

Planning for the Future

A lot of us find it all but impossible to live without calendars today. Check the Google Calendar or Franklin Day Planner for most of us and you will see dates written down many months into the future: planned vacations, upcoming weddings, appointments at school or work. You name it, and we mark it down even a year or more in advance. So how do we square all that planning with Jesus' famous words in the Sermon on the Mount about not worrying about tomorrow? Or, as we will discuss today on Groundwork, how do we square all of that with some very direct words of caution from the Apostle James about not letting all our future planning cause us to stumble in our faith? Join us as together we discover what James thinks is the appropriate way to plan for the future.

AWARENESS Before listening reflect on what you already know or understand about topics we'll cover in the episode.

- 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?



LISTEN TO THE EPISODE: [Planning for the Future](#)

READ [James 4:13-17](#)

REFLECTION After listening, consider the following questions:

- 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 for further study

[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.

<https://groundworkonline.com/episodes/planning-for-the-future>

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