



Sermon Discussion Guide

June 29, 2025 | James 4:13-17 | Garrett

SUMMARY

Big Idea: Faith that Works, Trust God with Tomorrow

In our passage, James confronts us with the sin of pride – this time as it rears its head in our presumptuous planning. James is not condemning business, travel, or even profit; rather, he is exposing a prideful heart that functions without thought toward God's sovereign rule. When we map out our lives with self-assured confidence, without reference to God's will or a humble awareness of our own frailty, we are living in functional atheism. James reminds us that our lives are but a mist – brief & fragile – utterly dependent on the will and grace of God, and invites us to entrust every moment and plan to the will of God.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Intro

1. Are you more of a planner, or more spontaneous, 'fly by the seat of your pants'?
2. When was the last time you made plans, and.. they did NOT go as expected? (humorous examples encouraged)
 - a. How did you respond?

Read James 4:19-17

3. What seems to be James' concern?
 - a. What is James NOT condemning? Why is that important to keep in mind?
4. How does this clash with our culture's emphasis on independence and ambition?
5. Is this a little issue for James, or a big one? Why do you think that?
6. Is this a little or big issue for you? How?
7. In verses 14-15, what two realities should we keep in mind as we make plans?
8. What does verse 17 address? How does this shape your understanding of the kind of life James is after in light of what he just taught us?
9. In what areas of your life are you tempted to plan without involving God?
10. How does this passage address both WHAT we plan and HOW we plan?
11. What do our calendar and schedules reveal about our hearts?
 - a. If someone looked at yours, would they conclude that you are seeking the kingdom first, or that you live differently from the world? Asked another way, Could your calendar be brought into a courtroom as evidence and "exhibit A" that you are a Christian?
12. Are you currently avoiding something God has called you to do, to keep in step with His Spirit and revealed will?
13. What would obedience to this teaching look like for you this week?
14. How does the gospel fuel a way of life that accords with what James is teaching here?
 - a. (think of Jesus' submission – for forgiveness of our arrogance, and strength to walk in humility)