

James 4:13-17

Introduction:

1. Subjects previously covered in our study of James include:
 - a. "facing temptations" (1:2-18)
 - b. "hearing and doing the Word" (1:19-27)
 - c. "respect of persons" (2:1-13)
 - d. "faith and works" (2:14-26)
 - e. "a warning for teachers" (3:1)
 - f. "use of the tongue" (3:2-12)
 - g. "true and false wisdom" (3:13-18)
 - h. "strife among Christians" (4:1-10)
 - i. "speaking evil of others" (4:11-12).
2. Throughout his letter James showed how Christians must not overlook God's will.
3. (4:13-17) James dealt specifically with overlooking God's will when making plans.

Discussion:

- I. (vs.13) THESE INSTRUCTIONS RELATE TO SELF-SUFFICIENCY
 - A. James confronted a situation in which financial plans are made for the future.
 1. James wrote about people who decide on their own:
 - a. when they will do what they want to do
 - b. where they will go
 - c. how long they will stay there
 - d. what they will do
 - e. what the outcome of their efforts will be.
 2. In this statement,:
 - a. God is not mentioned
 - b. God's will is not considered
 - c. God is not recognized as the source of all good blessings (1:17)
 - d. no plans for serving the Lord are included.
 - B. Depending upon self to this extent must be avoided (Jeremiah 10:23).
 - C. One of the Lord's parables was about a man with this problem (Luke 12:16-21).
 - D. Making plans for the future is not wrong, but God and His will must be included in our plans.
- II. (vs.14, 16) JAMES SHOWED WHY CHRISTIANS MUST NOT BE SELF-SUFFICIENT
 - A. (vs.14) We must not be self-sufficient because no one knows what will happen tomorrow.
 1. Life is like a vapor -- it appears for a short time and vanishes.
 2. Life is so uncertain that we cannot afford to overlook God and His will.
 - B. (vs.16) We must not be self-sufficient because it is evil.
 1. Self-sufficient people rejoice in their "*boastings.*"
 2. All such rejoicing is evil, and the Lord's people must not be guilty of it.
 - C. Instead of depending upon self, . . .
- III. (vs.15) CHRISTIANS ARE TO DEPEND UPON THE LORD
 - A. Christians are to acknowledge the Lord's will and trust in His providence.
 - B. Paul's example is worthy of imitation (Acts 18:20-21; 1 Corinthians 4:19; 16:7).
 - C. Wise advice is given in Proverbs 3:5-6.
- IV. (vs.17) KNOWING TO DO GOOD AND NOT DOING IT IS SIN
 - A. From the context, knowing that we should trust in the Lord's will and failing to do so is sin.
 - B. The Bible addresses the sin of omission many times (Matthew 25:24-30; 25:41-46).