Christian Counseling and Mediation

Hope, Help, and Peacemaking Grounded in God's Word

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James 4:13-17 PLANNING BY PRIDE OR BY FAITH

James 4:13 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." 14 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. 15 Instead, you ought to say, "If it is the Lord's will, we will live and do this or that." 16 As it is, you boast and brag. All such boasting is evil.

PLANNING DONE IN PRIDE IS FORBIDDEN:

This kind of planning is self-centered and done independently of God. It does not want to acknowledge that God is the Lord over the future. It does not want to accept the limitations he places upon your life. It does not accept those changes in your plans that are out of your control, but in God's control. It puts all its hope in this life, rather than the one to come.

PLANNING DONE IN FAITH IS ENCOURAGED AND COMMANDED:

Faith-filled planning is bold to live in the present with a movement toward the future. It rests upon God's lordship over the future and trusts in his wise and good providence. It understands that your goal is not to try to persuade God to fulfill your plans, but to ask him to mold your plans by his sovereign and wise will. You do not see him as the one who destroys your plans to make you miserable, but the one who works through your plans, and often alters them, out of his Fatherly goodness and love toward you, and his purpose to glorify his Son.

Faith-filled planning trusts in the Good Shepherd to provide daily guidance through his Word and to sovereignly ordain the circumstances of your life. Godly planning is done freely and joyfully, but always submitted to God's mighty intervention. It accepts the impermanence of all things in this life, but puts its ultimate hope in the New Creation ahead.

Php 3:12 I know what it is to be in need, and I know what it is to have plenty. I have learned the secret of being content in any and every situation, whether well fed or hungry, whether living in plenty or in want. 13 I can do everything through him who gives me strength.

REFLECTION:

What plans do you have that are most important to you, both short-term and long-term? Does your attitude toward these plans reflect the planning done in PRIDE or planning done in FAITH? Are your plans grounded upon God's revealed will, the Bible? Do they reflect biblical priorities in the amount of importance that you attach to them? How do you think God wants you to modify your plans, or your attitude toward them?