The Book of James
James 4:13-17
T.A.G. Resource

13 Come now, you who say, "Today or tomorrow we will go to such and such a city, and spend a
year there and engage in business and make a profit." 14 Yet you do not know what your life will
be like tomorrow. You are a vapor that appears for a little while and then vanishes away.
15 Instead, you ought to say, "If the Lord wills, we will live and also do this or that." 16 But as it
is, you boast in your arrogance. All such boasting is evil. 17 Therefore, to one who knows to do
the right thing and does not do it, to him it is sin.

Topic: We do not know what tomorrow will hold for earthly life is transitory, but God's will genuinely is operable in our lives. This means that unspiritual rugged individualism is arrogant and must not be boasted about. If we know the right thing to do but do not do it, we sin.

James warns against practical atheism—living like God isn't involved in our daily decisions. What does a daily schedule or budget look like when it actively acknowledges "If the Lord wills"?

Verse 16 connects self-reliant future plans with "arrogance." Why is assuming control over tomorrow considered a form of pride or evil in God's eyes?

About what should we boast? (see Psalm 20:7; 34:2; Romans 5:11; 1 Cor. 1:31; Gal. 6:14)

Association:
In what areas of your life (e.g., career, finances, family plans) do you tend to plan as if you are in total control? How does James 4:13–15 challenge those habits?

Verse 17 highlights that knowing the good you ought to do and not doing it is sin. What is a specific "good" God has placed on your heart recently that you have been delaying or ignoring?

How does recognizing our life as a "vapor" change your sense of urgency regarding obedience, stewardship, and loving others today?

Guidance:
How can we practice saying "If the Lord wills" in a way that reflects genuine humility rather than just repeating a religious phrase?

How does one discern the Lord's will? (see Romans 12:2). How do you explain your process of renewing your mind and seeking His will?

Pray with and for one another.