

- A. What will happen tomorrow? How long will I live? These are questions that make it evident that God is seated on His throne.
- B. Earlier in this epistle, James gave some encouragement and very useful help in dealing with trials, testing, and temptations. This epistle also dealt with abuses seen abroad within the church such as arrogance, quarrels, and the showing of personal favoritism to the rich over the poor.

You are called to depend upon God and His sovereign will.	I. NATURE OF PRESUMPTION II. CURES FOR PRESUMPTION
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I. **NATURE OF PRESUMPTION** →v13

- A. James likely cited this example of presumption because he observed conversation in his day.
- B. He noted that people stated such definite plans as if they were making a claim to know future.
 - 1. In **v16** James gave his analysis of such plans: **“But as it is, you boast in your arrogance; all such boasting is evil.**
 - a) The Greek for **“boast”** in this verse can be translated as “glory, rejoice, or brag”
 - b) As James demonstrated, one’s speech can reveal the nature of a person’s heart.
 - c) Boasting in one’s arrogance can be defined as self-sufficiency rather than a dependence upon God.
 - 1) Such an attitude includes a disregard for God and His hand of providence.
 - 2) We should always have God and His sovereign dealings upon our mind.
 - 2. Today’s text teaches us to be careful with our speech, especially regarding our future plans.
 - a) Do you ever speak or act presumptuously? We all have from time to time.
 - b) What about those supposedly **“innocent”** or harmless statements such as, “Rain or shine, I’ll be there,” or when you tell your boss, “No matter what, I’ll get that job done tomorrow.”
- C. Some may look at today’s text and take it to an extreme by saying, “Because we do not know what tomorrow holds, why make plans at all?”
 - 1. **Prov. 20:4** say that, **“The sluggard does not plow after the autumn, so he begs during the harvest and has nothing.”**
 - a. Without planning ahead, a farm will become grossly dysfunctional.
 - b. When young, without planning for one’s future to develop an in-demand skill or get a degree, one may have to resort to working for minimum wage and living in poverty.
 - 2. Main issue here is not if we should make plans or not.
 - a. God wants us to focus on how we make our plans.
 - b. Do we make our plans as supposedly self-sufficient individuals or as those who are truly dependent upon God, seeking His blessing for the labors of our hands?

II. CURES FOR PRESUMPTION → **v14**

A. To eliminate presumption, you need a correct understanding of life to result in humility. This is taught to us using two vital facts from **v14**.

1. Life is unpredictable. James said, **“You do not know what will happen tomorrow.”**
 - a. **Prov 16:9**: **“Man’s heart plans his way, But the Lord directs his steps.”**
 - b. Often, God directs our steps better than we could ever plan.
2. Life is brief. James said that your life is like **“a vapor that appears for a little while and then vanishes away.”**
 - a. Earlier in chapter 1, James compared both life and riches to the flowering grass that withers away. → **Ja 1:10-11**.
 - b. Jesus told us in **Mat 6**, **“Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy, and where thieves break in and steal. But store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys, and where thieves do not break in or steal; for where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.”**¹
 - c. Although our property and very lives fade away, be encouraged— some things persist.
 - 1) The Word of God stands forever.
 - 2) Faith in Christ leads to an eternal inheritance in heaven and then in the new heavens and new earth after our resurrection.
 - 3) After we pass from this life, we should pray for our covenant seed— our descendants after us— would persist from generation after generation until Christ returns.

B. Rather than stating your plans as though you have the power to make them happen, **v15** says, **“Instead, you ought to say, ‘If the Lord wills, we will live and also do this or that.’”**

1. You are commanded to depend upon God & His providence.
 - a. For those who have a saving faith in the Lord Jesus, you put your trust in Him for your eternal life, why not trust Him with your tomorrow?
 - b. In **v15** James wrote, **“If the Lord wills, we shall live...”**
— Even our very lives— our taking a breath tomorrow— is dependent upon God.
2. There is a final encouragement to reform your ways in **v17**: **“Therefore, to one who knows the right thing to do and does not do it, to him it is sin.”**
 - a. The Holy Spirit instructed James to write this because He knows we often struggle with the sin of procrastination— putting off changing our ways because we presume that we will always have more time.
 - b. There is procrastination among Christians.
 - 1) There may be relationships inside and outside the church you need to mend.
 - 2) We are aware of the need to tell friends or our loved ones about salvation in Christ.
 - c. There is procrastination among those who do not know Christ as Lord and Savior.
 - 1) **2 Cor 6:2** says there is an urgency for accepting salvation: **“Behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation.”**
 - 2) **Heb 3:15**: **“Today, if you hear His voice, do not harden your hearts.”**

Review, further application, and conclusion:

¹ Mat 6:19-21