

Scripture

James 4:13-5:6

Summary

In this passage James follows on from his previous discussion about what true heavenly wisdom is by applying this wisdom to the Christian life, particularly in the areas of our financial ambitions and making future plans.

James speaks to Christians about the dual temptations of making plans based entirely on the profit motive and viewing ourselves as autonomous people who can plan the future with certainty. James' encouragement regarding the Christian way to live is that we are to inquire of the Lord regarding everything that we do, submitting all things to His will. Submitting to His will involves our general sanctification (the general will of God), as well as following His leading in our lives which includes recognizing the opportunities for good that He places in our lives (the specific will of God). True wisdom therefore

submits all of our plans to God, seizes opportunities that He gives us and respond to it accordingly.

Finally in James 5:1-6 He speaks to the unrighteous who use ungodly means to maximize their profits and who's self indulgence ends up corrupting their bodies. He uses their lives as a lesson to us all about how the earthly pursuit of such wealth corrupts our lives and will face eternal judgment.

Ultimately none of us perfectly obeys the will of God, and our hope is therefore trusting in Christ who did come and perfectly obey God's will in order that we who would otherwise stand guilty before God might be justified by his life, death and resurrection, whereby He sends His Spirit into our hearts to make us new and enable to truly obey Him from the heart.

Sermon in a sentence

The Christian life is characterized by humble prayerful submission to the will of God, empowered by the perfect work of Christ in submitting to the Father's will.

Main Points

1. How not to live: being driven by temporal wealth (5:1-6)
2. Temptations all Christians face (4:13-14)
 - a. Assuming we are autonomous
 - b. Living for temporary profit
3. How then should we live? Find out what pleases the Lord (4:15-16)

Think On This

"So, whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God" 1 Cor 10:31

Questions

1. How has the pursuit and or possession of goods/ money affected you?
2. In what ways does your life demonstrate autonomy from God?
3. In what areas are you tempted to make decisions without finding out what pleases the Lord?
4. How do we "find out what pleases the Lord"?
5. How would you define the general will of God for our life?
6. What are some ways to help us understand the specific will of God for our lives?

RHC Core Values

Gospel-Centredness – To have the gospel in the centre of our ministry, and for everything we do to find its root in the gospel.

Experimental Faith – To actively seek the modern day work of the Holy Spirit, expecting him to move in our midst in signs and wonders, and to lead us to the will of God.

Theological Depth – To pursue a deep and soul satisfying knowledge and understanding of God through the Bible.

Community on Mission – To recognise that we are not here for ourselves, but are on a mission to bring the gospel to the world.

City Renewal – To see the gospel change every aspect of the city we are living in by doing social justice, integrating our faith and work, and seeing the city renewed culturally, socially and spiritually for the glory of God.