

Dependence On God
(James 4:13-17)

“Nothing is more characteristic of a Christian than the desire to do the will of God.”
John MacArthur

- **The Foolish Planner** (James 4:13-14): The unbeliever who has no acknowledgment of God; the believer who forgets his God.
 - *“Come now”* - This phrase is used for correction and to draw attention to the Jewish merchants described in these verses. (James 5:1) They were practicing practical atheism, that is, living as if God did not exist.
 - *“Today or tomorrow we will go... spend... trade... make a profit”* - Hope here is placed in the wisdom of men and the world. Every plan shown is earthly, temporary, and for selfish ambition. (Lk. 12:16-21) We are called to plan and steward all that we have been given, but presuming we are in control and leaving no room for error is a sin. (1 Pet. 4:10)
 - *“You do not know what tomorrow will bring”* - We are finite beings with limited knowledge. None of us can truly know what the future holds. (Prov. 27:1)
 - *“What is your life? For you are a mist”* - We forget the uncertainty of life itself. We are not permanent and our life is fading from existence. (Ps. 39:5; 62:9; 102:3)

- **The Wise Planner** (James 4:15): The unbeliever is incapable of living according to the will of God; the believer should depend on God in all his plans and for all things.
 - *“If the Lord wills”* - A believer in making plans ought to acknowledge his utter dependence on God. (Mt. 6:31-34) God’s will here is describing His counsel by which He governs all things. (Prov. 19:21; Is. 46:9-10) He alone does whatever He pleases for the sake of His glory. By His will men are given life and breath. By His will we may use that to love and obey Him. (Eph. 2:10)

- **The Arrogant Planner** (James 4:16-17): The unbeliever who ignores the truth proclaimed to him; the believer who disobeys the truth revealed to him.
 - *“You boast in your arrogance”* - This addresses the one who knows the truth, but chooses to ignore it. This is a sin of contempt. (Rom. 1:18-23; Jn. 9:41; 1 Pet. 2:20-22)
 - *“Whoever knows the right thing to do and fails to do it... it is sin”* - Sins of omission are rarely isolated. By not doing what is right you are actively doing what is wrong. (James 1:22-24) There is no neutrality; we either glorify God or sin against Him. (Lk. 12:47-48)

What is God’s will?

- Salvation - God’s will is for men to be saved. (Ez. 18:23, 32; 1 Tim. 2:4)
- Sanctification - God’s will is for us to grow in holiness. (1 Thess. 4:3; Rom. 6:19)
- Submission - God’s will is for us to submit to authority. (1 Pet. 2:13; Rom. 13:1; Titus 3:1)
- Suffering - God’s will is for us to suffer as Christ did. (1 Pet. 3:17; 2 Tim. 3:12; Rom. 8:17-18)

Worship: How Great Thou Art (Various Artists)

As the Deer (Various Artists)