

God Time Day 1: Big Plans & Tomorrow is Unknown



Everyone makes plans. Some of us make detailed plans and know our schedules months in advance. Others of us are spontaneous and like to fly by the seat of our pants. But we all have ideas of what we want tomorrow to look like— of how we think it should go.



List one or two of your “big picture” plans.

Now list some of your mundane plans for tomorrow.



Read James 4:13-15 on page 36.

James tells us in this passage that there are some problems with planning for tomorrow. The first is that tomorrow is unknown. Yet, we can get arrogant and think we have things all figured out... that by our own ambition, apart from God, we can be successful. The truth is that God is always in control; He knows what tomorrow holds. We should hold our plans loosely, submitting them to His will.



Look carefully at verse 13. James was directing this to Christian merchants. Circle what the merchants want.

The profit that these business owners were seeking wasn't the problem. James does not tell us that we shouldn't make money. Instead, the problem was the boastful, arrogant attitude of control, when tomorrow is only known to God.



Read James 4:16.

But as it is, you boast in your arrogance. All such boasting is evil.

How does God feel about such boasting?



Spend time in prayer, asking God to help you remember that only He controls tomorrow.

God Time Day 2: Tomorrow May Not Arrive



Read James 4:14 on page 36.

According to that verse, what is our life like?

Another problem with planning for tomorrow is that tomorrow may not arrive. In the grand scheme of time, we aren't here long. This sounds very pessimistic, but it's our reality. While we are here, we need to embrace the way that God has made us and the time that He has given us.

The prayer of Psalm 90:12 says, *“Teach us to number our days carefully so that we may develop wisdom in our hearts.”* What a good thing for us to pray!



Knowing that our time here on earth is limited, what should you be doing differently today?

God Time Day 3: Tomorrow Reveals My Ignorance



Read James 4:15 on page 36.

As we've discussed, as much as we plan and prepare, there is so much that is outside of our control. There is also so much that we don't know. We can look back at 2020 for just one example of how, in our ignorance, all humanity was caught by surprise.

Corrie ten Boom was a Dutch woman who hid Jews in her home during WWII. She eventually was caught and put in a concentration camp. Corrie famously said, *“Never be afraid to trust an unknown future to a known God.”* There is great wisdom in that!



Other than the COVID pandemic, has there been a time when “tomorrow revealed your ignorance?” How did it teach you to pray, *“If the Lord wills...?”*

God Time Day 4: Seek God's Plan Moment By Moment



The passage of James that we are studying teaches us to seek and submit to God's plan each moment of each day. Though we don't know what tomorrow holds, we know the one who holds tomorrow!



Read Colossians 1:17.
He [Christ] is before all things, and by him all things hold together.



The verse above is about the preeminence (superiority) of Christ. Write the end of the verse here: by him...

Sometimes, we want to make plans because we feel like it gives us control. We must remember, though, that Jesus Christ Himself holds all things together. Even when it feels like the world around us is spinning into chaos, we can be assured: Jesus is holding it in His hands. Since He holds all things together, it only makes sense that we should seek His plan. But how do we do this?



Read Ephesians 2:10.
For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared ahead of time for us to do.

Underline what God prepared "*ahead of time for us to do.*"

God is a personal God. He desires a relationship with us! He has good works prepared for us to do. Therefore, we ought to seek the plan He has. We do this by cultivating our relationship with Him – submitting to Him, obeying Him, spending time with Him in prayer and His Word, and so on.

Many times, we want to know God's plan for us without getting to know God better. It doesn't work this way! As we seek Him, He reveals His plans.



How would you like to see your relationship with God grow over the next month? What will you do to cultivate it?

Consider joining a Men's Fireteam (cbcfamily.net/men) or Women's Agape Group (cbcfamily.net/women).

God Time Day 5: Do What You Know To Do



Read James 4:17 on page 36.

This is called the "sin of omission," which means not doing the thing we should do. For example, in the story of the Good Samaritan (see Luke 10:25-37), the priest and the Levite committed the sin of omission when they passed by an injured man without offering help.

We tend to overcomplicate things. We pray, asking God to reveal His specific will for our lives. We want all the details for exactly what it is that we should do. Should we try for this career or that one? Should we seek marriage or remain single? Should we start doing this, stop doing that...? And on and on it goes. We seem stuck in the asking.

But there is a place to start: **We start by doing what we know to do.**

This is where the priest and the Levite went wrong. Instead of offering help to someone in need, they kept walking. Not doing what we know we should do is a sin. God is in control, so we need to submit to seeking His plan and then just do what we know to do. If we don't, we are being arrogant and/or foolish.



Make a short list of things that you know God wants you to do. Here are some starters:

- | | | |
|-------------|-------------|-----------------|
| Love God | Pray more | Show compassion |
| Love others | Be merciful | Forgive |

How would it look to add a few of these things into your plans? Try it. Just add an actionable step, like this: Show compassion to so-and-so. Or: Pray about this-and-that. (If you keep a planner, keep these things recorded.)



What do you know you should be doing, but you aren't?

Commit to changing that today! "I will..."