

The Folly of Not Considering God **James 4:13-17 (NKJV)**

13 Come now, you who say, "Today or tomorrow we will go to such and such a city, spend a year there, buy and sell, and make a profit"; 14 whereas you do not know what will happen tomorrow. For what is your life? It is even a vapor that appears for a little time and then vanishes away. 15 Instead you ought to say, "If the Lord wills, we shall live and do this or that." 16 But now you boast in your arrogance. All such boasting is evil. 17 Therefore, to him who knows to do good and does not do it, to him it is sin.

James 4:13-17 (Phillips NT)

Just a moment, now, you who say, "We are going to such-and-such a city today or tomorrow. We shall stay there a year doing business and make a profit"! How do you know what will happen even tomorrow? What, after all, is your life? It is like a puff of smoke visible for a little while and then dissolving into thin air. Your remarks should be prefaced with, "If it is the Lord's will, we shall be alive and will do so-and-so." **As it is, you get a certain pride in yourself in planning your future with such confidence. That sort of pride is all wrong.** No doubt you agree with the above in theory. Well, remember that if a man knows what is right and fails to do it, his failure is a real sin.

To many people this may seem to be a small matter.

It does not to most to be a sin to live your life, even a good life without trying to take into consideration of leaving God out of it.

We think of sin as the things that we do not what we neglect to do.

We have the idea that we are free agents and all we need to do is give God a few trinkets along our way and everything will be fine.

But is much more involved in our lives than most of us know.

And God expects us to recognize that and to show that in how we plan our lives.

When we wake in the morning do we dedicate that day to the Lord?

When we make a life decision or change how much contemplation goes into it with regard to the will of God?

So let us look at this very significant passage today.

- I. Making plans
 - A. There is nothing wrong with planning.
 - 1. There are many passages that show the foolishness of not planning things out.
 - B. But we need to be careful when planning for God is the one who has the final say.

II. The problem with planning with out regard to God's Plan.

A. Life changes.

1. How can we be so confident to plan a year for five years ahead when we do not even know how tomorrow will turn out.
2. Many a plan that was made early in 2020 has come to nothing and failed.
3. Our situation is open for change any day, any hour, any minute.
4. Now we may not like that but that is the way life is.
5. Proverbs 27:1 (NKJV) 27 Do not boast about tomorrow, For you do not know what a day may bring forth.

B. Our life is like a vapor.

1. It is not solid like a rock.
2. It is not immovable like a mountain.
3. It is like a vapor that appears.
4. It can be clearly seen and photographed.
5. It can even be measured and analyzed.
6. But by its very nature it is temporary.
7. Life is temporary and we do not know how much so.
8. We count life by years but the Bible counsels us to number our days.
9. When we are young we think we have lots of time and when we get old we wonder where the time went.
10. Many early mornings I step onto my deck and look at the midst on the lake.
11. Sometimes it is light while at others it is heavy but each morning I know that its time is limited and soon the sun will rise and the midst will vanish away.
12. It is not meant to stay.
13. The Bible is filled with passages that deal with the fragileness of life.

III. Don't be foolishly arrogant.

- A. 15 Instead you ought to say, "If the Lord wills, we shall live and do this or that."
16 But now you boast in your arrogance. All such boasting is evil.

- B. That is what a person is who makes plans without taking God into account.

1. Luke 12:16–21 (NKJV) 16 Then He spoke a parable to them, saying: “The ground of a certain rich man yielded plentifully. 17 And he thought within himself, saying, ‘What shall I do, since I have no room to store my crops?’ 18 So he said, ‘I will do this: I will pull down my barns and build greater, and there I will store all my crops and my goods. 19 And I will say to my soul, “Soul, you have many goods laid up for many years; take your ease; eat, drink, and be merry.” ’ 20 But God said to him, ‘Fool! This night your soul will be required of you; then whose will those things be which you have provided?’ 21 “So is he who lays up treasure for himself, and is not rich toward God.”
2. ARROGANCE The alazō’n is “one who makes more of himself than reality justifies,” or “promises more than he can perform,” often used of orators, philosophers, doctors, cooks, and officials. A link with pride is sometimes seen; hence in Hab. 2:5 the alazō’n is one who does not trust in God. The term occurs in the lists in Rom. 1:30 and 2 Tim. 3:2 in its usual sense and with a religious nuance. This nuance is stronger in the case of alazoneía in 1 Jn. 2:16 (“thinking one can shape one’s own life apart from God”) and Jms. 4:16 (“thinking one controls the future”). [G. DELLING, I, 226–27] *Gerhard Kittel, Gerhard Friedrich, and Geoffrey William Bromiley, Theological Dictionary of the New Testament (Grand Rapids, MI: W.B. Eerdmans, 1985), 36.*

IV. Leaving God out of your plans is a sin.

- A. 17 Therefore, to him who knows to do good and does not do it, to him it is sin.
- B. The good that believers know they must do involves confessing dependence upon God’s will in everything they do. Is there not a close relation here with Paul’s principle “everything that does not come from faith is sin” (Rom 14:23)? *Kurt A. Richardson, James, vol. 36, The New American Commentary (Nashville: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 1997), 202.*
- C. This is America’s most pronounced sin.
 1. That attitude over the many years has lead us to where we are.
 2. At first it was neglect.
 3. And then it became a practice.
 4. Now it is the standard by which people are judged.
 5. That is why we are divided and people do not want to give a pledge to the flag.
 6. There was another time when this nation was divided.

Franklin's Request for Prayer

<https://www.americanrhetoric.com/speeches/benfranklin.htm>

delivered Thursday, June 28, 1787, Philadelphia, PA

In the beginning of the contest with G. Britain, when we were sensible of danger we had daily prayer in this room for the Divine Protection. -- Our prayers, Sir, were heard, and they were graciously answered. All of us who were engaged in the struggle must have observed frequent instances of a Superintending providence in our favor. To that kind providence we owe this happy opportunity of consulting in peace on the means of establishing our future national felicity. And have we now forgotten that powerful friend? Or do we imagine that we no longer need His assistance.

I have lived, Sir, a long time and the longer I live, the more convincing proofs I see of this truth -- that God governs in the affairs of men. And if a sparrow cannot fall to the ground without his notice, is it probable that an empire can rise without his aid? We have been assured, Sir, in the sacred writings that "except the Lord build, they labor in vain that build it." I firmly believe this; and I also believe that without his concurring aid we shall succeed in this political building no better than the Builders of Babel: We shall be divided by our little partial local interests; our projects will be confounded, and we ourselves shall be become a reproach and a bye word down to future age. And what is worse, mankind may hereafter from this unfortunate instance, despair of establishing Governments by Human Wisdom, and leave it to chance, war, and conquest.

I therefore beg leave to move -- that henceforth prayers imploring the assistance of Heaven, and its blessings on our deliberations, be held in this Assembly every morning before we proceed to business, and that one or more of the Clergy of this City be requested to officiate in that service.