

Personal Study

JAMES PART 9 ARROGANCE / HUMILITY

"OUR VIEW OF THE FUTURE HAS GREAT INFLUENCE ON WHERE WE PLACE OUR ASSURANCE. JAMES URGES US TO HUMBLY VIEW ALL OF OUR DAYS AS LIVED UNDER THE SOVEREIGN WILL OF THE LORD."

To re-watch this weeks message visit our website



James part 9 “Arrogance & Humility”
Read James chapter 4:13-17

Introduction:

When it comes to making plans there are typically 2 types of people in this world:

1. **Planners** – You have a schedule for everything (it may even be color coded).
 - You list your tasks for each day
 - You schedule your meetings for each day
 - You know exactly what every minute of every day will look like.
2. **Free Spirits** – You take a more “casual” approach to planning.
 - You do not have a schedule. You may not even own a calendar.
 - You let each day unfold as it will.
 - You’re not quite sure what you will do each day.
 - You fly by the ‘seat of your pants’

No matter who you are, here is the truth: Not one of us knows what tomorrow will bring. Each one of us are totally and completely vulnerable to having our entire lives change (for good or bad) by outside factors that are completely **out of our control**.

James chapter 4 gives us insight on how we should approach our days, our plans, and our outlook on life. He is continuing his teaching from chapter 3 describing “false wisdom” and “true wisdom”. False wisdom is the misconception that “we” are the center of our life. That everything we do, say, think, and earn is for our benefit. True wisdom (Godly wisdom) re-directs our hearts. True wisdom brings us back to Jesus at the center of our life, rhythms, finances, relationships, etc. All for God’s glory and the good of others.

Under this pretense, James tells us that there are two options for planning our days and viewing our lives:

1. Arrogantly (False wisdom) or. 2. Humbly (Godly wisdom)

1. Arrogance:

When we view our lives through the lens of false wisdom, the result is an arrogant outlook on our plans. We fool ourselves into thinking that we know what the future will hold. Our confidence and hope in life then shift from Jesus to “me”.

James gives us two points of consideration from verses 14 & 16.

-The first is this: verse 14 reminds our hearts that we are temporal, finite, and not “all-knowing”. We truly do not know what tomorrow will bring! In fact, this is a generous statement from the brother of Jesus. The reality is that we do not even know what TODAY will bring. James paints a picture for us here. He asks the question “what is your life”? Our life is just like a “mist” (other translations say “vapor” or “smoke”). It is here today and gone tomorrow.

-The second is this: verse 16 reminds our hearts that when we follow the path of false wisdom our tendency is then to “boast” in our arrogant planning. Thinking too highly of ourselves and our ability to see the beginning from the end, making an idol of ourselves. James tells us that this kind of boasting is “evil” and sinful.

Thankfully, James does not leave us to our own power to fix our tendency to drift toward false wisdom and arrogance. But continuing his statement from verse 6 “but He gives us more grace”, James points us back to Jesus as the solution to our arrogant, idol making hearts.

2. Humility:

The alternative to false wisdom is always *Godly wisdom*. James gives us the solution to our drifting hearts, and that is the person of Jesus. Godly wisdom always places Jesus at the center of our lives, this includes our plans.

James gives a very practical outlook and application to re-orienting our hearts back to Jesus when considering our future and our plans.

Verse 15 reminds us that our lives are ultimately always held together by Christ alone. He is sovereign, ruling, and reigning over all creation. The right and worshipful posture of our hearts when considering our plans should begin with “if the Lord wills”.

This simple (yet profound) phrase points us back to Jesus. It reminds us how finite we truly are when we consider how great and all-knowing He really is.

Living a life in the direction of humility (Godly wisdom) gives us two things:

-Freedom

In Christ we are free to worship Him whenever we release the need to be in control of our plans and embrace the truth that the sovereign King of the World leads for His glory on a daily basis.

-A “know so” Hope

In Christ, we have a hope that is beyond measure. Our hope in Christ is certain and promised. When we release the need for complete control and embrace our sovereign Jesus as Lord over our life, we then experience hope on a deeper level.

When my life plans are governed by Christ, we are free to trust Him through all seasons of life, both good and hard.

In response:

Do you feel the need to control every part of your life? Are you fooling yourself into thinking that you can know with certainty that your plans and ambitions will occur just as you envision?

Our response to Jesus in this passage is just as James writes: To make the shift in our heart from arrogant planning to “If the Lord wills”.

What plans do you need to surrender before the Lord?

In what areas of your life do you need to see Jesus as the center?

Re-read James chapter 4.

Pray and reflect. Ask the Holy Spirit to speak to you and lead you into the Truth.