

Series Title: **Evidence of Genuine Faith: Faith That Works**
Message Title: **Depending On God for the Future**
Text: **James 4:13-17**

James 4:13-17

¹³ Come now, you who say, "Today or tomorrow we will go into such and such a town and spend a year there and trade and make a profit"—¹⁴ yet you do not know what tomorrow will bring. What is your life? For you are a mist that appears for a little time and then vanishes. ¹⁵ Instead you ought to say, "If the Lord wills, we will live and do this or that." ¹⁶ As it is, you boast in your arrogance. All such boasting is evil. ¹⁷ So whoever knows the right thing to do and fails to do it, for him it is sin.

LIFE IS NOT ABOUT MEMORIES AND MONEY

James 4:13-14a, 16

¹³ Come now, you who say, "Today or tomorrow we will go into such and such a town and spend a year there and trade and make a profit"—^{14a} yet you do not know what tomorrow will bring.
¹⁶ As it is, you boast in your arrogance. All such boasting is evil.

People make Bucket lists - places to see and adventures to live.

- 50 states
- All continents other than Antarctica
 - 3
 - Need Africa, Asia, Australia

People make Budgets – Monthly, annually and preparation for retirement

Think about YOUR plans alone as an act of rebellion

- A belief that you control your future
- An absence of God in your planning
- An act of flesh that does not submit our days to the Lord

1 Samuel 15:23

For rebellion is as the sin of divination, and presumption is as iniquity and idolatry.

We also remember the story Jesus told about the rich man who made his great plans for the future, and foolishly lost it all when his soul was required of him.

Luke 12:16-21

¹⁶ And he told them a parable, saying, "The land of a rich man produced plentifully, ¹⁷ and he thought to himself, 'What shall I do, for I have nowhere to store my crops?' ¹⁸ And he said, 'I will do this: I will tear down my barns and build larger ones, and there I will store all my grain and my goods. ¹⁹ And I will say to my soul, "Soul, you have ample goods laid up for many years; relax, eat, drink, be merry.'" ²⁰ But God said to him, 'Fool! This night your soul is required of you, and the things you have prepared, whose will they be?' ²¹ So is the one who lays up treasure for himself and is not rich toward God."

Think about YOUR plans alone as an act of ignorance

- You do not know what tomorrow brings.

- Ignorance is ignoring.
 - Ignoring God’s plan, path, and presence.
 - Ignoring God’s purpose and promises.

1 Peter 2:15

For this is the will of God, that by doing good you should put to silence the ignorance of foolish people.

Ephesians 4:18

They are darkened in their understanding, alienated from the life of God because of the ignorance that is in them, due to their hardness of heart.

- “Notice, that these people, while they thought everything was at their disposal, used everything for worldly objects. What did they say? Did they determine with each other ‘We will to-day or to-morrow do such and such a thing for the glory of God, and for the extension of his kingdom’? Oh, no, there was not a word about God in it, from beginning to end!” (Spurgeon)

Think about YOUR plans alone as an act of arrogance

- Boasting is evil - *As it is, you boast in your arrogance. All such boasting is evil.*
- Arrogance
 - “The word is *alazoneia*.
 - *Alazoneia* was originally the characteristic of the wandering quack. He offered cures which were no cures and boasted to things that he was not able to do.” (Moffatt)

Romans 12:16

Live in harmony with one another. Do not be haughty, but associate with the lowly. Never be wise in your own sight.

LIFE WITHOUT GOD IS MEANINGLESS AND MIST

James 4:14b

What is your life? For you are a mist that appears for a little time and then vanishes.

Life’s definition

- *Zoe*
 - Both of physical (present) and of spiritual (particularly future) existence.

Life’s Source

Genesis 2:7

...then the LORD God formed the man of dust from the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and the man became a living creature.

Life’s Duration

Psalms 90:10

The years of our life are seventy, or even by reason of strength eighty; yet their span is but toil and trouble; they are soon gone, and we fly away.

