

Pride

In pride...

- ...we seek to determine the course of our future (4:13-17)
- ...we stand in independent judgment over others (4:11-12)
- ...we refuse to take our own sin seriously (4:7-10)
- ...we actively disregard the reality of Scripture and the impossibility of dual loyalties (4:4-6)
- ...we prioritize our own passions (desires, activism/zeal, ambition) over God, His desires and over others (4:1-3)
- ...we continue getting into conflicts with others, without considering our own responsibility in their existence (4:1)
- ...we fashion ourselves wise (or think we're doing what makes most sense) because we either know a lot or think we're following others that do (3:13-18)

Secular

"It is not their occupation, but their attitude, that has become secular."
(Blomberg, p. 207)

Perhaps, no other dynamic represents more tangibly enmity with God and, thus, friendship with the world than this: whose will is actually in the driver's seat of my life?

All such boasting is evil.

such boasting (cf. 1:9; 2:13 vs 3:14; 4:16)

is evil

- Because, if they *don't* say what they should be saying, it is sin (v. 17).

Whoever knows...

...the right thing to do
...and fails to do it

for him it is sin

How are you making plans for the future?

How do your plans reveal your heart's attitude toward God?

Sunday, June 22, 2025
Danny Capon, *Pastor*

PROVEN—The Letter of James
A Faith That's Practical, Prudent, and Patient
No. 19 | Not Boasting in Pride
James 4:13-17

Review

James writes, in the early years of the church, to help believers understand the dynamics of a proven faith—a faith that's practical, prudent, and patient in and throughout all of one's life, which includes:

Responding to Trials (1:2-15)

Responding to the Word (1:16-27)

Holding faith in Jesus Christ in a way that's consistent with true faith (2:1-26)

Showing true faith in Jesus Christ by demonstrating works (3:1-18; 4:1-12)

By taming the tongue (3:1-12)

By discerning who's wise (3:13-18)

By addressing the source of conflict (4:1-12)

By not boasting in pride (4:13-17)

What is James talking about in the passage before us (4:13-17)?

How should we understand this passage?

- This passage (4:13-17) is about making plans for the future (particularly, merchants seeking to do business and make a profit), and specifically about *how* we make plans, which proves to be morally consequential and reveals the fundamental orientation of our hearts and, thus, our perspective on life.
- This passage, though different from the previous passage (4:1-12), nonetheless develops its line of reasoning, but instead of addressing *how* we engage other people, addresses *how* we engage the future, with our tendency towards *worldliness* (ungodly) and *pride* (self-interest) near the center of both.
- This passage is structurally more closely tied to the next passage (5:1-6), as both passages begin the same way ("Come now...", 4:13; 5:1) and address two particular manifestations of arrogant living—self-determined living (4:13-17; e.g. the merchant) and self-indulgent living (5:1-6; e.g. the landholder).
- This passage can be summarized as follows: James is saying that (1) how you approach your life (2) is represented in the way you plan for your future, (3) which will be demonstrated in what you say and (4) will, thus, reveal whether or not your boast is wrong.

Not Boasting in Pride

No. 19

^{ESV} **James 4:13** 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"- ¹⁴ yet you do not know what tomorrow will bring. What is your life? For you are a mist that appears for a little time and then vanishes. ¹⁵ Instead you ought to say, "If the Lord wills, we will live and do this or that." ¹⁶ As it is, you boast in your arrogance. All such boasting is evil. ¹⁷ So whoever knows the right thing to do and fails to do it, for him it is sin.

How should believers make plans for the future?

By not boasting in our pride

What does this mean?

"Come now..."

...you who **say** [v. 13]
...instead of **saying** [v. 15]

Who is James talking about? (v. 13)

You who say,

'Today or tomorrow...

...we will go into such and such a town and
...(we will) spend (lit. 'do,' *poieo*) a year there and
...(we will) trade and
...(we will) make a profit'

What does this mean?

Is James against: making plans, doing things, making a profit, or going and staying somewhere (to do so)?

self-confident, self-determining

Why shouldn't they say what they're saying? (v. 14)

You do not know...

what tomorrow will bring
what is your life

^{NAU} **James 4:14** Yet you do not know what your life will be like tomorrow.

You are...

a mist
that appears for a little time and then vanishes (disappears)

What should they say instead? (v. 15)

You ought to say,

'If the Lord wills...

...we will live and
...(we will) do this or that

What does this mean?

The Lord's "will":

(1:18) *boulomai*, determines; (4:15) *thelo*, desires

doesn't overturn our planning, nor overturns our doing

"If the Lord wills":

submits to what God wants—and will end up bringing about—as it relates to my life and my plans for my life, which includes circumstances, other people...and "various trials" (cf. 1:2-4)

contrasts significantly with *not* saying it (v. 13)

- Who's all involved in the planning? "We" vs "The Lord"
- Who's "will" is actively operating (at the center)?
- What's assumed (or isn't assumed)?
- What's primarily focused on (or isn't focused on)?

"This perspective should add an element of contingency to all our planning—'if the Lord allows this to happen.' But it should also force us to evaluate our planning from a biblical ethical perspective—'if this kind of plan is in accordance with the Lord's will expressed in Scripture for his people.'" (Moo, p. 206)

Three Options:

"*Veni, vidi, vici*"
"*Que Sera, Sera*"
"*Deus volente*"

Why should they say what they should say instead? (vv. 16-17)

- Because, if they say what they've been saying, it is evil (v. 16).

You boast in your arrogance.

boast

arrogance