

FAITH VS PRIDE
JAMES 4:13-17

SERMON POINTS

- Expectation vs. Reality
- Pride presumes knowledge, while faith considers our ignorance
- Pride presumes strength, while faith considers our frailty
- Pride presumes independence, while faith considers our dependence

MAIN IDEA: The Psalmist says, “The fool says in his heart, “There is not God.” Normally we have the atheist or unbeliever regarding that phrase, but James is challenging believers to consider how often we live our lives with more faith in ourselves than we do our sovereign God.

QUESTIONS

Q: Read James 4:13-14. Scott talked about the extreme example of Elizabeth Holmes for presumption, but James’ example is shocking in how ordinary it is. What’s wrong with saying things like, “Tomorrow I will go to that town and start a business, and turn a profit?”

Q: James says that pride presumes to have knowledge, but he reminds us that we don’t even know what will happen later today. We are all just one phone call, email, or text away from everything in our lives being turned upside down. How has life taught you that we really don’t know the future and that we depend on God?

Q: James says that we are like mist (vapor) that is here for a second and then vanishes. While that isn’t the happiest thought, why do you think he wants us to keep that in mind?

Psalm 39:5

Behold, you have made my days a few handbreadths, and my lifetime is as nothing before you.
Surely all mankind stands as a mere breath!

Psalm 144:4

Man is like a breath; his days are like a passing shadow.

READ:

C.S. Lewis in his monumental book, Mere Christianity “The moment you have a self at all, there is a possibility of putting yourself first--wanting to be the center--wanting to be God, in fact. That was the sin of Satan: and that was the sin he taught the human race. What Satan put into the heads of our remote ancestors was the idea that they could “be like gods”--could set up their own as if they had created themselves--be their own masters--invents some sort of happiness for themselves outside of God, apart from God. And out of that hopeless attempt has come nearly all that we call human history--money, poverty, ambition, war, prostitution, classes, empires, slavery--the long terrible story of man trying to have something other than God which will make him happy....God cannot give us a happiness and peace apart from Himself, because it is not there. There is no such thing.”¹

P: According to Lewis the original sin which has infected all of us is the desire for independence from God rather than dependence. We want to build our lives apart from him and to be in charge. We have more faith in ourselves than in our God.

Q: What would it look like practically to live more and more with faith and dependence on Christ instead of ourselves? What would it look like in our speech? What would it look like in our planning? What our prayer life look like?

¹ Mere Christianity, p 53-54