

## James 7

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James 4:13-17

Where will you be next month? Next year? Five years from now? That is not a bad question to ponder, as you can learn a lot about a person based on their plans for the future. You can see ambitions, desires, hopes and dreams. But James shows us that you can also see if a person is a Christian or not.

However, before we dive into that point, let's start at the end of the passage.

### 1. WE ALL SIN

“Whoever knows the right thing to do and does not do it, for him it is sin.” Some people call this the “sin of omission.” It is a convicting statement which opens the door on no end of confession. Most of the time when we confess our sins we focus on what we have done right and wrong and ask for forgiveness. BUT HERE WE LEARN THAT SIN IS ALSO NOT DOING RIGHT.

Not all that long ago people had the idea that the way to avoid sin was to build monasteries. What could be better? The problem? Who was going to carry out the Great Commission.?

Have you ever witnessed people in a disagreement and one of the many people says: “I’m just trying to stay out of it!” That sounds spiritual, but it is a denial of Galatians 6:1

Do you confess and repent of your false opinions?

Do you repent of your times of despair and lack of trust in God?

What about your incorrigibility?

Do you possess any carnal securities?

Have you shown any lukewarmness or deadness to the things of God?

But that is not all James is talking about here. His claim of our sins of omission is connected to the previous verses. That's stated by a THEREFORE. So what is he linking our sins of omission to?

### 2. WE ALL FORGET GOD

Back to verse 13. We make plans. James has not problem with planning. What he is warning us against is PLANNING WITHOUT GOD. When we make plans we lock into our own time (today or tomorrow). We lock into our own location (such and such a city). Our duration (spend a year there). Our enterprise (engage in business). Our goal (to make a profit).

The problem is shown by the correct attitude which says IF THE LORD WILL. We forget Proverbs 27:1 – “Do not boast about tomorrow, for you do not know what a day may bring.” Consider the difference in these two attitudes:

Invites by William Henley

It matters not how straight the gate  
How charged with punishments the scroll  
I am the master of my fate  
I am the captain of my soul

HAVE THINE OWN WAY by Adelaide Pollard

Have Thine own way, Lord! Have Thine own way  
Thou art the potter, I am the clay  
Mold me and make me, after Thy will,  
While I am waiting, yieded, and still.

When we lock and load our plans without regard for God, then we basically and functionally act as captains of our own soul. We all know what it feels like to be “left out.” It hurts!

Isaiah 65:11-12

Isaiah 49:15

Job 8:12,13

Hosea 4:6

You don't forget things that are important to you.

### 3. WE ARE ALL A MIST

As we reflect on how we all sin, James takes time to remind us of the transitory nature of life. He writes FOR YOU ARE A MIST THAT APPEARS FOR A LITTLE WHILE AND THEN VANISHES. How long do you expect to live?

Applications:

1. Don't just say, “If the Lord wills.” MEAN IT! Hold your hands open and ask God to work His work in your life. If you are not in lock step with God's will, you will never have any peace in your life.
2. Follow Jesus' example. He prayed: “Not my will, but thine be done.” He submitted to God in everything He did. He was God's Son. Yet, a big part of His earthly life was communion with God and time spent in prayer. HIS ONE MISSION IN LIFE WAS TO DO GOD's WILL.

3. Remember what we said about NOT forgetting God? There are consequences for forgetting God and they are not good. Think of how many times you have forgotten Him. In Matthew 27, as Jesus was dying on the cross, He cried out to God: "MY GOD, MY GOD, WHY HAVE YOU FORSAKEN ME?" For the first time in eternity, Jesus was forsaken and forgotten. Why? So you and I would never have to be forsaken again but remembered and brought near.