

Planning with Faith

Planificar con fe

How can we plan with faith?
¿Cómo podemos planear con fe?

1. Let's plan to speak with _____.

Planeemos hablar con _____.

James 4:11 (Santiago 4:11)

Galatians 6:1-2 (Gálatas 6:1-2)

Galatians 5:14-15 (Gálatas 5:14-15)

2. Let's follow the will of _____.

Sigamos la voluntad de _____.

James 4:15 (Santiago 4:15)

Ephesians 5:8-10 (Efesios 5:8-10)

Ephesians 5:15-17 (Efesios 5:15-17)

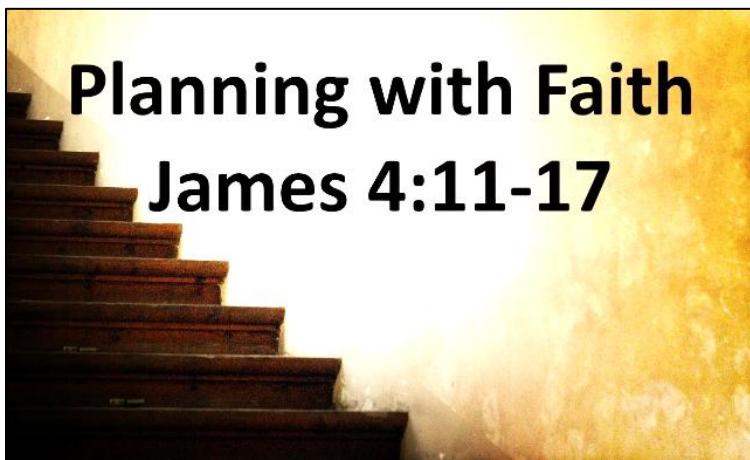
3. Let's plan to do good _____.

Planeemos hacer el bien _____.

James 4:17 (Santiago 4:17)

Galatians 6:9-10 (Gálatas 6:9-10)

Ephesians 2:10 (Efesios 2:10)



Life Group Discussion Questions

Week 8: July 13-20

James 4:11-17

The letter of James teaches us to be humble and refrain from boasting (1:9, 21; 2:5; 3:5, 14; 4:6, 10). James emphasizes this exhortation in chapter 4, where he addressed two problems. First, some Christians were judging others in a condescending way. Second, other believers were making plans to go places and get rich without taking God's will into consideration. These behaviors reveal an attitude of arrogance. These people were placing themselves in positions of authority that are reserved for God. Unfortunately, these problems have continued in churches down through history even to our own time. This passage will help us to be humble as we make plans with faith.

Read James 4:11-17

1. What does James tell us not to do in verse 11?

Gary Holloway writes,

“Slander” is a legal term today, implying telling a falsehood that ruins another’s reputation. The term here (καταλαλέω, katalaleō) is broader than that. Literally, it is “to speak against” or “talk down.” One can tell the truth about others and still put them down...Unfair criticism and fault-finding are condemned here, not simply forming an opinion about someone... James himself has just called his readers adulteresses and enemies of God. It is not wrong to condemn others for their actions, if one does it out of love with hope for their repentance. (Holloway, 104)

2. How is speaking against a Christian, demonstrating a negative view of God’s law? (4:11)

3. Who is the one Lawgiver and Judge in verse 12?

4. What question did James ask his readers in verse 12? Why?

Kent Hughes observes,

Ignorance mars our best judgments. We can judge external sins to be sins, but only imperfectly. We certainly do not know what is in the heart of another. God, however, knows every subtlety. “Therefore, judge nothing before the appointed time; wait till the

Lord comes. He will bring to light what is hidden in darkness and will expose the motives of men's hearts" (1 Cor. 4:5). (Hughes, 175)

5. Who was James talking to in verse 13?

Holloway comments,

The word here for "carry on business" (*ἐμπορεύομαι*, *emporeuomai*, from which we get "emporium") is used only one other place in the New Testament, 2 Peter 2:3, where it is associated with greed. James may be correcting those for whom business has become too important. They may not be those who are already rich, but those who want to be (cf. 1 Timothy 6:9). (Holloway, 107)

6. According to verse 14, why is it foolish to make plans without considering God's will?

7. To what did James compare our lives? (4:14)

8. What should we say when we make plans for the future? (4:15)

Hughes writes,

The right mind-set—dependence on God—is more important than saying the right words. Despite this, the phrase has been immensely popular at different times in church history. The Puritans loved it and filled their speech and correspondence with the Latin equivalent *Deo Volente*, "God willing."

...*Deo Volente* is to be the constant refrain of our hearts as we conduct the affairs of our lives. "If God wills" must be written over students' plans—the choice of a life partner, future education, all everyday activities. Older people need to say from the heart, "If God wills, I will spend my time... If God wills, my children will become... If God wills, I will take up this ministry... If God wills, I will wake up tomorrow." All of us should have this heart attitude. (Hughes, 183-184)

9. What attitudes do people often have when they make plans without considering God's will? (4:16)

Charles Swindoll observes,

God governs all things, even the “mundane” daily decisions. He owns it all. The alternative to submitting all things to God is an evil, boastful arrogance—living life as if we are the masters of our fate or the captains of our souls (4:16). (Swindoll, 101-102)

10. What kind of sin did James describe in verse 17?

Holloway notes,

“Doing good” in the Bible often means caring for those in need (Galatians 6:9-10). James is concerned with care for orphans, widows, and anyone without clothing and food (James 1:27; 2:15). He might, therefore, be warning against making plans for tomorrow not only without considering God’s will but also without concern for the poor. (Holloway, 109)

11. How can we correct people in a way that builds them up instead of tearing them down?

12. What responsibility does God want us to take in planning our lives?

13. How can we make travel plans that are pleasing to God?

14. How can we make financial plans that are pleasing to God?

15. Given how long you think you could live, how can you plan for the future with humility and faith?

16. What would you like to accomplish before you die?

17. What do you consider to be the greatest accomplishment in your life?

18. How can we gain a better understanding of God’s will for our lives?

19. What aspects of your future do you need to pray about this week?

20. How can you do the good that you know you ought to do this week?

Sources cited:

Holloway, Gary. *James & Jude*. College Press, 1996.

Hughes, R. Kent. *James: Faith that Works*. Crossway, 2015.

Swindoll, Charles. *Insights on James, 1 & 2 Peter*. Tyndale, 2014.