



Sermon Study Guide

Decisions, Decisions – James 4:13-17

April 9 & 10, 2016

Opening Question

Based on research (done by someone with too much time on their hands), human beings make approximately 35,000 decisions a day (227 are about food alone). If you can remember, think back to the first one you made today – are you willing to share it with your group?

Read Together

Read **James 4:13-17** as a group.

Big Idea

You and I are confronted with decisions to make every day. While some are less consequential than others, many have significant implications, but more specifically, they have implications for God's will for us. How we determine His will of our lives is part of a bigger picture than we often see.

Discussion Questions

1. Read James 4:1-17. Can you think of an example (generic example) of how a Christian might presume to know God's will? What does presuming upon God reveal about our character? List a few character traits associated with this type of behaviour.
2. Read verse 14 again and then read Matthew 6:30-32. How much control does God have over our lives? What does that look like from a practical/day to day standpoint? What point do you think James was trying to drive home?
3. If we didn't worry about things (just as Jesus says in the verses we read), how would it affect us emotionally? How many things in our lives would change from a practical point of view?
4. Sometimes we look at God's will as though it were a buried treasure of sorts that we have to somehow find. Is that a helpful way to understand it? Why or why not?
5. Explain in your own words (citing examples from Scripture as they come to mind) the Sovereign will of God. Do you think we have a good handle on God's Sovereign will for mankind? If not, why?
6. What are a few practical ways we can get to know God's perfect/ permissive will (His law/commands for us)?
7. Of the 35,000 decisions we make a day, research also says that we will come to regret approx 22% of them. What do you think are the biggest reasons for this?
8. What kinds of things hold us back from understanding God's will for our lives?
9. Verse 15 says, "If the Lord wants us to..." How hard is that to say without running it through our personal filter of what "I want?"
10. Read verse 17 again. Describe the relationship between God's will and "doing the right thing." Is that hard? Why?

Challenge

This week in the decisions you will have to make, **DECIDE** to choose God's will over you own. Commit to read daily the words of Proverbs 3:5-6. *Trust in the Lord with all your heart; do not depend on your own understanding. Seek his will in all you do, and he will show you which path to take.*

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Prayer

- As you pray, ask God to give you the courage to echo the words of Jesus in Luke 22:42 “not my will, but yours be done.” Pray that He embolden you to seek to understand Him and not be distracted by your own desires.
- Ask Him to help you trust in His will despite what the circumstances may bring.

Next Steps

- Make a list (write it down or keep a mental list), of specific (new) examples where we can give our will over to God’s will this week.
- Read Acts 21:1-14 and let God’s Word speak to you through this story.