



# *Epistle of James*

## *James 4:13-17 - Self Sufficiency vs. Reality*

- Review *James 4:11,12: Speaking Against One Another*
  - We are commanded not to speak evil of our brother.
  - Moreover, judging our brother is not our responsibility.
  - There is only one Lawgiver and judge; let's leave judgment entirely up to Him.
- ***James 4:13,14 - Come now, you who say, “Today or tomorrow let us go to such and such a city, spend a year there, buy and sell, and make a profit”;***
  - *Come now* – Greek jargon for to excite attention?
  - Before we dissect this verse, let's ponder and reflect on our interpretation.
    - Should we make no plans?
    - Should we have no goals?
    - Is making a profit wrong?
  - How should we interpret the fact that the following verbs in this verse, *spend, buy, sell, make* are in the subjunctive mood?



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- McCalley – ‘This verse is a prime example of worldliness. Worldliness is not revealed by what the person spoken of in this verse does, but rather in what he does not do. He plans and arranges his life without regard to God. Worldliness is living life as though God does not exist.’
  - This verse could reflect the Jewish merchant of old, or even the Jewish believer of James’ time.
    - » *Matt 13:45 - “Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a merchant seeking beautiful pearls,*
  - So, what’s the major shortcoming here?
    - » *Matt 16:26 - For what profit is it to a man if he gains the whole world, and loses his own soul? Or what will a man give in exchange for his soul?*
- ***James 4:14 - whereas you do not know what will happen tomorrow. For what is your life? It is even a vapor that appears for a little time and then vanishes away.***



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- *whereas you do not know what will happen tomorrow.*
  - *know here is epistamai – become acquainted with*
    - » *Jude 10 - But these speak evil of whatever they do not know (eido); and whatever they know (epistamai) naturally, like brute beasts, in these things they corrupt themselves.*
- *For what is your life?*
  - Can we each answer that for ourselves?
  - In Greek – life is the state of one who is possessed of vitality or is animate.
    - » *Phil 1:20, 21 - According to my earnest expectation and my hope, that in nothing I shall be ashamed, but that with all boldness, as always, so now also **Christ shall be magnified in my body, whether it be by life, or by death. For to me to live is Christ and die is gain.***
- *It is even a vapor that appears for a little time and then vanishes away.*
  - How do we vs. the unsaved world interpret this and why?
    - » *Luke 12:18-20 - “So he said, ‘I will do this: I will pull down my barns and build greater, and there I will store all my crops and my goods. **And I will say to my soul, “Soul, you have many goods laid up for many years; take your ease; eat, drink, and be merry.”**’ “But God said to him, ‘Fool! This night your soul will be required of you; then who's will those things be which you have provided?’*



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- » Job 7:6 - *“My days are swifter than a weaver’s shuttle and are spent without hope.*
- » 1 Peter 4:7 - *But the end of all things is at hand; therefore, be serious and watchful in your prayers.*
- » 1 John 2:17 - *And the world is passing away, and the lust of it; but he who does the will of God abides forever.*

- **James 4:15 – Instead, you ought to say, “If the Lord wills, we shall live and do this or that.”**
  - *Instead, you say* – present active infinitive
    - Opposes ‘you say’ in verse 13.
  - *“If the Lord wills, we shall live and do this or that.”*
    - *wills* and *shall live and do* – aorist active subjunctive
    - How should we interpret ‘if’?
      - 3<sup>rd</sup> class conditional
  - But I thought He would have us all live to be conformed and transformed according to His will?
    - Then what does it mean for the *if Lord wills*?



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- to resolve, determine, or purpose
  - » *Rom 8:29 - For whom He foreknew, He also predestined to be conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the firstborn among many brethren.*
  - » *Rom 12:2 - And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God.*
- Constable – ‘A study of the use of this conditional clause ["If the Lord wills . . ."] in the NT makes it clear that we are not to repeat it mechanically in connection with every statement of future plans.
  - » *1 Cor 4:19 - But I will come to you shortly, if the Lord wills, and I will know, not the word of those who are puffed up, but the power.*
  - » *Acts 18:21 - but took leave of them, saying, "I must by all means keep this coming feast in Jerusalem; but I will return again to you, God willing." And he sailed from Ephesus.*
  - » *Heb 6:3 - And this we will do if God permits.*
- ***James 4:16 - But now you boast in your arrogance. All such boasting is evil.***
  - *boast or rejoice, glory in* – present active indicative
  - *in your arrogance (boastings) - alazoneia*



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» *1 John 2:16 - For all that is in the world—the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride (alazoneia) of life—is not of the Father but is of the world.*

- *Constable-* ‘They derived joy from feeling that they controlled their own destiny. Here is the picture of the **"self-made man"** taking credit for what God has given him. Boasting of this kind is unrealistic. It betrays an attitude that puts man in God's place. For this reason, it is evil.’

» *Psalms 52:7 - “Here is the man who did not make God his strength, But trusted in the abundance of his riches, And strengthened himself in his wickedness.”*

» *1 Cor 4:6,7 - Now these things, brethren, I have figuratively transferred to myself and Apollos for your sakes, that you may learn in us not to think beyond what is written, that **none of you may be puffed up on behalf of one against the other.** For who makes you differ from another? And what do you have that you did not receive? Now if you did indeed receive it, why do you boast as if you had not received it?*

- *James 4:17 - Therefore, to him who knows to do good and does not do it, to him it is sin.*

– Typical of James, the last verse of chapters is a summary.



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- *Therefore, to him who knows to do good*
  - *knows here is eido and the tense is perfect– fact!*
- *and does not do it, to him it is sin.*
  - *And what is sin?*
    - » *James 1:23 - For if anyone is a hearer of the word and not a doer, he is like a man observing his natural face in a mirror;*
    - *And even for the believer*
      - » *Rom 7:13 - Has then what is good become death to me? Certainly not! But sin, that it might appear sin, was producing death in me through what is good, so that sin through the commandment might become exceedingly sinful.*
- **Isn't this the theme that James is all about?**