

## THEWELL

GPS 8.3-8.8

### Monday, 8.3.20 - Psalm 90:12

Considering God's righteous anger and wrath (Psalm 90:11), Moses provides an example of sensible prayer. He asks God for wisdom to account for our time. Time flies, life is uncertain, and God judges sin. It is important, therefore, to value the moments and days He has given us. We cannot know what tomorrow will bring (Proverbs 27:1), so we ought to dedicate today and every day to the Lord. We must live sensibly and with a purpose, yet do so one day at a time.

We should seek divine wisdom for the best way to live throughout each day. Our prayer in the morning should be what David prayed: "Teach me to do your will, for you are my God! Let your good Spirit lead me on level ground!" (Psalm 143:10). Jesus set a perfect example of morning prayer that we can emulate (Mark 1:35). Surely, if we considered every 24-hour period as something valuable God has entrusted to us, we would faithfully dispense our moments in ways that honor Him (1 Corinthians 4:2).

- Do you sense how brief life really is?
- How are you making sure you use your time in the best possible way?

### Tuesday, 8.4.20 - Colossians 4:5

Part of proclaiming the gospel and making it clear (Colossians 4:3–4) is found in the believer's actions toward unbelievers. Two important principles are presented here. First, wisdom or discernment should be used regarding our actions—our "walk"—toward unbelievers. What we do and what we say must be consistent, over time, and with each other, in order to clearly present the message of Jesus.

Second, we are to make effective use of our time. Some translations interpret this phrase as "making the most of every opportunity." Every moment of life is important and should be maximized in service to Christ. More than most, Paul was acutely aware of this, having been beaten, imprisoned, and shipwrecked over the course of his ministry. This perspective inspired Paul to boldly share faith in Jesus with unbelievers.

This is a fundamental part of the gospel message: time is short. Whether by accident, nature, or the return of Christ, each person can be

## THEWELL

face-to-face with God at any moment. Believers should be motivated by the knowledge that the people around us will die apart from Christ unless they hear and receive the gospel.

-If you and three of your friends were to ask some unbelievers what they think of your lifestyle, what do you think they would say?

### Wednesday, 8.5.20 - James 4:13

In the previous verse, James warned about arrogantly judging our neighbors for their sinfulness. Now he begins a section about the arrogance of imagining that we have total control over the events of our own lives. Over the next few verses, he will point out that true humility means recognizing our limitations. We really don't know everything about the future. Even our best planning is still subject to God's will.

This verse sets up this point with a generic business plan. The problem here is not in making the plan—James doesn't go on to say that planning is sinful, or foolish. The problem James is relating, by using this example, is an attitude of self-reliance. "Tomorrow, I will do this or that." Verse 16 shows the attitude James intends behind the words of this verse. Making such a statement, out of confidence in one's own ability, and without humility, is unwise.

The context of the prior passage is important. James has been discussing the problem of following the thought process of the world, instead of the wisdom of God. Here, James imagines a businessman declaring how he will make more money, how he will get what he wants out of life. In context, this is meant to mean one who is planning according to the pattern of the world. This man is making plans and vowing to keep them in his own power and by the force of his own will.

That's not the life of dependence God calls His children to walk in.

### Thursday, 8.6.20 - James 4:14

James has spent most of this chapter warning about the wisdom of the world. This includes the attitude of success at all costs, and selfish ambition. In that context, verse 13 imagined the declaration of a businessman: "Today or tomorrow, we will..." James wants us to hear this statement in the context of his prior points. We should recognize our own

## THEWELL

arrogance in believing that we are the masters of our own fate. We want to think of ourselves as able to do whatever we put our minds to, especially if that involves gathering for ourselves money or status or comfort.

The first problem with that, James writes, is that we can't predict or control the future. We truly have no idea what will happen tomorrow. In addition to that, our lives are temporary and fragile. We are a mist that is here for a moment and then gone.

James isn't being a pessimistic downer. Nor is he denying the value of sound planning or judgment. As verse 16 shows, James is condemning these kinds of remarks in a mindset devoid of God's influence. He is asking us to understand and embrace our human limits instead of trying to shrug them off. Realizing how dependent and fragile we truly are is a major step in escaping the desperate pursuit of cash, power, and pleasure. James wants us to carry with us an awareness that our every moment, every movement, is dependent on God's grace, mercy, and will.

### Friday, 8.7.20 - James 4:13

In the previous verses, James called out declarations of what we will do in the future, without humbly admitting our dependence on God, as arrogant and foolish. Most of this chapter has been James's explanation of how arrogant self-reliance is behind much of the evil in the world. When we don't rely on God for our needs, we tend towards envy, competition, and abuse of others. Here in this verse, James shows how we should demonstrate our awareness of our dependence on God.

This is a deeper issue than simply tacking the words "if the Lord wills" onto any statement of future plans. God wants His children to willingly live in dependence on Him. The right approach includes weighing God's will before we make the plans, then relying on Him to be in control of the results. He wants us to trust Him, to allow Him to direct our course. He wants to commit ourselves first and above all to accomplishing His will, not our own

## THEWELL

### Saturday, 8.8.20 - Proverbs 27:1

Here is, 1. A good caution against presuming upon time to come: Boast not thyself, no, not of to-morrow, much less of many days or years to come. This does not forbid preparing for to-morrow, but presuming upon to-morrow. We must not promise ourselves the continuance of our lives and comforts till to-morrow, but speak of it with submission to the will of God and as those who with good reason are kept at uncertainty about it. We must not take thought for the morrow (Matt. 6:34), but we must cast our care concerning it upon God. See Jas. 4:13-15. We must not put off the great work of conversion, that one thing needful, till to-morrow, as if we were sure of it, but to-day, while it is called to-day, hear God's voice. 2. A good consideration, upon which this caution is grounded: We know not what a day may bring forth, what event may be in the teeming womb, of time; it is a secret till it is born, Eccl. 11:5. A little time may produce considerable changes, and such as we little think of. We know not what the present day may bring forth; the evening must commend it. *Nescis quid serus vespere vehat*—Thou knowest not what the close of evening may bring with it. God has wisely kept us in the dark concerning future events, and reserved to himself the knowledge of them, as a flower of the crown, that he may train us up in a dependence upon himself and a continued readiness for every event, Acts 1:7.

-Is it necessary to boast to have good self-esteem?