**SERMON OUTLINE**

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| **SERMON TITLE:** | Planning Your Future |
| **SERMON REFERENCE:** | James 4:13-17 |
| **LWF SERMON NUMBER:** | #2268 |
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1. INTRODUCTION
   1. We’re interested in the future.
      1. We want to know what the year will bring to us.
   2. Our Scripture today tells the story of a boastful, first-century businessman who was making plans for his future.
      1. James 4:13-17
      2. This man, in many respects, would be called successful in the first century, and even today in the twenty-first century.
   3. Failure is succeeding at the wrong thing.
   4. The man in our Scripture passage made three major mistakes.
      1. Our message today will give three warnings as you plan for your future.
2. beware of self-centered planning
   1. This man was looking forward to the future in a business endeavor.
   2. He planned the period of time.
      1. James 4:13
      2. This man said that either today or tomorrow, he was going to a city and would stay there for a year.
         1. That was where he was planning to invest his time for that year.
   3. He planned the place he would go.
      1. James 4:13
      2. He looked at the advantages and disadvantages of all the cities, and he chose a particular city.
   4. He planned a procedure.
      1. James 4:13
      2. He was going to buy and sell.
         1. Evidently, he had a marketing scheme.
   5. He planned the profits.
      1. James 4:13
      2. He planned to make a good profit.
   6. All of his planning sounds good.
      1. It doesn’t seem like he’s doing anything wrong.
      2. The Bible certainly doesn’t condemn business; rather, it encourages it.
      3. The Bible encourages planning.
      4. The Bible encourages making a profit.
   7. What he did wrong was to leave God out of his plans.
      1. He was not consulting with God.
      2. He did not seek the will of God.
   8. So many of us today have divided our lives into the secular and the sacred.
      1. Our worship life is one thing.
      2. Our business life is another thing.
      3. So, we go to church and worship, and then we plan our lives as if there were no God.
         1. The biggest fool is not the person who says there is no God, but the person who says that there is a God and then doesn’t live like it.
   9. Have you really taken God into your plans?
   10. James 4:15
       1. This is the key to all of this.
       2. The man had not sought to bring God into his plans.
       3. There is a big “if” in this verse.
          1. “If the Lord will…”
          2. Have you ever asked God to bless what you’re doing, rather than ask the Lord to help you do what He’s blessing?
   11. God wants to show us His will.
       1. Psalm 32:8
          1. To be guided with God’s eye means that you have a very close relationship with Him.
       2. Isaiah 30:21
          1. God is saying, “Don’t go this way; don’t go that way. This is the way.”
       3. John 16:13
          1. We have a Heavenly guide who is the Holy Spirit of God.
             1. He is here to lead us.
       4. Romans 8:14
   12. We don’t have to be floundering around in life.
   13. God has a plan for every area of our lives, not just in our church life but also in our education, our business, our marriage, our home and our recreation.
   14. There are three words that will help you find God’s plan for your life:
       1. Confession
          1. Confess your sins.
          2. Get your heart right with God.
          3. Psalm 66:18
             1. We are wasting our breath if we pray with unconfessed, unrepented of sin in our hearts and lives.
             2. This is one of the great, prayer promises.
          4. 1 John 1:5-6
             1. If there is sin in our lives, then rather than walking in the light, we will be stumbling in the dark.
          5. Do you have an idol in your life?
             1. An idol is anything you love more, serve more or fear more than God.
             2. Ezekiel 14:3

If you have idols in your heart, then what right do you have to ask God to guide you?

* + - 1. Make certain that there is no unconfessed, unrepented of sin in your life.
         1. This is normal living.
         2. How can you expect to have God in your life if you regard iniquity in your heart?
      2. 1 John 1:9
    1. Consecration
       1. It is not enough to be clean; we need to be consecrated.
       2. Proverbs 3:6
       3. Do you really want to know the will of God, or do you just want God to help you in your plans?
       4. Have you acknowledged Him in all of your ways, not just some of your ways?
    2. Concentration
       1. Listen to God.
       2. The Holy Spirit is spoken of in the Bible as a gentle dove and as a still, small voice.
          1. This is why we need that quiet time alone with God.
       3. Some people don’t believe that God is speaking to them.
          1. We would be foolish to deny that there’s music in the air just because we have turned off the radio.
          2. God is speaking.

Are you listening?

