

### 5.14.23 / Submit to God / James 4:13-16

(1) We are the beloved of the Lord.

**In love** He created us / came to us / died for us / makes us His own –

(2) folding us into / transforming us by / sending us out in **His love**

(3) **By our love this world will** know that we are His / see Him in us –  
as He lives His life of love in us and through us, to the glory of God

We know that the book of James is unpacking the idea of living a Life of love... the last few weeks the challenge from James has been that our living a life of love involves **submitting to God...**

- Quarrels (fight to get what you want) – submit to God – submit to what He wants
- Judgements – submit to God - trust Him as the ultimate Judge
- Plans – **submit to God's – let go of ours**

(4,5,6) **James 4:13-16**

**What's so wrong** with making plans and making money?

What if I were to say, "I'm going to college to get a good degree that will secure me a high paying job so I can have a big house, nice cars, and a comfortable life." **Is there anything wrong with going to college to get a good degree? High paying job? Big house? Nice car?**

What if I were to say, "This summer, I'll go on a great vacation and enjoy the rest **I've** earned and the fun **I** deserve with the money **I've** accumulated. I've got it all planned." **Is there anything wrong with planning a great vacation?**

James says (7) **4:14**

**James** – that's harsh, I'm doing some planning. I'm being a responsible adult. How is this wrong?!

**How many of you plan to go on vacation this summer?**

**How many of your plan to make some money this year?**

I invite you to put down your defenses and really process this with me.

When I can put down my defensiveness for a moment, I can see that James is saying two things about the reader/listener of this letter: (8)

1. You're small.
2. You're not in control.

1. You're small

- Isaiah 40:22 – God sits enthroned above the earth and it's people are like grasshoppers.
- Psalm 39:5 – life is but a breath
- Job 7:7 "my life is but a breath" – **You're small**
- **Rope Illustration**

- Look outside - Size of me compared to earth

2. You're not in control.

- Big questions! Job 38: 4, 12, 16, 18, 32, 35, 39:1, 26,27.
  - Job's right to bring concerns. Small perspective.
- Driving / Think illness / natural disasters / others choices

When I look at scripture & life – Me compared to God

- God is huge – measures the oceans in His hand (Is 40:12)
- God is in control – think the questions just asked / Exodus

You are small.

You are not in control.

This isn't harsh criticism. This is an invitation to put confidence in the One who is huge and in complete control.

Yet, "as it is", James says... (9) 4:16

**To boast** (in its original sense) is to **put confidence in** or to **rejoice in**.

James observes people boasting in their arrogant schemes – putting confidence in / rejoicing in – their ability to **plan and make money**.

They are putting confidence in and rejoicing in the fact that they (as this dot) seem more important than these other dots. And if they exert the right pressure (and all the uncontrollable things don't get in their way) they *might* be able to control *some* things on this blue tape.

For these little dots to run around putting confidence in their plans rather than the plans of their loving maker who sees everything... is either foolishness, idolatry or both.

James isn't saying that planning is bad or making money is bad.

Placing your confidence and your joy in your ability to plan and make money... **that's what's wrong**.

Prov 19:21 says, "Many are the plans..."

Where in your life are you spinning your wheels trying to make your thing happen instead of asking God what His plan/purpose is? How gracious He is that...

Here's James's corrective advice: (10) 4:15

**James says**, what you should be holding on to, putting confidence in, letting set your course is... the **Lord's will**.

This begs the question: **What is the Lord's will?** (His want, wish, desire, choice) - **What is the Lord's will for me?** BIG question to land on with moments left in our worship service.

Usually we try to leap right to step 10. Forget about the introductory steps – we want step 10 - college, marriage, job. It may be the Lord's will...

I can't speak with clarity regarding step 10, but I can speak with crystal clarity regarding step 1. What is the Lord's will for you?

- Matthew 22:37-39: Love...
- Mt 16:24
- Is 66:2

That's God's will for each of us. [Not doing this and asking for God's will regarding what job you should take is like a two year old asking a Rocket Scientist how they get Rockets in space.](#) (interesting question – missing building blocks – not ready for the answer).

But this is what we do when we're not intently listening to God and following after Him and all of a sudden we want to hear very clearly from Him on a very specific matter.

I firmly believe that when we lean deep into this step – when we read God's Word, listen to God's Spirit and experience God's people – when lean into the things that we know are part of God's will, we will get swept into a movement of following God's will.

[Recommend \*Experiencing God\* by Henry Blackaby.](#)

If I'm leaning into the parts of God's will that I know (because scripture is clear about it)

- I'll find myself swept up in a stream that places **small** me into something sooooo large.
- While I'll be quick to recognize that **I am not in control** – I'll know with certainty that things are under control.

That's when I'll find that **I've submitted to God's plans and let go of my plans.** (11) / Time of prayer.