

James 4:13 - 5:6 ~ Questions for Discussion
Boasting About Tomorrow/Warning to the Wealthy

1. Here James is again coming back to the subject of wealth and pride. Where had he addressed it previously and what was his focus then? (James 1:9-10)
2. From these verses (4:13-17), do you get the impression that James is opposed to planning? (Proverbs 19:21, 27:1, Job 17:11, Luke 12:16-21)
3. Is James opposed to business success and making a profit? (1 Corinthians 5:6, 1 John 2:15-17)
4. What is James' message (or warning) to these businessmen?
5. When James speaks of 'mist' in Verse 4:14, he is referring to Hosea 13:3. Why?
6. What is the sin that these businessmen are practicing?
7. Notice that James moves directly from the sin of boasting (a sin of commission) to another type of sin in Verse 4:17. What is it? (Luke 12:47, John 9:41)
8. Starting in Chapter 5, James addresses a new audience in a new "tone of voice". Who is the audience, what is his tone, and why does he come on like this?
9. Is he opposed to wealth? (1 Timothy 6:10, Hebrews 13:5)
10. What is James' main concern? (1 Timothy 4:1-2)
11. What is his message to us 21st century Christians?
12. What was Jesus' teaching in the Sermon on the Mount on the subject of wealth? (Matthew 6:19-21)

James 4:13 - 5:6 ~ Questions for Small Groups

Boasting About Tomorrow/Warning to the Wealthy

1. Here are some well-known quotes about planning:

- “He who fails to plan, plans to fail.”
- “A good plan today is better than a perfect plan tomorrow.”
- “It pays to plan ahead. It wasn’t raining when Noah built the ark.”
- “To be prepared is half the victory.”
- “Proper preparation prevents poor performance.”
- “If you don’t have a plan for yourself, you’ll be part of someone else’s.”

I could not find a single quote that said planning was a bad thing. Why then does James seem to oppose planning ahead in verses 4:13-17?

2. Politicians often make many promises in their campaigns that don’t come true. Is this one of the types of things that James is talking about in these verses?

3. What things do *you* boast about or talk about that you are “going to do” or plan to do? Have you ever been embarrassed when you’ve talked about something you plan to do and, for one reason or other, you haven’t done it? What does that lead to? Covering up? Making excuses? Pointing to someone else’s shortcomings?

4. King David made plans to build the temple but God told him not to build it (1 Chronicles 28:2-3). These were plans to do a good thing that God actually wanted done (but not by David). Have you ever made plans to do a good thing and been so wrapped up in your own plan that you haven’t heard or wouldn’t have heard the voice of God speaking to you? By the way, God is just as likely to bless your plan or improve it as he is to stop it or delay it.

5. How can we use our resources to help do what is important to God? You may not have a great deal of money; what resources do you have that can serve God?

6. The Bible always seems to speak of serving others. Aren’t there times when you feel like you’re in need of being served? When have you felt (or do you feel) that you should be at the receiving end rather than the giving end? How does that affect your relationship with other people when you feel this way?

7. What three words would you use to describe someone you know quite well, say your son? Your father? Your wife? Your Bible study leader? What three words would God use to describe you?