



James

Living Right in a Wrong World!

Living Right in God's Will!

James 4:11-17

Message #11 of 15 – S973

Sermon given on November 28, 2021



Sunday Morning Service

Pastor Rick Lancaster

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Opening Comments

- Turn to **James 4**
- Today, we continue the series: **James - Living Right in a Wrong World!**
- What do you do when you don't know what to do?
- I am convinced that the best life anyone can live is by walking with Jesus
- Last time, we learned that God gives more grace to the humble
- That means when we humble ourselves before God that He will give us more grace to live a life that pleases and glorifies Him
- But the question is, 'How do you know what pleases God?'
- Well, you can read the Bible, right?
- But that doesn't answer every question in life, does it?
- For example, should you get the COVID-19 vaccine?
- Even though millions of dollars are being spent on advertising trying to convince everyone to do it – more than one-third of Americans haven't – don't want to
- And because the advertising isn't working on most of those who are not inclined to get the vaccine – the government has instituted mandates requiring people to get vaccinated so that they can participate in life
- To work – to travel – to attend public events – to eat in a restaurant – to attend school classes – to visit your loved ones in the hospital
- What should you do? I looked in the concordance of my Bible and couldn't find anything about COVID-19 or vaccinations
- So, what do you do?
- The simple answer is, do what God wants you to do!
- It is simple, but it is not easy
- It is simple but it is not the same for all of us
- God may tell me to do one thing and then tell you to do something different

- When the Bible doesn't answer our questions directly, we must seek the wisdom that is from above and to do that we must humble ourselves before God
- To live right in this wrong way world, we need to know God's will for our lives
- God's will is the true north of our spiritual compass
- Let's pray and ask the Holy Spirit to help us understand God's will
- **Pray**

Teaching

- **Living Right in God's Will!**
- Chapter 4 began with the idea that we need God's grace to live right in this world
- In fact, we always need more grace
- And to get it, we need to humble ourselves
- One evidence of grace and humility missing in our lives are the fights and wars people have with others
- James begins with another evidence
- **James 4:11-12**
- The law that James is referring to is the 'royal law' **James 2:8**
If you really fulfill *the royal law according to the Scripture, "You shall love your neighbor as yourself," you do well.*
- If you are speaking evil of another believer, you are not loving them and you are judging the law of liberty or love as false or useless
- Then asks the rhetorical question, who are you to judge?
- Ended the last message saying that we are to humble ourselves
- A person who speaks evil of others is setting themselves above the other person, above the law of love, and above God, who is the only Lawgiver
- To live a life that is right and pleasing to God we must know and be willing to do God's will
- In very simple terms, God's will is His plan
- God has a plan for all of creation
- That would be defined as His general will
- He also has a specific will for every individual that He created

- And that specific will is unique to every individual
- God's will or plan for my life is different than His plan for your life
- Most of the world has rejected God and His Word – the Truth
- They have no desire to know or do God's will and so they resist God's plan for them and for the world
- This is why the world is so messed up
- God's plan for the world is good and blessed
- But for the world to experience the good and blessings people need to follow God's good plan – they need to align themselves with /God's will
- James is going to describe to us 3 wrong attitudes toward the will of God
- By avoiding these wrong attitudes, we can live the Christian life in a way that glorifies God, blesses others, and grows our faith
- And it will be beautiful to watch and be enjoyable to live
- First wrong attitude – **Ignoring God's Will**
- **James 4:13-14**
- 'we will go' = arrogance – assuming they know what is best for them
- 'to such and such a city' = independence – they don't need to know what God thinks – Should we move out of California?
- 'make a profit' = materialism – don't need God's blessing to be successful
- They weren't talking to God about their plans, and if they were, they weren't asking for His will to be known, they were asking God to bless their plan
- Don't ask God to bless your plan if you left Him out of your plan!
- In verse 14, James says, 'How can you make plans about a future that you know nothing about?'
- Not only that, but your lives are as a vapor – here for a moment, then gone
- No one is promised a long full life
- The second wrong attitude – **Being Above God's Will**
- Skip verse 15, we will come back to it
- **James 4:16**

- These people are acting as if they are masters of their own fate

Warren Wiersbe

“Man cannot control future events. He has neither the wisdom to see the future nor the power to control the future. For him to boast is sin; it is making himself God.”

