



Leader

10/18 - James 4:13-17

LOVE

A new commandment I give to you, that you love *one another*... (John 13:34)

- *Internal*: How was your week? Any new life updates? How was your walk with the Lord this week?
- *External*: Practically, is there any individual or family that needs encouragement from us as a group?

TRUTH

Let the word of God dwell in you richly, teaching and admonishing *one another*... (Col. 3:16)

Understanding:

1. When you reflect on the message from Sunday, what most resonated with you?

[\[Open Discussion\]](#)

2. Let's read our primary text. How does this passage connect to what James has said in 4:1–12 (concerning pride)?

It is the same pride in a different setting. In 4:1–10 pride shows up as selfish craving and friendship with the world; in 4:11–12 it shows up as playing judge over others. Here it shows up as playing sovereign over the future. In each case the human heart takes a seat that belongs to God alone. James's call to "humble yourselves before the Lord" (4:10) applies just as much to our calendars and business plans as to our conflicts.

3. James asks, "What is your life?" and answers, "You are a mist." What does that image teach us? A mist, like breath on a cold morning or fog that burns off by midday, is real but brief and fragile. Scripture repeatedly uses this kind of picture for human life (Ps. 39:5; 90:10–12; 144:4). The point is not that our lives are meaningless, but that they are short and dependent. Seeing life as a vapor teaches us to number our days, to hold plans loosely, and to spend our limited time on what lasts.

4. Does this passage forbid making plans, setting goals, or thinking about the future?

No. James does not say "do not plan," but "plan as dependents." Proverbs 16:9 captures the balance: "The heart of man plans his way, but the LORD establishes his steps." Wise stewardship involves budgets, calendars, and goals. The difference is whether we hold them with an open hand, pray over them, seek God's glory in them, and are willing for him to redirect them.

5. How does verse 17 relate to the rest of the passage? What is a "sin of omission"?

Verse 17 functions as a summary and warning: now that you know you should live in humble dependence, failing to do so is sin. More broadly, James teaches that sin is not only doing what is wrong but failing to do what is right. Knowing the good and leaving it undone, a delayed act of obedience, an unspoken word of encouragement, a neglected need, is real disobedience (Luke 12:47; James 1:22–25). Knowledge raises responsibility.

6. How does the gospel free us from the burden of trying to control the future?

The myth of control is exhausting; it breeds anxiety when things are uncertain and pride when they go our way. The gospel tells us that our future is secured not by our planning but by Christ's finished work. The God who did not spare his own Son will also graciously give us all things (Rom. 8:32), and he works all things for the good of those who love him (Rom. 8:28). Because our eternal tomorrow is certain, we can face uncertain earthly tomorrows with peace rather than fear (Matt. 6:34; Phil. 4:6-7).

Application:

7. Look at your calendar and plans for the coming month. How would you pray over them differently if you truly believed "if the Lord wills"?
8. How can you deposit this type of eternal mindset in the minds of your family or those you lead?
9. Since life is a mist, what is one way you want to invest your limited time this week in what will last, in your family, your church, or your neighbors?
10. Any other thoughts you would like to share before we wrap up this text?

GREAT COMMISSION

Go therefore and make disciples of all nations... (Matt. 28:19-20)

- *Internal:* Did you make time to disciple your family this week? Pray with them?
- *External:* Is your life marked by joy/contentment? Are you prepared to share the gospel if the Holy Spirit prompted? Is the name of Jesus on your lips in your day-to-day activity?

CONFESSION/PRAYER/REPENTANCE

But exhort *one another* every day, as long as it is called "today," ... (Heb. 3:12-14)

- Confession is agreeing with God about our sin according to the Scriptures. Is there anything you want to confess before the group (generally)? [*apathy, idolatry, selfishness, jealousy, anger, envy*]
- Let's pray, asking God to help us apply His word to our lives.

Sources:

- ESV Study Bible Commentary
- GotQuestions.org
- Multiple AI Resources