

**Planning, Pandemics, and Providence / James 4:13-17**  
**Warren Boettcher / Sunday, July 26<sup>th</sup>**

**Passage Summary**

James provides a reminder to wealthy Christians that they are not of this world and that their life and future in the world is uncertain and brief. But rather, they belong to God and should consult God in their planning and business dealings, seeking His will, and they should not boast in their own doing and disobey the Lord, which is evil and sinful.

**Action Steps**

1. Consult the Lord with your plans.
2. Plan with an eternal perspective.
3. Do what is right unto the Lord.

**Scripture Meditation**

James 4:13-14

*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.*

**Message Takeaway**

1. How did you hear God speaking to you?
2. In what ways were you strengthened?
3. Where do you need help?
4. What can you apply today?

**Going Deeper in Application**

1. What are some ways that materialism and covetousness are evident in your own life?
2. How does greed blind us to spiritual realities? Where have you seen this show up in your own life?
3. What are the ways in which your plans haven't reflected the pursuit of God's will?
4. Why is it good news for you that God is in control of your future? How might this reality better impact your prayers and how you involve God more in your planning?
5. What does it look like for you to live out an attitude that expresses, "If the Lord wills, we shall live, and we shall do this, or that"?
6. As you meditate on this passage, in what ways is God speaking to you to do what you know is right unto the Lord?
7. How can you cultivate a greater dependence on the Lord and become more focused on knowing and doing the will of God?

**Further Study (Read James 4:13-17)**

1. What mistakes are the wealthy believers making in their assumptions, according to James?
2. What are the two cautions that James gives them? (Verse 14) Why is this significant?
3. According to Jesus, what certainty can those who follow Jesus have, and what is uncertain for those who choose not to follow Him? (Read Matthew 16:24-26)
4. Why does James call boasting in our plans to be evil and also to be sin? (Read Luke 12:13-21)
5. How can planning for the future be wise and honoring to God? (Read Matthew 6:10, 26:36-46)
6. What are some things that you know are clearly the will of God? What Scriptures would support your answers?