

## Remembering God's Sovereign Providence

James 4:13-17

### 1. **A Confident Plan** (v.13)

This is not a condemnation of wise planning in business or wise stewardship of what God has entrusted to us, for both of these are good and commended by God (Prov. 15:22; Luke 12:42-48; 14:25-32). James is addressing the folly of confidently planning while leaving no room in your plans or hopes for the overall plan of God (Eph. 1:11).

### 2. **An Uncertain Future** (v.14)

It is normal for men to behave as if the days in which they are living will continue in a consistent manner (Matt 24:36-39). The Lord is clear that while He knows all the days of our lives and exactly what He has intended for us, we do not (Ps. 144:4). The Scriptures instruct us plainly that those who fear the Lord ought to consider our current lives as fragile and fleeting (Ps. 90:12; 139:13-17; Matt. 10:28-31). Remembering this is helpful in the struggle against sin and in the pursuit of holiness (cf. 1 Cor. 10:13-14; 2 Tim 2:22).

### 3. **A Submitted Attitude** (v.15)

James is not concerned with the reciting of a religious catch-phrase but with the attitude and conviction of the heart. The Bible is full of men and women who could recite orthodox truth but did not live in accordance with it (cf. Mark 12:28-34).

There is a danger both in looking to God only for what He can do for us while we are alive (cf. John 6:26) as well as only looking to God for what He can do for us after we die and not trusting Him for today and tomorrow (cf. Matt. 6:11).

### 4. **An Arrogant Boast** (v.16)

Living in such a way as to not properly take into consideration God's right and ability to do all things according to His will is wicked. It is evil because of the inherent assumption that someone other than God Himself is able to cause things to occur (cf. Col. 1:17; Heb. 1:3).

### 5. **A Loving Warning** (v.17)

This is a proverbial statement that can rightly be applied to all things that God has commanded and that the Christian has been taught (cf. Lev. 19:15; James 2:1-9). The primary application of this, however, is for Christians to live and plan so as to be intentionally reliant upon God's ability and pleasure for what the future holds.