



The Book of
James

Planning God's Way

James 4:13-17

James at a Glance

- Written by the half-brother of Jesus
 - Ya'aqov (Hebrew) or Iacobus (Greek)
 - James is the English derivative of the Latin, French, and southern European derivatives of Iacobus, which is itself derived from the Hebrew
- Written around 50 A.D.
- 1st book of the New Testament in order of authorship
- New Testament's "book of wisdom" (Proverbs, Sermon on the Mount)

James 4: The Main Players

- James
 - Head of the Jerusalem church
- The Jewish Christian diaspora
 - Acts 8:1, 11:19

James 4: Setting the Stage

- James 1
 - Find the joy in trials and tribulation
 - Ask God for wisdom
 - Human anger does not produce the righteousness of God
 - Be doers of the Word, not just hearers
 - Reign in your tongues
 - Pursue pure faith – care for the lowly and keep yourself from being corrupted by the world

James 4: Setting the Stage

- James 2
 - Do not show favoritism
 - A violation of any part of the law is a violation of the entire law
 - Works are evidence of a living faith
- James 3
 - Teachers of the Gospel are held to a higher standard
 - Watch your mouth!
 - Can't praise God & curse people made in His image with the same tongue
 - Seek and display God's wisdom, not that of the world

James 4: Setting the Stage

- James 4:1-12
 - Battle the worldly desires that cause “fights and quarrels among you”
 - “Friendship with the world is enmity against God” (James 4:4)
 - Humble yourself before God, resist the devil, and “He will lift you up” (James 4:10)
 - Do not slander your brothers and sisters (James 4:11-12)

James 4: Setting the Stage

What is the result of living by the wisdom of the world, rather than the wisdom of God? What should Christians do when they realize that's the path they've been on? James answers those questions in Chapter 4. This passage continues to build on the end of chapter 3. Previously, James described the so-called wisdom of the world: figure out what you really want out of life (bitter envy) and plan to get it for yourself at any cost (selfish ambition). He described this earthly, unspiritual, demonic philosophy as the source of disorder and all sorts of evil in the world (James 3:15-16). ~ *Bibleref.com*

James 4:13-17

Come now, you who say, “Today or tomorrow we will go into such and such a town and spend a year there and trade and make a profit”—yet you do not know what tomorrow will bring. What is your life? For you are a mist that appears for a little time and then vanishes. Instead you ought to say, “If the Lord wills, we will live and do this or that.” As it is, you boast in your arrogance. All such boasting is evil. So whoever knows the right thing to do and fails to do it, for him it is sin.

What's a plan?

- Intention ~ “something that you intend to do or achieve”
- Arrangement ~ “a set of things to do in order to achieve something, especially one that has been considered in detail in advance”
- Document ~ “a drawing or diagram,” “a detailed proposal”

What's a plan?

- “By failing to plan, you are preparing to fail.” ~ Benjamin Franklin
- “A goal without a plan is just a wish.” ~ Antoine de Saint-Exupéry.
- “Give me six hours to chop down a tree and I will spend the first four sharpening the axe.” ~ Abraham Lincoln

What's a plan?

- “The time to repair the roof is when the sun is shining.” ~ John F. Kennedy
- “A man who does not plan long ahead will find trouble at his door.” ~ Confucius
- “Always plan ahead. It wasn't raining when Noah built the ark.” ~ Richard Cushing
- “It does not do to leave a live dragon out of your calculations, if you live near one.” ~ J.R.R. Tolkien

What's a plan?

- Etymology
 - Latin – planum (“level ground”), planus (“level”)
 - Late Latin – plantare (to plant, fix in place)
 - French – plane (“flattened out,” “leveled off”)
 - French – planter (“to lay, place, deposit, set down”)

Is Planning Unbiblical?

- Proverbs 6:6-8
- Proverbs 21:5
- Proverbs 24:27
- Luke 14:28-33
- 1 Corinthians 14:40

Is Planning Unbiblical?

- Great planners of the Bible
 - Joseph (Genesis 41:33-36)
 - The Proverbs 31 woman (Proverbs 31:10-31)
 - God Himself
 - Jeremiah 29:11
 - Isaiah 46:10
 - Luke 24:26, 44
 - Ephesians 2:10

So What was James' Beef?