- Turn to **Daniel 4**
- King Nebuchadnezzar was a powerful and successful king, built up the city of Babylon, and it was magnificent
- He had a wrong attitude about God’s will
- **Daniel 4:30**
- ‘Babylon is great – look at what I did for me’
- **Daniel 4:31-33**
- Turn back to **James 4**
- For seven years Nebuchadnezzar had the mind of an animal
- All because he claimed the glory that belonged to God alone
- Some people argue with God about the plan He has for their life, like they know better than God
- Ignoring God’s will, and thinking your will is above God’s will are both driven by the sin of pride
- The third wrong attitude about God’s will – **Disobeying God’s Will**
- **James 4:17**
- This person knows God’s will and His authority and chooses to disobey
- In the parable of the talents, three servants given money to invest
- Two did and received a reward – one didn’t – punished
- God established a plan for our lives that is good and beautiful
- And He expects us to live out that plan, depending upon Him
- Jesus spoke about this **Luke 6:46**
- **But why do you call Me ‘Lord, Lord,’ and not do the things which I say?**
- You are out of step with Jesus if you call yourself a Christian, but don’t do what He says
- And there are consequences to doing things your own way **Hebrews 12:6**

For whom the LORD loves He chastens, and scourges every son whom He receives.

- If you get out of step with God, don't be surprised if you get your toes stepped on
 - It is important for us to get into step with God, if we want to live this Christian life right
 - **James 4:15**
 - 'instead' of ignoring God's will, or thinking you are above God's will, or disobeying God's will
 - 'instead...say, "If the Lord wills..."
 - One of the key words in that statement is 'If'
 - My will, my plan for my life doesn't always line up with God's plan
 - If I want to live this Christian life in a way that is good, I need to get into step with God's plan – He is not going to change His plan
 - Would like to leave you with three things to help you to get into step with God's will for your life
 - First – **Seek God's Will**
 - You need to get to know what God's will is for your life **Acts 22:14** Then he said, 'The God of our fathers has chosen you that you should know His will, and see the Just One, and hear the voice of His mouth.'
 - It is God's will that we know His will – day by day
 - To know it we must humble ourselves before Him and seek it out diligently – at every point of decision
 - We get to know God's will from His Word, the Bible, and from trying to walk with Him in the Spirit – by living and doing what we believe God has set for us to do
 - The Bible teaches us the language of God – how He thinks and acts
 - And as I learn the language of God, as I pray I am better able to hear His voice directing me toward His will
 - Second – **Understand God's Word**
 - To live right with God, we need to understand the steps of the dance we call the Christian life **Colossians 1:9-10**
- For this reason we also, since the day we heard it, do not cease to pray for you, and to ask that you may be filled with the knowledge of His will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding; that you may walk worthy of the Lord, fully pleasing Him, being fruitful in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God...**
- It is not enough just to know what God's Word says, we need to understand it for our life today – Bible study – discipleship

- **Third – Do God’s Will**

- We need to make sure that we are doing God’s will **Romans 12:2**
And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what *is* that good and acceptable and perfect will of God.

- When we are in sync with God our lives prove that God’s will is good, acceptable, and perfect

- Once we know and understand God’s will, we need to do it **Ephesians 6:6-8**

...as bondservants of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart, with goodwill doing service, as to the Lord, and not to men, knowing that whatever good anyone does, he will receive the same from the Lord, whether *he is* a slave or free.

- We need to do it and keep doing it

- We are living in confusing, complicated, and contrary times

- As we strive to live right in the wrong way world, we will have to make difficult decisions

- One of the things that I have discovered in my spiritual life is that once I believe I know God’s will, the decisions become much easier

- No one can tell you what God’s will is for you in this life

- But God has put us into a spiritual family that He intends to use to help you seek His will

- The more involved you are in the body of Christ, the clearer God’s will becomes

- And not just for you – God’s will becomes clearer for everyone around you

- Let’s pray and ask God for the grace we need to seek His will more diligently

- **Pray**