

## Christmas at Grace Chapel: Avoid the Sin of Self-sufficiency

James 4:13-17

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**Sermon Summary:** So often we depend more on our plans than the sovereign involvement of God in our lives. We rest hard on what we can see, write, calendar or list out, and struggle to put our trust in the invisible God. Our hearts should be to trust God and have His involvement in all of our planning, never resting on our own plans or skills more than God's work in and around us.

### **The Sin of Self-sufficiency is:**

Planning our future without God's involvement – v. 13

- What plans are the merchants about whom James writes making in v. 13? Are these necessarily wrong plans to make? What are some of the assumptions of the merchants are revealed in the plans they have made v. 13?
- Now how about your life? What does God's involvement look like in your own plans/goals? Think about: your financial plans, career plans, educational, /goals, vacation plans/goals, personal relationship plans/goals, spiritual growth plans/goals, marriage plans/goals, etc.

Failure to recognize the uncertainty of life – v. 14

- For what reason does James make the statement, “yet you do not know what tomorrow will bring” Does this mean that James is against planning for the future? Look up Proverbs 6: 6-8. How does this relate to God's view of planning for the future?
- James reminds us that our lives are nothing more than a “mist” (the Greek = a swirl of smoke arising from a fire), is this thought encouraging or discouraging to you? How does this thought impact how we live our lives? Should this give us “urgency” in our lives.

Failure to acknowledge God's sovereignty – v. 15

- “If the Lord wills...” How often do you think about this? How does implementing this thought into your life change how you think? How you act?
- What does it say about you AND God if you make plans without this thought process in mind?

Boasting, bragging, and arrogance - v 16

- What type of boasting is sin? Is there anything at all that we as Christ followers should boast in? How does 1 Corinthians 1:31 speak to this?

Sin – v. 17

- Are you putting your trust in God or yourself? Prove it☺: What does that look like on a day-to-day basis in your life? Would those around you agree with you? Ask them.
- The opposite of faith is self-reliance. Do you truly live your life out of faith or out of self-reliance? Again, ask those around you who know you well. What do they say?

Apply:

1. Pray for God's involvement in ALL AREAS of your life.
2. What areas of your life are you most prone to self-reliance?
3. Write down how you have seen God's sovereignty in your life in the past year.
4. “If the Lord wills...” What does living this out look like? Start living it out.

