

Read James 4:13-17

What is your approach to planning for the future?

Discuss the kind of people James is talking about in v13—what is the problem he is addressing?

Read v14. What kind of perspective on life does James give in this verse? How is it different to the way we normally view our lives?

*“The number of things we cannot control in life is infinitely greater than the number of things we can.”* Do you agree or disagree with this statement? Why?

The word ‘mist’ in v14 literally means breath or vapour. What difference does it make when we see our lives as a breath in the scope of eternity?

What is the practical difference between living a self-determined life and living a God-determined life?

Read v15. This verse contains a helpful guide to planning ahead for Christians. It contains three phrases:

1. “If the Lord wills”—What does this mean? How can we prevent this from being merely a tag-line, and allow it to become a guiding principle in our lives?
2. “We will live”—Why does James include this phrase? What kind of attitude does it teach us to have?
3. “And do this or that”—What does this say about the place of planning ahead in the Christian life?

What is the balance between trusting God and planning ahead in life?

What would it mean for you to surrender your future plans, hopes and dreams to God? What would this look like practically?