1. beware of self-confident presumption (james 4:14-15)
   1. James 4:14-15
      1. Our lives are like a vapor.
         1. The word “vapor” is the word from which we get our word “atmosphere.”
         2. It is there for a little while and then vanishes away.
   2. Don’t boast carelessly about the future.
   3. We don’t know what the future holds.
      1. This may be your final year; we don’t know.
      2. We need to beware of thinking that we’re going to do this or that, and then we get frivolous with the use of our time.
   4. Proverbs 27:1
   5. Ask the Lord to help you not to waste time.
      1. Ask Him to help you apply your days unto wisdom.
      2. Ask Him to help you to live out the rest of your days, whether they be few or many, being used of Him.
   6. To kill time is suicide by degrees.
      1. Don’t presume upon the time that you have.
   7. If this is the last sermon you ever hear, would you go from here to Heaven or to Hell?
      1. Are you ready?
      2. Do you know Jesus?
      3. Are you saved?
         1. Don’t say, “I’ll get saved one of these days.”
         2. Proverbs 27:1
   8. Luke 12:16-20
      1. Jesus told a parable of a rich farmer.
      2. This farmer had great crops; so great that he didn’t have enough room to store it all.
      3. He decided to tear down his old barns and build bigger barns.
      4. Then, he said to himself that he had so much goods laid up for so many years that he would eat, drink and be merry.
      5. But God called him a fool, for that night his soul would be required of him.
         1. Then, who would get all those things that he had laid up in store?
         2. This man said, “Many years.”
         3. God said, “Tonight.”
2. beware of self-complacent procrastination (james 4:15-17)
   1. James 4:15-17
      1. Here was a man who knew what he ought to do, but he didn’t do it.
      2. He’s boasting in himself of all that he’s done.
      3. He has become complacent.
      4. He is aware of God’s will, but he doesn’t want to do it.
   2. Procrastination may be the biggest problem most of us have today.
      1. It is a very deceptive sin.
      2. Other sins are very obvious, such as drunkenness, stealing, hate, violence, etc.
      3. Most people don’t think of procrastination as a sin.
         1. James 4:17
   3. It is a greater sin to fail to do what we ought to do than to do what we ought not to do.
      1. The Bible teaches that the sins of omission are greater than the sins of commission.
      2. If we’re doing what we ought to do, then we can’t do what we ought not to do.
         1. But even if we’re not doing what we ought not to do, we still wouldn’t be doing what we ought to do.
   4. James 4:17
      1. It isn’t that the man said that he would never do it; he just didn’t do it.
         1. It was self-complacent procrastination.
   5. The sin of procrastination is not only very deceptive, but the person committing it may look kind of respectful.
      1. One person doesn’t know what God is leading another person to do, so the first person may look fine and respectful to those around him, even though he has sin in his heart and life.
   6. The sin of omission (the sin of procrastination) is a very dangerous and deceptive sin.
      1. It’s the reason that many people are lost.
         1. People do not go to Hell because they lie, steal, commit adultery, etc.
            1. These are sins worthy to condemn us, but these sins have been paid for.
         2. The reason people are lost today is because they have failed to do what they ought to do.
         3. John 3:18
            1. No longer is a person condemned to Hell because he’s a sinner.

Those sins have been paid for.

* + - * 1. He is condemned because he has not believed.
        2. Acts 16:31
      1. A person doesn’t have to do anything to be lost.
         1. They are already lost.

John 3:18

* + - 1. It is the sin of omission now that sends a soul to Hell.
    1. Many people want to correct their thinking.
       1. They want to get pornographic images out of their minds.
       2. They want to get hatred out of their minds.
       3. They want to get negative thoughts out of their minds.
       4. The reason people think wrongly is because they are not thinking rightly.
          1. They’re not thinking what they ought to think.
       5. Our minds are like gardens.
          1. We don’t have to sow weeds.
          2. All we have to do is to fail to cultivate the garden, and the weeds will come.
       6. God made us to where we cannot think two thoughts at one time.
          1. If we’re thinking what is right, then we cannot be thinking what is wrong.
    2. David got into trouble and committed adultery.
       1. 2 Samuel 11:1-4
       2. It was in the afternoon, and David was still in bed.
          1. He most certainly had forgotten to have a quiet time with the Lord that morning.
       3. His problem was not aggressive lust, but simply neglected duty.
       4. David failed to do what he ought to have done.
          1. Therefore, he did what he ought not to have done.
       5. Center your heart and mind on God.
       6. Fill your heart and mind with that which is right, true, pure and of good report.
          1. Then, you won’t have difficulty with impure, unclean thoughts.
          2. Philippians 4:8
    3. The sin of omission is the reason for many broken homes.
       1. God’s plan is one man married to one woman until death do them part.
       2. All you have to do for your home to fall apart is to just neglect to do what you ought to do.
          1. James 4:17
    4. Many churches fail because of the sin of omission.
       1. We have half-empty churches because people simply neglect their church.
       2. Numbers 32:23
          1. The Israelites had come out of Egypt and were preparing to cross over the river into Canaan.
          2. The tribes of Reuben and Gad told Joshua that they didn’t want to cross over.

They wanted to stay where they were.

* + - * 1. Joshua reminded them that their brothers were going to war over in Canaan against the Canaanites.
        2. The tribes of Reuben and Gad said that they would come over and help their brothers when it was time for war.
        3. Joshua told them that if they didn’t do so, they would sin against the Lord.
      1. Many people today want to stay on the easy side of the river.
         1. They don’t want to work and help build the church.
      2. No one has a right to be at peace when his brethren are at war.
      3. You don’t have to go to war against the church, just neglect it.
      4. James 4:17

1. CONCLUSION
   1. There are many people who know that there is a death to die, a God to face and a judgment to go through.
      1. Yet, they’re not saved.
      2. They say that they will get saved some day.
   2. The Bible says that today is the day of salvation.
      1. 2 Corinthians 6:2
      2. Proverbs 27:1
   3. Face your future by giving your heart to Jesus Christ and letting the Holy Spirit be in you to guide you and to give you a hope that is wonderful and glorious.
   4. Do you know Jesus personally? If not, you can pray to Him today by asking Him to come into your life.
   5. Call upon Jesus today. Repent (turn) from your sins, and turn to Jesus. Ask Him to forgive you of your sins, and acknowledge Him as Lord of your life.
      1. Romans 3:23
      2. Romans 10:9-10
      3. Romans 10:13
      4. Acts 16:31
      5. John 3:16