

James Series Going Deeper

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

Week 13, Day 5: The Evil of Arrogant Boasting

Primary Verse:

Reading: James 4:16; Luke 12:13–21; 1 Corinthians 4:7

Focus Verse:

“As it is, you boast in your arrogance. All such boasting is evil.”

James 4:16

Devotional:

James ends this section with strong words: “As it is, you boast in your arrogance. All such boasting is evil.”

That should make us pause.

James does not say this kind of mindset is merely unwise. He does not say it is just immature. He calls it evil.

Why?

Because arrogant boasting places the self in the position that belongs only to God. It acts as if we are sovereign over our life, our breath, our future, our success, and our outcomes. It is not simply confidence. It is pride dressed up as certainty.

This kind of arrogance can be subtle because it often hides under respectable language.

It may sound like vision.

It may sound like leadership.

It may sound like strategy.

It may sound like ambition.

It may sound like good business.

It may sound like responsibility.

But James looks beneath the surface and exposes the heart.

The issue is not whether we make plans. The issue is whether our plans are surrendered to God or built on self-rule.

Arrogant boasting says, “I will do this. I will accomplish that. I will make this happen. I will build this life. I will secure this outcome.”

Humble faith says, “By the grace of God, if the Lord wills, I will be faithful with what He gives me.”

That difference may seem small in words, but it is massive in the heart.

James has been confronting pride throughout this whole section. In James 4, pride shows up in worldly desires, spiritual adultery, conflict, friendship with the world, failure to submit to God, speaking evil against a brother, judging the law, and now planning life without surrender to God.

The common thread is this: pride keeps putting self where God belongs.

Self on the throne of desire.

Self on the throne of judgment.

Self on the throne of the future.

Self on the throne of life.

James is calling us down from that throne.

This is why humility is so central to the Christian life. Humility is not weakness. Humility is reality. Humility tells the truth about God and tells the truth about us. God is Creator. We are creation. God is sovereign. We are dependent. God is eternal. We are a mist. God is Lord. We are servants.

The arrogant life boasts in what it will do.

The surrendered life boasts in the Lord.

The life we want to live is not the life where we grip tomorrow in pride. The life we want to live is the one where God is leading us, lifting us, redirecting us, providing for us, correcting us, and ruling over every step.

This is the heart of James 4:13–16:

Plan humbly.

Live dependently.

Walk surrendered.

Remember life is brief.

Remember God is Lord.

Reflection Questions:

Where has confidence in your life become arrogance before God?

What success, plan, dream, or future outcome are you tempted to boast in?

How would your life change if every plan began and ended with surrender to the Lord?

Prayer:

Father, forgive me for arrogant boasting. Forgive me for the times I have lived as though my life belonged to me and my future was under my control. Humble my heart before You. Teach me to boast only in You. Let my plans, dreams, work, ministry, family, and future be fully surrendered to Your will. I do not want to live in pride. I want to walk humbly with You. Amen.

Action Step:

End today by reviewing your week, your responsibilities, and your future plans. Pray over each one with open hands and say honestly: “Lord, Your will be done.”