

“LORD WILLING,”

James 4:13-17

16 yr old boy in Sudan; soldiers decided to convert. Tied wrists & ankles behind his back; began to kick & beat him, demanding that he renounce Christ. He refused, suffered blow to the head which caused permanent brain damage.

5 M in Sudan suffer persecution 2 M died

1000/day starving to death. Churches bombed.

Children taken as slaves –**because of faith in Christ!**

8th most persecuted in world–others worse!

How do we plan for tomorrow in such adversity?

Rumors float they're going to **close Guatemala operation** of your company **how do you face tomorrow?**

You're **facing retirement** not many yrs down the road,

How do we plan when 401k tanks; cash flow stops?

How will we provide for tomorrow?

How do people facing hard times plan for tomorrow?

1st C. church faced similar ??? regarding *their* life

How do they plan for tomorrow, in hard times they face?

Living Faith Produces Peace 3:13-5:6

Facing rising pressure, suffering people argue & fight; they're not finding peace!

Peace comes from seeking *God's* wisdom.

Solution for Fighting 4:7-5:6

***SUBMIT* to God 4:7-10**

***SUBMIT* to one another 4:11-12**

***DEPEND* on God 4:13-5:6**

Dependence on God is 1st related to **our plans.**

Passage doesn't criticize us for making plans.

NOR does it refer to common dialogue:

"See you next Sunday!" "*Lord willing!*"

We may *NOT* see each other next week;

that's not issue James is dealing with!

Nature of their plans. They're planning to...

–Escape to another town –Engage in business

They're *self-centered* plans; out to *make money!*

Their plans don't take God into account.

This is how world plans: seeking personal benefit

They leave God out of the picture

They're practical atheists—living as *if* there's no God

They believe in God, but plan same way as *atheists!*

What do people focus on in hard times? 13 "*Now listen, you who say, "Today or tomorrow we'll go to this or that city, spend a year there, carry on business & make money."*

When we face hard times,

we make plan to escape the pain.

4 goals WE try to achieve in hard times:

1. **Escape; get away from it all.** We seek way out!

Plan to go to another town reflects wish to get fresh start

In Guate, people go "to other side" –to make money.

Rather than trust God, they come up with a scheme!

2. **Settle down comfortably.**

3. **Get on with our life.**

Expression *can* apply to engaging in business.

4. **Make MONEY!**

This is human wisdom. (< 3:13-4:6)

It's not from God.

It doesn't produce peace.

It leads to conflict. ... *every man for himself!*

What do people pursuing man's solutions forget?

14 *"Why, you don't even know what will happen tomorrow. What is your life? You're a mist that appears for a little while & then vanishes"*

We forget that...

1. We don't know what will happen tomorrow;

2. Life is short.

3. We're not in charge!

When we pursue human solutions, we forget that we don't even know what tomorrow holds, much less control it; and we forget that life is short.

[weather control]

We don't have ability to make things happen "*our way!*"

What's difference between plans we make & world's?

What should we focus on when we face hard times? 15 *"You ought to say, "If it's the Lord's will, we'll live & do this or that."*

Instead of self-centered schemes we trust God with it

When we face hard times, we should focus on GOD; accomplishing HIS will!

Center of focus should be what GOD wants!

He has perfect plan for our life; knows what He's doing.

If we want *peace*, place selves in His hands;

James: "Say: *"If the Lord wills we shall live & do this or that,"*

NOT ritual to repeat re. plans for week.

It acknowledges what songwriter expressed: *"I know not what future holds, but I know who holds the future!"*

Even **staying alive** depends on Him—"if the Lord wills, **we'll live**" => *We might not be around tomorrow!*

Prayer: ***Thy will be done on earth as in heaven***

James wants us to recognize God's control of our life

When we plan, ask what HE wants from us tomorrow!

This is wisdom that's from above.

This is wisdom that leads to peace.

What people who pursue human wisdom produce in hard times? 16-17 Fruit of approach—

16 *"You boast & brag. All such boasting is **evil**."*

Danger of pride

Making *our* plan better than God's plan is **pride**—it's **SIN!** Our boasting is wrong—it's **evil**. **17** *"¹⁷Anyone, then, who knows the good he ought to do & doesn't do it, sins."*

Danger of disobedience

To reject God's plan & come up with our own, is to refuse to do what's right. It's rebellion! It's **SIN!**

Human wisdom => pride & disobedience;
God opposes proud, but gives grace to humble

So, how DO we plan for the future?

Rather than trust self-centered plans, which easily fail

James calls us to trust GOD to handle our problem.

When we face hard times, top priority should be to seek God's will above everything else—even before staying alive!

Making money isn't the goal—pleasing God is!

Success isn't the goal—pleasing God is!

Staying alive isn't the goal—pleasing God is!

So, how DO we plan for the future?

–In **persecution** like our brothers face in Sudan?

–when we're not sure we'll have **job** tomorrow?

–when **retirement funds** may not be enough to make it?

–when faced with **uncertainties** about future?

What's seeking God's will look like for us?

We make our **5-year plan**, then God changes it!

How many of us are still on track for our plan for 2020?

We sit down, work out steps from “**pt A**” to “**pt B**”

“Here's how we'll get out of debt in 3 yrs” We get laid off!

God told us **leave SLC**; had no idea where we were going.

He said resign—trust me—I'll take you to place I've prepared for you! –He took us **to the desert!**

After 5 yrs in desert, he again told us: “Trust me!”

–Like Abraham—we set out to unknown promised land.

Everybody said—but it's COLD in the winter!

We had to trust God in the dark—let Him have *HIS* way.

And then, we **retired! Is THIS what we signed up for?**

Young people have to make decisions about future.

How do you decide what to do with your life?

Salary? Work conditions? benefits? job security?

Young people make decisions about future—don't know where God will take them, where funds will come from; decide to trust Him; **follow Him, wherever He leads!**

What about YOU? What are we facing this week?

Is THIS what you thought you were signing up for?

Are we ready to trust Him with *OUR* future?

**When pressure rises, we focus on HIM—
—seek *HIS will* before anything else**

It doesn't matter whether decision relates to tough times, looking for job, or facing uncertainties of tomorrow!

We have to learn to focus on HIM & seek HIS will!

WE CAN TRUST HIM!

If you haven't trusted Christ as your Savior, this sounds scary & foolish! *You're never going to go there!*

You *can't* live to please God.

Pleasing Him begins with **trusting Jesus**, receiving gift of eternal life, God gave, sending Son to die in our place.

What's our plan for tomorrow?

Are WE planning to do *HIS* will?

...whatever that may be?