

# James Series Going Deeper

## 5- Day Devotional “Living Under the Will of God”

### Week 13, Day 1: Planning Without God

**Primary Verse:**

#### **James 4:13–16**

**Reading:** James 4:13–16; Proverbs 16:1–9

**Focus Verse:**

“Come now, you who say, ‘Today or tomorrow we will go into such and such a town and spend a year there and trade and make a profit.’”

**James 4:13**

**Devotional:**

James begins this section with a loving but serious correction: “Come now, you who say...” He is calling attention to a mindset that can quietly take root in the heart of believers. At first glance, the people James describes do not seem to be doing anything obviously sinful. They are making plans. They are choosing a location. They are setting a timeline. They are preparing to do business. They are hoping to make a profit.

None of those things are wrong by themselves.

The problem is not that they planned. The problem is that they planned as though God was not Lord over their plans. They spoke confidently about where they would go, how long they would stay, what they would do, and what they would gain. But God was nowhere in their thinking.

That is what James is confronting. He is not attacking wisdom, diligence, business, preparation, or even ambition. He is attacking proud, Godless, self-confident planning. He is confronting the kind of heart that says, “I know what I am going to do. I know how it is going to work. I know how long I have. I know what the outcome will be.”

But James wants us to see that this kind of thinking is spiritually dangerous because it assumes a level of control we do not actually have.

We can make plans, but we do not control providence.

We can write things on a calendar, but we do not command tomorrow.

We can prepare wisely, but we cannot guarantee outcomes.

We can work diligently, but we cannot make ourselves sovereign.

This passage presses deeply into the heart because many believers would never say, “I do not need God,” but we often live, decide, build, schedule, and dream as if we do not need to actively surrender those things to Him.

James is exposing practical pride.

A person can believe in God theologically while ignoring Him practically. That is the danger. We can worship God on Sunday and then live Monday through Saturday as though our life, our business, our future, our family, our money, and our plans belong fully to us.

But true faith does not simply invite God into our emergencies. True faith submits every ordinary plan to the Lordship of Jesus.

The question James places before us today is not, “Do you have plans?” The question is, “Are your plans surrendered?”

**Reflection Questions:**

Where in your life are you making plans without truly seeking God?

Do you tend to pray before you plan, or only after you have already decided what you want?

What area of your future are you tempted to hold with a closed fist instead of open hands?

**Prayer:**

Lord, forgive me for the times I have planned my life as though it belonged to me. Forgive me for the pride of assuming I know what is best and the arrogance of moving forward without surrender. Teach me to seek You first, trust You deeply, and place every plan under Your authority. My life is Yours. My future is Yours. Lead me in Your will. Amen.

**Action Step:**

Take one plan, decision, or desire you are currently carrying and intentionally pray over it today. Do not just ask God to bless it. Surrender it to Him.