

DISCIPLESHIP GROUPS

Our Mission: Reaching Out to Leaders Who Can Change the World.

Dec 2017

FAITH IN ACTION: #9: WHAT ABOUT TOMORROW?

INTRODUCTION

What Christian businesses do you know that show that they are living their faith?

OBSERVATION/INTERPRETATION

Read James 4:13-17

1. What kind of planning model does James describe in verses 4:13-14 and 16?
2. How does he criticize the model? What is his solution?
3. Is James criticizing long-range planning altogether? What's the balance?

Note: Just as the truth of God and his sole lordship are necessary correctives to human autonomy, so also is this truth about the transitory nature of humans.¹¹

4. What scares you the most about being used by God and submitting to His plans? **Acts 18:21**
5. How do your plans express confidence that the future is in God's control? **Jer 29:11**
6. What responsibility comes with knowing God's will?
7. How does James define sin? (17) **Rom 14:23** Why is "omission" a sin?
8. How does that compare to most people's definition of sin? **John 9:41; Lk 12:47**
9. Why do most people feel that it is not a sin to "fail to do what is right"? **1 John 1:8-10**

Note: The principle of doing only what one knows to be good begins with placing all of the intentions of the heart before God. Only this doing what is good can be whole-hearted trust in God.²

Read James 5:1-6

Note: Many scholars think that James is addressing traveling merchants and wealthy landowners that were not Christians because he warns them to repent and weep because of their impending judgment. He also does not address them as "brothers." This is like OT judgments against pagan nations. Zeph 2: 4-15 If he is addressing believers, he is warning them that they are acting like unbelievers and need to repent or face judgment.

10. James is asking the rich: "How did you get rich? How is it being used?" What does that imply for Christians in the market place?
11. What word pictures is James creating to explain the rich's value system? (5:2-3) **Mt 6:19**
12. What do self-centeredness and worldly interest imply about a person's perspective on eternity? **1 Tim 6:10**

APPLICATION

- How could these passages influence your career or purchasing decisions?

The Wendels were a wealthy New York family who allowed money to become a miserable taskmaster. A bachelor brother and his seven sisters led lonely, deprived lives - no suitors (they were after the money), no modern conveniences such as radio, electricity, and automobiles. The only household member who enjoyed wealth was the poodle named Toby, who slept in a four-poster bed, ate from a special table with a velvet cloth, and played in a yard that cost a million dollars to equip and maintain. The others lived lonely and frugal lives. They illustrate the extreme to which we can allow wealth to dominate our priorities, our needs, our humanness. Godliness with contentment is great gain... (1 Timothy 6:6-9)

¹¹ Cf. Job 7:7; Pss 39:5; 102:3; 144:4; Isa 2:22.

¹² Richardson, K. A. (1997). *Vol. 36: James*. The New American Commentary (199, 203). Nashville: Broadman & Holman Publishers.