our own talents or giftedness in initiating our plans is to neglect the will of God for our plans, mundane or extraordinary, and is arrogant and sinful.**

- B. Subjecting our plans to the will of God, mundane or otherwise, should be done not only because it is sinful not to do so but also because HE desires to be involved in our lives and knows what is best for us in all things.**

Conclusion: Lyrics of Frances Ridley Havergal:

Take my life and let it be
Consecrated, Lord, to Thee,
Take my moments and my days—
Let them flow in ceaseless praise,
Let them flow in ceaseless praise.
Take my voice and let me sing
Always, only, for my King.
Take my lips and let them be
Filled with messages from Thee,
Filled with messages from Thee.
Take my will and make it Thine—

It shall be no longer mine.

Take my heart—it is Thine own,

It shall be Thy royal throne,

It shall be Thy royal throne.