November 15, 2026 **Pastor Andy McClellan**
Series Title: James
Sermon Title: "If the Lord Wills"
Text: James 4:13-17

In our planning…

1. We must realistically **ACCEPT** our human limitations, vv. 13-14 *(see also Psalm 39:5-6; 90:12; 103:15-16; Proverbs 27:1; Luke 12:13-21; 1 Corinthians 16:7; Philippians 2:5-8).*

2. We must humbly **YIELD** to the Sovereign plan of God, vv. 15-16 *(see also Prov. 16:9; 19:21; Matthew 6:10; Luke 22:42; 1 Cor. 4:19; 5:6; James 3:5).*

3. We must obediently **ACT** on the wisdom we've received, v. 17 *(see also Luke 12:47-48; John 9:41; Romans 14:23; Ephesians 5:17; 2 Peter 2:21).*

FOR FURTHER STUDY & DISCUSSION

1. The average lifespan of a person in the U.S. is 80 years. Yet, even *that* represents a tiny fraction of mankind's entire history. How does this illustrate what James says in v. 14? How should both the brevity and fragility of our lives influence how we think of ourselves, and how we posture ourselves before God?
2. What are some areas in our lives where we make plans? How and when is God included or excluded in those plans? What assumptions do we often make in planning? How do vv. 13-17 warn us against excluding God and making unrealistic assumptions about our lives? Aside from simply saying the words, what does it mean to actually plan with "*If the Lord wills*" in mind?
3. Considering that the Lord sometimes wills that we go through trials that test our faith (ch. 1), what might we actually be praying for when we pray Matthew 6:10? How did Jesus model this for us in Luke 22:42? What must we understand about God and about ourselves to be able to follow Jesus's example? How might you apply this principle to the plans you're making right now?
4. So far in James, we've learned that God gives wisdom when we ask (1:5) and that heavenly wisdom produces good conduct (3:13). When God gives us wisdom, and calls us to put it into action through good, what are some things that might keep us from doing what we know to be right? How have you experienced that in the past? Are you facing that in the present? How does James 4:17 show us the consequence for not following that wisdom? What should we do if we're having a hard time obediently acting on the wisdom we've received from God? What steps can we take in moving forward in obedience?

NEXT WEEK: James 5:1-12, Andy McClellan
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