

Now listen, you who say, "Today or tomorrow we will go to this or that city, spend a year there, carry on business and make money." Why, you do not even know what will happen tomorrow. What is your life? You are a mist that appears for a little while and then vanishes. Instead, you ought to say, "If it is the Lord's will, we will live and do this or that." As it is, you boast and brag. All such boasting is evil. James 4:13-16 (NIV)

Now Listen

Listen, now that's one of the more important words that you will ever hear. Why is that? **You will hear many voices in life.** There will be a voice that says stop while another voice says start. Another voice will say go as one more says stay. You will hear a voice suggesting that you turn left while turning right looks equally inviting. You will hear yes and no. You will be faced with a hundred different directions you could go. You will have the choice of a thousand different things that you could do. How will I ever know which way to go? How will I ever know for sure what I should do? **Those are two very good questions.**

How have you decided which way you should go? How have you determined what you should do? How I have decided which way I should go and what I should do in the past is no basis for making a good decision in the future. **Why is that?** I have made a lot of mistakes. Quite frequently I have made the wrong choices and followed a faulty plan. I have gone left when right would have been far better. I have stayed when I should have gone. I have said yes when no would have been far wiser. **Who did you listen to when you made all these choices? Who gave you guidance? What wisdom did you seek? What counsel did you follow?** Those are all good questions. Unfortunately I don't have any good answers. **You must have an answer.** My answer is the problem. I didn't listen to anyone when I made my decisions. I had no guidance. I received no wisdom. I sought no one's counsel. **What did you do?** I listened to myself. I listened to my own counsel. I followed my own wisdom. I set my own goals and followed my own plan. **That is a problem.** Yes, I know.

Your past has not gone to waste. You have been taught valuable lessons. What have you learned? I have learned to listen. I have learned to ask for wisdom. I have learned to seek counsel. I have learned to receive guidance. I have learned to listen and rely on one voice that will give me wisdom, counsel and guidance. **What voice is that?** I have learned to listen to your voice. I have learned to rely on you. **So now, you will listen to me?** Yes Lord, I will listen to you. **That will be very good.**

Lord, no longer will I go charging forward with my own pride filled plan of what I think I will do and accomplish. Instead I will attentively listen to you. I will seek you and your will for my life. I will go where you guide me. I will do all that you ask of me. Amen

If *The Lord's Will*

Now listen, you who say, "Today or tomorrow we will go to this or that city, spend a year there, carry on business and make money." Why, you do not even know what will happen tomorrow. What is your life? You are a mist that appears for a little while and then vanishes. Instead, you ought to say, "If it is the Lord's will, we will live and do this or that." As it is, you boast and brag. All such boasting is evil.

NIV James 4:13-16

If *The Lord Wants*

Look here, you who say, "Today or tomorrow we are going to a certain town and will stay there a year. We will do business there and make a profit." How do you know what your life will be like tomorrow? Your life is like the morning fog—it's here a little while, then it's gone. What you ought to say is, "If the Lord wants us to, we will live and do this or that." Otherwise you are boasting about your own plans, and all such boasting is evil.

NLT James 4:13-16

If *The Lord Wishes*

Come now, you who say, "Today or tomorrow we will go to such and such a town and spend a year there, doing business and making money." Yet you do not even know what tomorrow will bring. What is your life? For you are a mist that appears for a little while and then vanishes. Instead you ought to say, "If the Lord wishes, we will live and do this or that." As it is, you boast in your arrogance; all such boasting is evil.

NRSV James 4:13-16

If *The Lord Is Willing*

Come now, you who say, Today or tomorrow we will go into such and such a city and spend a year there and carry on our business and make money. Yet you do not know [the least thing] about what may happen tomorrow. What is the nature of your life? You are [really] but a wisp of vapor (a puff of smoke, a mist) that is visible for a little while and then disappears [into thin air]. You ought instead to say, If the Lord is willing, we shall live and we shall do this or that [thing]. But as it is, you boast [falsely] in your presumption and your self-conceit. All such boasting is wrong.

AMP James 4:13-16

If *The Lord Wills*

Come now, you who say, "Today or tomorrow we will go to such and such a city, and spend a year there and engage in business and make a profit." Yet you do not know what your life will be like tomorrow. You are just a vapor that appears for a little while and then vanishes away. Instead, you ought to say, "If the Lord wills, we will live and also do this or that." But as it is, you boast in your arrogance; all such boasting is evil.

NASB James 4:13-16

If *The Lord Wills*

Come now, you who say, "Today or tomorrow we will go into such and such a town and spend a year there and trade and make a profit"—yet you do not know what tomorrow will bring. What is your life? For you are a mist that appears for a little time and then vanishes. Instead you ought to say, "If the Lord wills, we will live and do this or that." As it is, you boast in your arrogance. All such boasting is evil.

