



# Transforming Prideful Plans into God-Honoring Decisions

James 4:13–17

# Worldly Influences

- James in the immediate context of James 4:13–17 underscores the need to avoid worldly influences—whether internal, external, or both (Jas 4:1–5:6).
- The original audience had unfortunately allowed an air of conflict, compromise, and condemnation to infiltrate their congregation (Jas 4:1–12; cf. 1 Cor 3:1–4).
- A specific manifestation of the worldly pride that had generated these issues was the independent and presumptuous scheming of certain Christians.

# Boasting in Arrogance

- James uses the words translated “boast” (Gr. *kauchomai*) and “boasting” (Gr. *kauchesis*) positively and negatively; in the negative sense, he connects it with arrogance (Jas 1:9–10; 4:16; cf. Jer 9:23–24; 1 John 2:16).
- All boasting of the Jas 4:16 kind is evil and needs to be eliminated (Jas 4:16; cf. 2:4; 1 Cor 5:6–8 [Gr. *kauchema*]).
- The prideful planners of Jas 4:13–17 were scheming for personal profit (and involving others too) but ignoring the good that they could do (Jas 4:13, 17; Prov 25:14).

# Humbly Facing the Future

- **PLAN WITH GOD IN MIND.** God must be at the beginning, middle, and end of our plans/decisions (Jas 4:15 [e.g., 1 Cor 4:19]; cf. Luke 12:16–21; Mark 8:36–37).
- **PLAN IN HOPE, NOT DEMAND, OF TOMORROW.** Life is short. We must do what we can with today (Jas 4:13–14 [*atmis*, e.g., Lev 16:13]; Prov 27:1; Matt 6:34).
- **PLAN WITH THE GOAL OF DOING GOOD.** Our decisions should never exclude the good that is in our power to perform (Jas 4:17; Prov 3:27–28; Matt 25:24–30).



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