- They left the Great Planner out of their plans
 - After the diaspora, Jewish Christians had gotten comfortable
 - Their focus shifted to personal gain over Godly aims
 - They prayed for God's favor over their plans (James 4:3)

“They were so like us. We are such children of our times that we cannot conceive it would ever be God’s will that we not become rich and prosperous. Sadly, we have often advised our children the same way: “Be sure you get into a profession where you will make a good living, son, so you won’t have to struggle like I did.” Some have even objected to their children going into Christian work because it is not lucrative. Despite Christian trappings and evangelical nods, we often live without serious reference to God’s will. This is practical atheism.”

~ Kent Hughes, “James: Faith that Works”

Planning without God

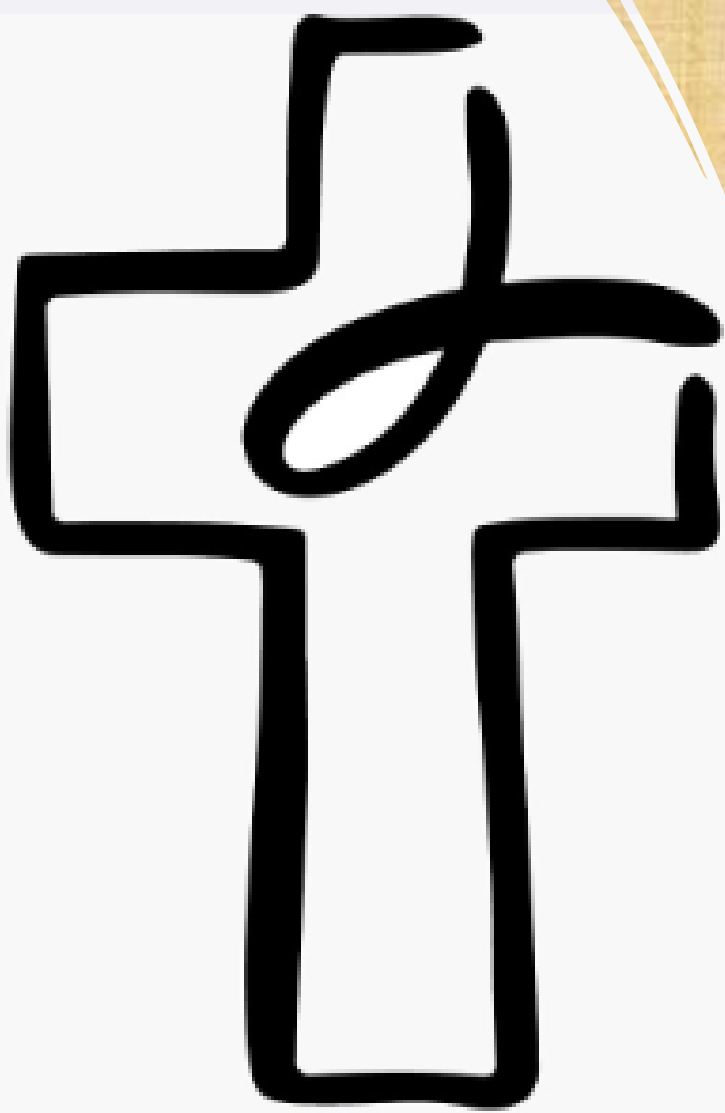
- Unless the Lord builds the house, the builders labor in vain. Unless the Lord watches over the city, the guards stand watch in vain. ~ Psalm 127:1
- I am the vine; you are the branches. If you remain in me and I in you, you will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing. ~ John 15:5

Planning without God

- Your limits
 - You can't see into the next day, much less the next few months or year (James 4:14)
 - You can't define the number of days you have (James 4:14)
- God is limitless
 - James 4:15

Planning with God

- How do we discern His will?
 - Study and obey His Word (2 Timothy 3:16-17)
 - Pray and ask God for help (James 1:5-8; 1 John 5:14-15)
 - Let God guide your heart (Matthew 11:28; Isaiah 59:8)
 - Seek Godly counsel (Proverbs 11:14)
 - Recognize God's control over everything (Colossians 1:15-17)



**IF GOD SAYS DO IT
JUST DO IT.**

So whoever knows the
right thing to do and
fails to do it, for him it is
sin. ~ James 4:17

Commit to the Lord
whatever you do, and he
will establish your plans.

~ Proverbs 16:3