

## PLANNING FOR THE FUTURE

James 4:13-17

### Awareness

Before listening, reflect:

- How many times a day do you check your schedule or calendar? What do you think your answer to the previous question says about your understanding and value of time?
- How often do you pray while making plans? Describe what those plans are most often for and what your prayers generally include when you plan and pray. Do your plans inform your prayer or do your prayers inform your plans?

Once again, the author of James confronts us with a hard-hitting, direct warning about our regard for time. But his warning isn't just for those who are busy and overscheduled. His caution has much more to do with how we plan. When we schedule our time, do we position ourselves in relationship to God? And to what degree do we follow or seek his will in the ordering of our daily lives? A valuable topic on which we can continually reflect as we plan for tomorrow, next week, next year, or even the next phase of life.

**Listen:** [\*Planning for the Future\*](#)

### Reflection

After listening, consider:

- How does planning for the future relate to your spiritual life according to James? How can logistics and your faith impact each other in a positive way?
- How do you feel about saying “if the Lord wills” when you are planning? Try to put your reaction into words. Does giving up this control make you feel anxious, frustrated, or peaceful? Consider whether a prayer of supplication, prayer of confession, or a prayer of gratitude might be in order.
- When has planning for the future tempted you to boast (even if just to yourself) about your accomplishments or skills? What are ways you could cue yourself in future situations to remember God's hand in your past and your future?
- Have you checked your future plans with God's will lately? If not, take time to write down a list of our future plans (big and small). Then, commit to praying over these items in the coming days and weeks.

### Related Passages

- **Matthew 6:25-34**
- **Proverbs 3:1-12**
- **Jeremiah 29:4-14**
- **Romans 11:33-36**

## Conclusion

Reflect on Proverbs 3:5-6:

*Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and do not lean on your own understanding.  
In all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make straight your paths.*

Whenever you plan, whether making major future plans or planning the simple details of your day, say a prayer of gratitude. What has God gifted you that makes this moment possible? Pray for his Holy Spirit to guide your planning in accordance with God's will.

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