**Making Plans**

*James 4:13-17*

**Introduction**

1. Generally speaking, we are a people who look to the future.
   1. What are we going to do?
   2. What could happen?
   3. What do we want to happen?
2. It is not wrong for us to consider these things. It is not wrong to make plans.
3. **However, like with everything else in our lives, God is the Governor.**
   1. What is the wrong way to make plans?
   2. **How does God want us to go about planning our life?**
      1. **(3:13-18)** – In the context of heavenly wisdom, God tells how we should be “Making Plans.”
      2. This all falls under the concept of ***“[being] doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves” (1:22)***. (*This is the focus of the Christian’s life. Every second, minute, hour, day, week, month, and year should revolve around being a doer of God’s word.*)
4. Making Plans **(cf. James 4:13-17)**
5. Presumption **(v. 13-15)**
   1. **(v. 13)** – it is not that making plans to travel, and make a profit is sinful, but the attitude in which it is done here is sinful.
      1. The context shows the one described is presumptuous in his actions.
      2. **He does not consider the brevity of life, and the fact that God is in control.**
   2. **(v. 14)** – Our lives will end how they began – suddenly, and without warning.
      1. Before birth, did you know when you would be born? Of course not!
      2. Before death, do you know when you will die? Likewise, of course not!
      3. **Just like a vapor appears seemingly out of nowhere, it will vanish suddenly into nowhere.**
   3. **(v. 15)** – Not a concept of everything happening according to a specially tailored plan by God for you, **but simple recognition that all things are out of our hands, and in His, and that our lives as such should submit to His control in everything – even simple plans.**
   4. ***“This is the day the Lord has made; We will rejoice and be glad in it” (Psalm 118:24).***
      1. **If the Lord did not make it, it would not exist.**
      2. **Because the Lord made it, it belongs to HIM. (And is in His control.)**
   5. ***Jesus “[upholds] all things by the word of His power” (Hebrews 1:3).***
   6. ***“And He is before all things, and in Him all things consist” (Colossians 1:17).***
      1. *The only power/ability we have to do ANYTHING comes from HIM.*
      2. **It is presumptuous, not only to think that will continue with us, but to use it without Him and His will in mind.**
   7. ***“They are presumptuous, self-willed” (2 Peter 2:10)***. (Gnostic false teachers)
      1. Why are they described as presumptuous? – Self-willed.
      2. **How does that look?**
         1. **Because they are self-willed, they do not consider the God’s law – they are unbridled in their lusts – running rampant, and doing what THEY want.**
         2. **2 Peter 2:10** – They despise authority in that they don’t consider what God permits and demands – they do what they want **(v. 12-16** – Depraved characters unrestrained by God’s will.).
         3. **2 Peter 3:3-7** – They assume they have all the time in the world. That Christ is not coming again. (That is presumption. That is sin.)
   8. Mentioned before was an extreme, but it is commonplace in the world.
      1. **Men live day to day without a thought concerning their mortality.**
      2. **They live day to day without a thought about doing what God wants them to do.**
      3. **Ecclesiastes 12:13** – we are here to serve God! (Every day should reflect this truth!)
6. Boasting **(v. 16)**
   1. This presumptuous attitude is boastful.
      1. **It not only disregards God, and assumes tomorrow*, but is predicated upon a false sense of self-sufficiency*. (self-sufficiency does not exist with mankind)**
      2. This is evil, James says.
   2. **Arrogance** – *alazoneia* – braggadocio, that is, self-confidence: - boasting, pride.
      1. Used in ***1 John 2:16 – “the pride [alazoneia] of life”***
      2. ***“the vainglory of life” (ASV)*** – vain (empty) glory.
         1. The concept that you have reason to glory or boast.
         2. **However, it rests upon nothing. Empty boasting. (Don’t have anything to boast about, but do anyway.)**
         3. ***“For if anyone thinks himself to be something, when he is nothing, he deceives himself” (Galatians 6:3)*.**
   3. **1 Corinthians 4:7** – Paul’s rebuke to the Corinthians for their divisive character.
      1. The one who goes to such and such a city and makes a profit has nothing to boast about before God. (**WHAT DO YOU HAVE THAT YOU DID NOT RECEIVE?!**)
      2. **James 1:17** – Everything good comes from God. **To leave Him out of the picture is a dastardly offence.**
   4. **John 1:1-4** – Everything that is – including us – without God, is NOT!
      1. **He made everything we have out of nothing. (Try to make something – can’t do it without God.)**
      2. ***“In Him was life”*** – **Acts 17:25, 28** – He gives to all, so He doesn’t need anything. ***However, in HIM we have our being, so we need Him – EXCLUDES ALL BOASTING!***
   5. ***“ALL SUCH BOASTING IS EVIL” (James 4:16b).***
7. Omission **(v. 17)**
   1. ***Therefore*** *– connects to previous thoughts. (It appears at first to be a random thought insertion, but it is closely related to the previous verses.)*
   2. **This negative description of planning in verses 13-16 leads logically into another transgression (***in addition to presumption, and arrogance***): Omission 🡪**
      1. ***“And whatever you do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus” (Colossians 3:17).***
         1. This does not just mean – make sure what you’re doing or saying is authorized by Jesus.
         2. **It also means – make sure you’re doing what Jesus has commanded you to do by His authority. 🡪**
      2. ***“But why do you call Me ‘Lord, Lord,’ and not do the things which I say” (Luke 6:46)?***
         1. Certainly, we aren’t to do something that is not authorized by Jesus.
         2. **However, we are also TO DO His POSITIVE commands He gives us.**
   3. The knowledge that something is evil has inhering in it the moral obligation to avoid it.
   4. **The knowledge that something is good has inhering in it the moral obligation to do it!**
      1. Thus, ***“to him who knows to do good and does not do it, TO HIM IT IS SIN” (James 4:17).***
      2. Many in their planning may make sure they avoid things that are evil, or contrary to the will of God.
      3. **However, many fail to plan according to what God expects them to do! (THIS IS SIN!)**
   5. **James 1:22-27** – We are to see what the word requires, and do it.
      1. NOTE: **v. 27** – both negative, **AND POSITIVE religion**.
      2. Don’t do the bad – keep unspotted from the world.
      3. **Do the good – visit orphans and widows in their trouble.**
   6. **James 2:14-17** – Faith without works is dead.
      1. Why didn’t the person ***“give them the things which are needed?”***
      2. We aren’t told specifically, but we do know HE HAD FAITH.
      3. **However, HE FAILED TO DO – OMISSION OF A POSITIVE COMMAND OF GOD.**
      4. THIS IS SIN.
      5. **Perhaps he did not have time because of his plans for the day? – we must plan around the will of God, and allow His will to transcend all plans.**
   7. **EXAMPLE: Planning a vacation** – do you plan it before considering whether there is a sound congregation to worship with on the first day of the week? Or do you plan first, then check?

**Conclusion**

1. We need to understand that our lives as Christians are just that – LIVES AS CHRISTIANS.
2. Christianity is our life. Jesus is our life. God is our life. HIS WILL IS OUR LIFE.
3. Every facet of our being is to be subject to God’s will. THIS INCLUDES OUR PLANNING.
4. **We must remember, (1) God is in control, (2) our lives are but a vapor, (3) everything we do must be predicated upon both the negative and positive facets of God’s will.**