

James: A Letter from Jesus' Brother **How to Make Plans — James 4:13-17**

What were James' readers doing? (v.13)

They were making plans about going to a town, conducting business, and making some money.

We all make similar plans all the time.

What's the problem with that kind of planning? (v.14)

We do not know what will happen in the future.

We do not know if we will even be here in the future.

How should we make plans? (v.15)

"The Will of God"	
"God's Moral Will"	"God's Sovereign Will"
God's moral will refers to how God wants us to live.	God's sovereign will refers to what God purposefully allows to happen.
God's moral will doesn't always happen (people murder, kidnap, steal)	God's sovereign does always happen (God ultimately controls everything – even people's murdering, kidnapping, stealing)
Examples: Mark 3:35; Romans 12:2; Eph 5:17; 1John 2:17	Examples: 1Samuel 2:25; Isaiah 53:10; Acts 21:14; Colossians 1:1; James 4:15

In James 4:15, "the Lord's will" refers to God's sovereign will — that God is in ultimate control of everything; I'm not in ultimate control of anything.

- Seemingly random events (Pro 16:33)
- Other people (Pro 21:1)
- Whether we live (Jam 4:15)
- What we do (Jam 4:15)

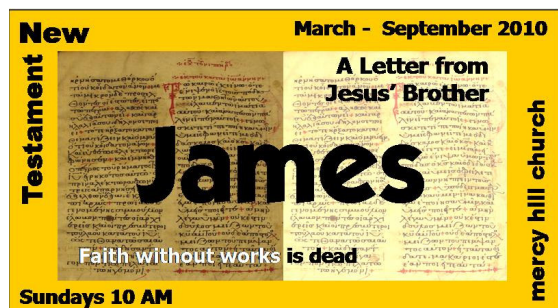
This is how Paul planned (Acts 18:21; 1Cor 4:19).

So make plans with conscious, humble dependence on God's will.

Why is it so important to plan with conscious dependence on God's will?

Because when we don't, we boast in our arrogance, and that is sin.

So receive forgiveness through Jesus' death on the Cross, rely on His grace in your life, and make your plans with conscious dependence on God's will.



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HOME GROUP DISCUSSION OF SUNDAY'S TEACHING

What was the Holy Spirit saying to you Sunday through this passage?

What questions, ideas, objections, encouragements did you come away with?

If we don't know what will happen in the future, and if we will even be here in the future — why do we make plans as if we were in ultimate control?

Does it make sense that sometimes the Bible talks about God's will as God's moral will, and sometimes as God's sovereign will? Can you see the difference?

Do you agree that we are not in ultimate control of seemingly random events, other people, whether we live, and what we do — but that God is in ultimate control of all these? Why or why not? What difference does this make?

What's more important, saying "if the Lord wills," or meaning "if the Lord wills"? What are the benefits of saying it without meaning it? Of meaning it without saying it? Of both saying it and meaning it?

What's your take-away from this message? What are you going to do differently? When? How?

Share prayer requests that come up in the discussion, jot them down below, and pray for each other.

New Testament **March - September 2010**

A Letter from Jesus' Brother James

Faith without works is dead

Sundays 10 AM

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