

“Tomorrow Never Comes”

“Plan ahead; it was not raining
when Noah built the ark”

- Plans are good when based on God’s will
- Ja.4:13-17, wrong preferences
 - 1-10, they preferred the world to God
 - 11-12, they preferred own judgment to God’s
 - 13-17, they preferred business profits over God’s will

I. What They Say (13)

- Ambition of life: Today or tomorrow we will go...
- What their saying says about them: they think they control their own . . .
 - Time
 - Mobility
 - Location
 - Longevity
 - Prosperity (Mt.13:45)

James does not
condemn their . . .

1. Wealth
2. Desire for profit
3. Planning ahead

I. What They Say (13)

II. What James Says
About What They Say (13)

1. Uncertainty of life: *you do not know...* (14)

- Argument from lesser to greater
- If you don't know what tomorrow may bring, how can you predict what will happen next year?
- Pro.27:1; Lk.12
- Gn.11:3,4,7...8
- Ja.4:13, *the chain...*
 - Today|tomorrow / go / city / year / trade / profit
 - If one link breaks ... all is lost

2. Question of life: *what is your life?* (14)

- NKJV: You do not know what will happen tomorrow. For what is your life?
(Also ASV; ESV; NRSV; NIV)
- NASB: You do not know what your life will be like tomorrow
 - Lk.12:16-21
 - Rich fool made plans, but . . .
 - 15: man's life...
 - Some measure life by possessions
 - 21: rich toward God. Phil.3:8

3. Brevity of life: (14)

- Vapor...little time...vanishes
- Steam, mist, puff of smoke...
 - Illness, death, the return of Christ may shorten our life as quickly as the morning sun melts the mist or a shift in the wind blows away smoke
 - Even if you live a long life, it will fly
 - The prospect of one's own imminent death “wonderfully concentrates the mind” – Sm. Johnson

3. Brevity of life: (14)

- We are not guaranteed long life
- Job 7⁶ Surely every man walks about like a shadow; Surely they busy themselves in vain; He heaps up *riches*, And does not know who will gather them. ⁷ And now, Lord, what do I wait for? My hope *is in You*.
- Psalm 39, *frail*
- Psalm 90, *days*
- James 1:9-11

4. Importance of life (14)

- Vanishes away
- Only one opportunity to live
- Hb.9:27

5. Gift of life (15)

- If the Lord wills, we shall live...
- Knowing that life is God's gift gives purpose to our existence. Now is the time to prepare
- Remember that God has a plan for us
- Ec.12:13-14

Mt.6:25

Some live on the level of a cow

- 2 Pt.2:12, But these, like natural brute beasts made to be caught and destroyed, speak evil of the things they do not understand, and will utterly perish in their own corruption

Mt.6:25 – summary

- *“This is your life”*: summary of one’s achievements
- *“That’s life”*: be willing to accept whatever happens
- *“This is living!”*: what life is all about (usually fun, luxury, leisure, pleasure)

Christians know better

6. Frailty of life (15)

- If the Lord wills, we shall live ... do this or that
- Common regret of old age: neglected opportunities.
- ‘If only I could go back and redo those moments.’ Live each day to the fullest

7. Pride of life (16)

- Arrogant boasting
 - Worldly attitude causes pride
 - (13 – pride is a boast)
 - (17 – pride is sin)
1. James told readers what is right; they cannot plead ignorance.
 2. “I never harmed anyone in my life.”
Mt.25:31-46.

So what?

1. Send child to college
2. When considering marriage
3. Moving for new job