ESV James 4:13-16

If *The Lord's Will*

Come now, you who say, "Today or tomorrow we will go to such and such a city, spend a year there, buy and sell, and make a profit"; whereas you do not know what will happen tomorrow. For what is your life? It is even a vapor that appears for a little time and then vanishes away. Instead you ought to say, "If the Lord wills, we shall live and do this or that."

NKJV James 4:13-16

If *The Master Wills*

And now I have a word for you who brashly announce, "Today—at the latest, tomorrow—we're off to such and such a city for the year. We're going to start a business and make a lot of money." You don't know the first thing about tomorrow. You're nothing but a wisp of fog, catching a brief bit of sun before disappearing. Instead, make it a habit to say, "If the Master wills it and we're still alive, we'll do this or that." As it is, you are full of your grandiose selves. All such vaunting self-importance is evil.

MSG James 4:13-16

If *The Lord Wants*

Look here, you people who say, "Today or tomorrow we are going to such and such a town, stay there a year, and open up a profitable business." How do you know what is going to happen tomorrow? For the length of your lives is as uncertain as the morning fog—now you see it; soon it is gone. What you ought to say is, "If the Lord wants us to, we shall live and do this or that." Otherwise you will be bragging about your own plans, and such self-confidence never pleases God.

TLB James 4:13-16

If *The Lord Wants*

Some of you say, "Today or tomorrow we will go to some city. We will stay there a year, do business, and make money." But you do not know what will happen tomorrow! Your life is like a mist. You can see it for a short time, but then it goes away. So you should say, "If the Lord wants, we will live and do this or that." But now you are proud and you brag. All of this bragging is wrong.

NCV James 4:13-16

The Lord's Will

Year _____ Week _____ Day _____ Date _____

If – James 4:13-16

In Context: Read James 4

Begin With Prayer:

Here I am Lord. I Am Listening.

Meditating On God's Word: (What is God speaking to your heart?)

Now listen, you who say, "Today or tomorrow we will go to this or that city, spend a year there, carry on business and make money." Why, you do not even know what will happen tomorrow. What is your life? You are a mist that appears for a little while and then vanishes. Instead, you ought to say, "If it is the Lord's will, we will live and do this or that." As it is, you boast and brag. All such boasting is evil. James 4:13-16

Considering The Words: (What words speak to your heart?)

Now listen, | you | who say, | "Today | or | tomorrow | we will | go to | this | or | that city, | spend | a year there, | carry on | business | and | make money." | Why, | you | do not | even know | what will | happen tomorrow. | What is | your life? | You are | a mist | that appears | for | a little while | and then | vanishes. | Instead, | you ought | to say, | "If it is | the Lord's will, | we will | live | and do | this or that." | As it is, | you boast | and brag. | All such | boasting | is evil. James 4:13-16

Praying The Scripture: (What prayer from your heart will you write?)

Lord, no longer will I go charging forward with my own pride filled plan of what I think I will do and accomplish. Instead I will attentively listen to you. I will seek you and your will for my life. I will go where you guide me. I will do all that you ask of me. Amen

What It Means: (What questions speak to your heart?) (Suggested questions for small group discussion are in bold)

What have you been telling yourself about your goals and plans for your life?

Why is it a critical mistake to make your own plans without asking the Lord to show you His will?

When are you setting aside time to listen to all that the Lord has to say to you?

How has the Lord helped you to know and do His will as you have listened to Him?

When have you set aside your will and plan in order to do God's will and plan for your life?

How has relying on the Lord helped you to make the best use of the time He has given to you?

How has the Lord been blessing your work as you have continued to listen to Him?

Living It Out: (What action step is God guiding your heart to take?)

Set aside time every day to listen attentively to all that the Lord has to say to you so that He can guide your life.

Seeing It Happen: (What are you trusting God for in your heart?)

Have faith that the Lord will guide your life and the work of your hands as you listen attentively to Him.

Get Ready To Share: (What can you share with others from your heart?)

Share with another person or your small group how you are listening attentively to the Lord so He can guide your life.

Close With Prayer: **Quiet Yourself Before The Lord**

Pause And Offer Prayers Of...

With An Attitude Of Faith Listen To What The Lord Wants To Say To You

Adoration... _____

Thanksgiving... _____

Confession... _____

Intercession... _____

Petition... _____

Journal

As You Quiet Yourself Before The Lord

What Do You Want To Say To Me Lord?

What Prayers Are You Praying Today?

Prayer Of Blessing

(What Prayer Of Blessing Can You Pray For Another?)

May you listen attentively to the Lord so that you can know and do His will.

Prayer To Carry

(What Prayer Would You Like To Carry Throughout Your Day?)

Lord, I will listen attentively to you so that I can know and do your will.

What Do You Want To Remember About Today?

A Question To Ask God

(What Would You Like To Ask God?)

Lord, what do you want to say to me today about knowing and doing your will?