Matt. 6:27

And which of you by being anxious can add a single hour to his span of life?

- Overcome by guilt you are dwelling in the past. Overcome by anxiety, you are dwelling in the future. Only in the present can you experience peace

Job 14:5

Since his days are determined, and the number of his months is with you, and you have appointed his limits that he cannot pass,

Life's Brevity

- A vapor
 - breath, steam, vapor.

Psalm 102:11

My days are like an evening shadow; I wither away like grass.

Job 8:9

For we are but of yesterday and know nothing, for our days on earth are a shadow.

1 Chronicles 29:15

For we are strangers before you and sojourners, as all our fathers were. Our days on the earth are like a shadow, and there is no abiding.

Life's Longevity

Dan. 12:2-3

² *And many of those who sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt. ³ And those who are wise shall shine like the brightness of the sky above; and those who turn many to righteousness, like the stars forever and ever.*

John 5:26-29

²⁶ *For as the Father has life in himself, so he has granted the Son also to have life in himself. ²⁷ And he has given him authority to execute judgment, because he is the Son of Man. ²⁸ Do not marvel at this, for an hour is coming when all who are in the tombs will hear his voice ²⁹ and come out, those who have done good to the resurrection of life, and those who have done evil to the resurrection of judgment.*

Life's Quality

Ecclesiastes 2:11

Yet when I surveyed all that my hands had done and what I had toiled to achieve, everything was meaningless, a chasing after the wind; nothing was gained under the sun.

Ecclesiastes 6:12

*For who knows what is good for man while he lives the few days of his vain life, which he passes like a shadow?
For who can tell man what will be after him under the sun?*

Memorials

- “The life of the dead is set in the memory of the living.” — Marcus Tullius Cicero, Philippics
- People telling stories and setting single words to describe a person’s nature in life

- Time can be spent but it cannot be saved.
- Time can be invested for eternity.
 - “When Time is spent, Eternity begins.” - Helen Hunt Jackson

Ephesians 5:15-17

¹⁵ Look carefully then how you walk, not as unwise but as wise, ¹⁶ making the best use of the time, because the days are evil. ¹⁷ Therefore do not be foolish, but understand what the will of the Lord is.

- What is your life?
- What gets you up in the morning?

LIFE WITH GOD LIFE HAS MISSION AND MEANING

James 3:15-17

¹⁵ Instead you ought to say, “If the Lord wills, we will live and do this or that.” ¹⁶ As it is, you boast in your arrogance. All such boasting is evil. ¹⁷ So whoever knows the right thing to do and fails to do it, for him it is sin.

- “The meaning of life. The wasted years of life. The poor choices of life. God answers the mess of life with one word: 'grace.'” - Max Lucado

The Lord’s Will for my Day

- Every day is a gift.
- Paul knew and lived this principle:
 - I will return again to you, God willing (Acts 18:21).
 - But I will come to you shortly, if the Lord wills (1 Corinthians 4:19).
 - I hope to stay a while with you, if the Lord permits (1 Corinthians 16:7).
- “Commitment to the will of God - the purpose for which we are designed - offers freedom to become the person we are meant to be.” Charles E. Hummel

Ecclesiastes 12:13

Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God, and keep his commandments: for this is the whole duty of man.

The Lord’s Mind for my Day

- I will not boast in myself but boast in the Lord.
- My mind will move my choices according to the Mind of God.

- God will be the director of what I aim at.
- “Aim at heaven and you will get earth thrown in. Aim at earth and you get neither.” - C. S. Lewis

Matthew 6:33

But seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be added to you.

The Lord’s Way for My Day

- “If you don't know where you are going, any road will get you there” - Lewis Carroll

Isaiah 43:7

Even every one that is called by my name: for I have created him for my glory, I have formed him; yea, I have made him.

- I will do the right thing
- I will not do the wrong thing

Challenge

I will See Each Day as a Gift from God.

I will Plan Each Day with God’s Purposes.

I will Live Each Day Trusting the Lord.

I will Design Each Day for Mission and Meaning.