

Gods Will for Living James 4:13-17

Verses 13-14. Read. "Come now." That means, "Get this," or "Now listen." Or "Let me have your ears." James then identifies who he is referring to. Someone doing business. A picture of a typical Jewish merchant. He was involved in commerce, he was involved in trade of some sort, but he completely ignores God. There's no place for God in his planning. His agenda does not include God.

- The guy has the whole thing planned out. What is sinful about planning? You see, the issue here is not in what is said, the issue here is in what is not said; that's the implication. What is not said does reveal the problem, because there's no mention of God. This is the man/women who runs his/her own life, foolishly ignoring God and showing utter disrespect for His sovereignty.
- The first thing that makes this planning without God foolish is ignorance. You don't know anything about tomorrow. Proverbs 27:1, *"Do not boast about tomorrow, for you do not know what a day may bring."*
- When we plan, we must plan to allow for what God might do, and the Bible tells us we are foolish if we do not do so. The foolishness in this kind of thinking is to believe that we are in charge.
- If we plan our lives and do not include God, we cannot expect to have the best outcome. Proverbs 19:21
- John MacArthur said, "What a confidence it is to believe in a sovereign God who knows perfectly and with unerring accuracy every factor in the universe, and who is controlling them all to His own purposes and wants to make you a part of those purposes. So not only is it foolish to order your life, ignoring the will of God from the viewpoint that you can't control it, but it is foolish to try to live that way, because you're cancelling out the very thing which can give your life meaning, and that is the work of God in your behalf. And He alone is the one who controls everything."
- We are completely dependent on God whether we know it or not. How ignorant of us to plan without God when life is so short. "Just a vapor" gives clear indication of our fragility. Job 7:7, 9; 9:25, Psalm 39, 90, 102, and 103.
- **Read verse 16.** James rebuked those of his readers who were living with this God-neglecting attitude. They derived joy from feeling that they controlled their own destiny. Here is the picture of the self-made man taking credit for what God has given him ("you boast in your arrogance"). Boasting of this kind is unrealistic. It betrays an attitude that puts man in God's place. For this reason, it is "evil."

- “You boast,” literally means “to be loud-mouthed,” or “to speak loudly.” Someone who speaks greatly of themselves. Boasting or even bragging in other translations from the original. So, it’s the idea of standing up, opening your mouth, and bragging pretentiously about something. Proverbs 14:12
- **Read Verse 17:** Here is the person who believes in God, and believes God is supreme, and knows God has a will, and just doesn’t do it. This is not speaking of what we may not know. The text clearly states that this person knows. You might be thinking, so how do we know what God’s will is then?
- 1 Timothy 2:4; Ephesians 5:17; 1 Thessalonians 4:3; 1 Peter 2:13; 1 Peter 3:17.
- MacArthur sums these verses up, “God’s will is that you be saved. God’s will is that you be Spirit-filled. God’s will is that you be sanctified. God’s will is that you be submissive, that you be a model of virtue, no matter what persecution you might be under willing to suffer for the cause of Christ.”
- Doing these things outlined in Scripture means you are dying to self.
- If you want to live life the way God intended us to live it, then we put God at the center of all our plans.
 1. A true believer is the one who seeks divine counsel.
 2. The true believer is the one who has a heart to obey the counsel he seeks.
 3. A Christian accepts the lordship of Christ over all his plans.
- These verses show the foolishness of ignoring God’s will: Because of the complexity of life (v. 13), the uncertainty of life (v. 14a), the brevity of life (v. 14b), and the frailty of man (v. 16).
- **Let’s close with verse 15:** Read.
 1. Acts 18:21 – “but taking leave of them and saying, “I will return to you again if God wills,” he set sail from Ephesus.”
 2. 1 Cor. 4:19 – “But I will come to you soon, if the Lord wills, and I shall find out, not the words of those who are arrogant but their power.”
 3. 1 Cor. 16:7 – “For I do not wish to see you now *just* in passing; for I hope to remain with you for some time, if the Lord permits.”
 4. Phil. 2:19 – “But I hope in the Lord Jesus to send Timothy to you shortly, so that I also may be encouraged when I learn of your condition.”
- We, like Paul, must seek God’s will in all our plans. If we sense that He desires a change of direction, we gladly surrender and adjust course.
- Warren Wiersbe writes, “Paul did not consider the will of God a chain that shackled him; rather, it was a key that opened doors and set him free.”
- Trust in the LORD with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways submit to him, and he will make your paths straight” (Proverbs 3:5-6).