



Digging Deeper

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Boasting About Tomorrow

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Definition and Context:

Boasting about tomorrow refers to the act of making presumptuous claims or plans about the future without acknowledging the sovereignty and will of God. This concept is addressed in the Bible, particularly in the context of human pride and the uncertainty of life. It serves as a caution against self-reliance and a reminder of the need for humility and dependence on God.

Biblical References:

The primary scriptural reference for boasting about tomorrow is found in the Book of James. James 4:13-16 states: "Come now, you who say, 'Today or tomorrow we will go to this or that city, spend a year there, carry on business, and make a profit.' You do not even know what will happen tomorrow! What is your life? You are a mist that appears for a little while and then vanishes. Instead, you ought to say, 'If the Lord is willing, we will live and do this or that.' As it is, you boast in your proud intentions. All such boasting is evil."

Theological Implications:

The passage in James highlights the transient nature of human life and the folly of making plans without considering God's will. It underscores the belief that God is sovereign over all aspects of life, including the future. By acknowledging "If the Lord is willing," believers are encouraged to submit their plans to God's authority, recognizing that He alone knows and controls the future.

Related Concepts:

1. **Humility:** Boasting about tomorrow is contrasted with the biblical virtue of humility. Proverbs 27:1 advises, "Do not boast about tomorrow, for you do not know what a day may bring." This verse emphasizes the importance of humility in acknowledging human limitations and the unpredictability of life.
2. **Dependence on God:** The act of boasting about tomorrow reflects a misplaced confidence in one's own abilities and understanding. Instead, Scripture calls believers to trust in God's provision and guidance. Proverbs 3:5-6 instructs, "Trust in the LORD with all your heart, and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways acknowledge Him, and He will make your paths straight."

3. The Brevity of Life: The metaphor of life as a "mist" in James 4:14 serves as a reminder of life's brevity and the urgency of living in accordance with God's will. This perspective encourages believers to focus on eternal values rather than temporal achievements.

Practical Application:

Believers are encouraged to approach their plans and ambitions with a heart of submission to God. This involves seeking His guidance through prayer, studying His Word, and being open to His leading. By doing so, Christians can align their desires with God's purposes and live with a sense of peace and assurance, knowing that their future is in His hands.

Warnings Against Pride:

The Bible consistently warns against the dangers of pride and self-sufficiency. In Luke 12:16-21, Jesus tells the parable of the rich fool who stored up earthly wealth without regard for his soul's eternal state. The man's sudden death serves as a stark warning against placing confidence in material security and neglecting one's relationship with God.

Conclusion:

While the Bible encourages planning and diligence, it also calls for a posture of humility and dependence on God. Boasting about tomorrow is ultimately a reflection of human pride, which is contrary to the biblical call to trust in the Lord and acknowledge His sovereignty over all aspects of life.

Why Should We Not Boast About Tomorrow?

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The wisdom of Solomon warns us not to make arrogant presumptions about the future: "Do not boast about tomorrow, for you do not know what a day may bring" (Proverbs 27:1). The New Testament writer James echoes this theme and develops it further: "Now listen, you who say, 'Today or tomorrow we will go to this or that city, spend a year there, carry on business and make money.' Why, you do not even know what will happen tomorrow. What is your life? You are a mist that appears for a little while and then vanishes. Instead, you ought to say, 'If it is the Lord's will, we will live and do this or that.' As it is, you boast in your arrogant schemes. All such boasting is evil" (James 4:13-16).

The Bible instructs believers not to boast about tomorrow because the future is uncertain and beyond human control. The word translated as "boast" in Proverbs 27:1 means "to show off verbally; to offer self-praise." Boasting about our future reveals a lack of humility. It is an arrogant reliance on self and fails to acknowledge God's sovereignty over our lives.



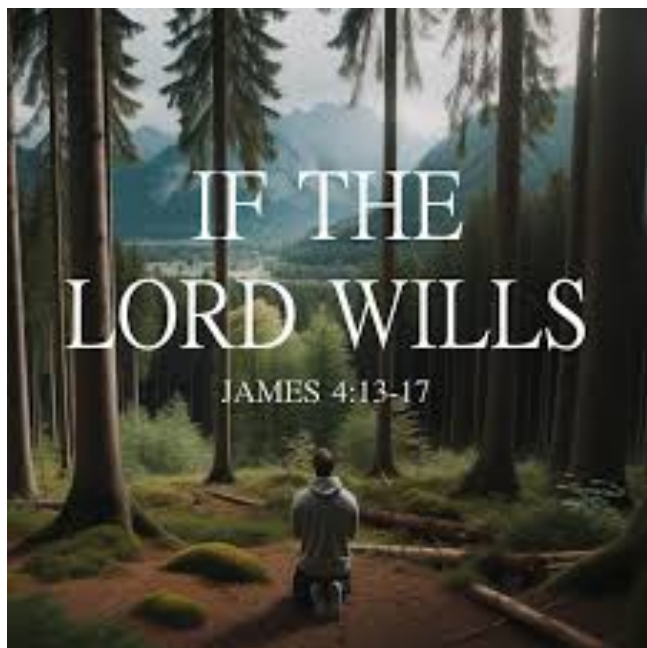
We put ourselves in God's place when we confidently declare what will happen in the coming days. In truth, we cannot know what will happen tomorrow. Our lives are fleeting; they could end at any moment. James says they are "a mist that appears for a little while and then vanishes" (James 4:14).

Jesus' Parable of the Rich Fool (Luke 12:16-21) underscores the fleeting nature of human life. The rich man in the story kept accumulating wealth, so much so that he decided to build bigger barns to store his great fortune. He proudly said that soon he would amass such riches that he could sit back, take it easy, "eat, drink, and be merry!" (verse 19). But just then, God said to him, "You fool! This very night, your life will be demanded from you" (verse 20). The rich man boasted about tomorrow, but God knew his tomorrow would never come.

"In their hearts, humans plan their course, but the Lord establishes their steps," declared Solomon (Proverbs 16:9; see also Proverbs 16:1). We can boast about tomorrow and "make many plans, but the Lord's purpose will prevail" (Proverbs 19:21, NLT). True wisdom recognizes our dependence on God—that He alone is sovereign and in control of our future. We are not promised tomorrow; therefore, we must not boast about it. Instead, we embrace God's plans, purposes, and will, whatever they may be. We acknowledge that He is the only all-seeing, all-knowing One (Proverbs 15:3; Psalm 33:13-15).

We should not boast about tomorrow because God is the Lord of today, yesterday, and tomorrow. The comforting flip side to this wisdom is that we don't have to worry about tomorrow, either. Jesus said, "So don't worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will bring its own worries. Today's trouble is enough for today" (Matthew 6:34, NLT). We can approach the future by trusting in the Lord with all our heart, not depending on our own understanding, but seeking His will in all we do, confidently knowing that He will show us which path to take (Proverbs 3:5-6).

Proverbs 27:1 urges us to recognize our limited control over the future and humbly focus on the present. Godly wisdom teaches us to trust the Lord for what lies ahead and not depend on ourselves. Wisdom always promotes humility, and "true humility and fear of the Lord leads to riches, honor, and long life" (Proverbs 22:4, NLT).



We should not boast about tomorrow because doing so shows a lack of godly character. In fact, self-praise is one of the worst, most dangerous forms of pride (see Proverbs 16:18-19). The arrogant trust in themselves and brag about their plans for a successful future. But those who have acquired wisdom have a realistic view of their own gifts and of their future. They humble themselves before the sovereignty of God, for only He knows the future.