

# FAITH IN ACTION

## *The Danger of Presumption*

### *James 4:13-17*

#### ***The Danger of Presumption***

***James 4:13 (NLT) 13 Look here, you who say, “Today or tomorrow we are going to a certain town and will stay there a year. We will do business there and make a profit.”***

- One of the key identifying marks of a believer is the desire to do the will of God
- When we are doing the will of God, we’re saying our lives subject to God’s guidance and direction
- There are several scriptures that support to prove this to be true:
  - **Psalm 40:8 (NLT)** <sup>8</sup> I take joy in doing your will, my God, for your instructions are written on my heart.”
  - **1 Peter 4:2 (NLT)** <sup>2</sup> You won’t spend the rest of your lives chasing your own desires, but you will be anxious to do the will of God.
  - **1 John 2:17 (NLT)** <sup>17</sup> And this world is fading away, along with everything that people crave. But anyone who does what pleases God will live forever.
  - **John 4:34 (KJV)** <sup>34</sup> Jesus saith unto them, My meat is to do the will of him that sent me, and to finish his work.
- Here in verse 13, James tells us to *look here*, pay attention to what he was about to say
- James says, some of you say, ***“Today or tomorrow we are going to a certain town and will stay there a year. We will do business there and make a profit.”***
- James paints a picture of the merchants that planned to travel abroad to buy and sell merchandise
- The merchants speak as though they have everything planned and under “their control”
- The merchants appear to be in “control” of:
  - the time – Today or tomorrow
  - the location – a certain city
  - their time table - we’ll stay there a year
  - what happens there – we’ll do business
  - the results - we’ll make a profit
- There is nothing wrong with making plans, everyone makes plans
- The problem with the merchant’s example in the text is that they made all these plans and *did not* consider God; they were not concerned if “their plans” were in God’s will
- Why don’t we acknowledge God when we lay out our plans?
- It’s because of our *presumption, arrogance* and *self-confidence*.
- We feel we are “perfectly capable” of handling our own lives
- It’s *presumptuous* to think we know what’s going to happen in the future

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- It's *arrogant* to think that that God does not to be acknowledged or consulted in our planning.
- It's *self-confident* to trust *only* in our knowledge, skills, and abilities
- Again, there is nothing wrong with making plans, but we must seek God's will and guidance, help, and care

#### ***The Future is Uncertain***

**14 How do you know what your life will be like tomorrow? Your life is like the morning fog—it's here a little while, then it's gone.**

- When we are presumptuous, we fail to recognize the uncertainty of life
- We can't know the future because our minds are limited
- We are completely in the dark about what may happen future
- That's how life is, we do know about tomorrow
- We don't know what our lives will be like tomorrow
- Not only is tomorrow uncertain, so is our lives
- Our lives are temporary at best, like the morning fog, it appears for a while and then disappears
- Life will come to an end
- In Luke 12, Jesus tells the parable of *the Rich Fool*
  - But look what it says in verses 20-21 **Luke 12:20-21 (NLT)20 "But God said to him, 'You fool! You will die this very night. Then who will get everything you worked for?' 21 "Yes, a person is a fool to store up earthly wealth but not have a rich relationship with God."**
- Planning for the future of our lives *without* planning for our *eternal future* is foolish

#### ***Submit to the Will of God***

**15 What you ought to say is, "If the Lord wants us to, we will live and do this or that."**

- When we think of how uncertain and how short life is, what should be our attitude about the future?
- Our attitude should be one of submission
- What we ought to say is, "if the Lord wills (wants), we shall live, and do this or that"
- This passage means we are dependent on God for two things:
  1. *We're dependent on God for life* – if the Lord will, we shall live
    - Whether we live or not and how we live is in the hands of God
  2. *We are dependent on God for all we do* – if the Lord wills, I shall do this or that
    - This means our plans are subject to the will of God
- Apostle Paul lived his life finding and doing the will of God

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- When he left the believers in church he planted in Ephesus, he said **Acts 18:21 (NLT)** *“I will come back later, God willing.”*
- To the Church at Corinth he said, **1 Corinthians 4:19 (KJV)** **19** *“But I will come to you shortly, if the Lord will, ...”*
- Regardless of what turns our lives may take, we are to consult God for guidance and direction **Proverbs 3:6 (KJV)** **6** *In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths.*

#### **A Challenge to Live What We Know**

**16** *Otherwise you are boasting about your own plans, and all such boasting is evil.* **17** *Remember, it is sin to know what you ought to do and then not do it.*

- If we are not submitting our lives and future to the will of God, we're boasting
- To boast means to be speak loudly or being loud-mouthed
- What's interesting about boasting, it's not done most *by what we say*, it's done *by the way we live*
- We boast because we want to be seen as better than or more successful than others
- What's worse is a lot of our boasting, we can't even deliver on
- But such boastings are product of our pride and arrogance; are evil in the sight of God
- Our life and ability to function in life all rest in the hands of God
- We should not be boastful, but humbly acknowledging and submitting to the will of God in all areas of our lives
- James concludes by saying it's sin to know what's right to do and not do it
- James is speaking to Christians, who should know what's right to do
- We tend to think and believe that only “doing wrong” is sin, but it's also a sin *not to do right*
- It's not just *doing* what we shouldn't, it's also *not doing* what we should
- Some sins are *sins of commission* and others are *sins of omission*
- What we “omit” to do may be as serious as what we “commit” to do
- The unpredictably and uncertainty of life should not make us fearful, but it should make us recognize what is good and then do it