



September 7, 2025 | Matt Magee

Series: James: Faith/Works

Sermon Title: If the Lord wills . . .

Main Scripture: James 4:13-17

[Oak Grove Sermons Online](#)

OUTLINE

1. Principle: The Lord's will is ultimate; our lives must be aligned under His sovereignty.
2. Problem: We presume our will is final, sidelining God's authority in daily life.
3. Gospel: Jesus prayed, "Not my will, but Yours be done," and submitted for our salvation.
4. Response: Yield our will daily in prayer, saying with James, "If the Lord wills."

ANNOUNCEMENTS

- MISSIONAL PRAYER CARDS: Remember to be praying about who you can minister to, and how. Pray with and for one another.
- Who can you invite to join your Community Group?
- EXPLORE Oak Grove next Sunday, Sept. 14 after church.

DISCUSSION GUIDE

Group Leader: See if your group has reviewed the latest newsletter and briefly skim together if needed. [NEWSLETTER ARCHIVE](#)

Pray, asking the Lord to give humility as you read His Word, acknowledging His sovereignty over all your plans.

Read James 4:13–17 aloud together. Also have one person read in another translation for comparison.

Icebreaker: Share one plan you've made recently that didn't go the way you expected. How did you respond?

Principle: The Lord's will is ultimate; our lives must be aligned under His sovereignty.

1. What does it mean for our lives to be 'like a mist' as described by James (v. 14)?
2. What is the central theme of James 4:13–17 regarding human control and planning?
3. What does James call "evil" in this passage? (v. 16)
4. Have different group members read Job 7:7, Psalm 39:5, Prov. 27:1. What is the context for each passage, and how do they relate to James 4:13-17.
5. Why is it hard for us to remember our lives are short and fragile? How should this perspective shape the way we plan?

Problem: We presume our will is final, sidelining God's authority in daily life.

1. What are the people in v. 13 presuming they can do?
2. How does James describe this mindset in v. 16?
3. Have group members read Jeremiah 9:23–24, Ecclesiastes 6:12, and Luke 12:18-20. How do these passages speak to the attitudes we are to have?
4. Where do you tend to place your security—plans, savings, achievements?
5. What idols of control or self-reliance might God be exposing in you?

Gospel: Jesus prayed, "Not my will, but Yours be done," and submitted for our salvation.

1. What exchange happens at the cross for those who are arrogant and presumptuous?
2. Have different group members read Luke 22:42; Philippians 2:5-8; and Romans 5:19. What do they teach us about Christ's obedience, and how His obedience impacts those who believe?
3. Practically, how does Christ's obedience comfort you when you fail?
4. In what ways does the gospel free us from the pressure of self-sovereignty?

Response: Yield our will daily in prayer, saying with James, "If the Lord wills."

1. What phrase does James say we should use instead of boasting? (v. 15)
2. How does v. 17 expand our understanding of sin?

3. Have group members read Proverbs 16:9; Colossians 3:17; and John 15:5. What practical wisdom do these passages give us. How do they affirm James' message?
4. What would it look like for you to make plans with humility and prayer?
5. Where do you sense the Spirit inviting you to say, "If the Lord wills"?

Summary: Life is a mist, but God is sovereign. Christ's perfect submission covers our arrogance. By the Spirit, we can plan boldly yet hold everything with open hands.

Closing Prayer Focuses:

- Thank God for His sovereignty and grace.
- Confess areas of pride and presumption.
- Ask the Spirit to give humility in planning and trust in God's timing.