



Practical Christian Atheism

James 4:13 – 5:6 (#9 in Series)

Lyle L. Wahl

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Theme: **A living faith replaces self-sufficiency with submission and service.**

A living faith moves from independent to submissive planning.

1. The problem of independent planning.
(4:13-14, 16; see also Proverbs 27:1; Luke 14:25-33; John 4:34; 6:38; 8:28; 12:26; 1 Corinthians 4:1; James 1:1)
2. The attitude and practice of submissive planning. (4:15, 17; see also Matthew 6:10)

A living faith moves from selfish use of possessions to service through possessions.

1. Examples of this selfishness.
(5:4-6; see also Leviticus 19:13; Deuteronomy 24:14-15; Matthew 5:42; 6:19-24; Luke 10:7; 1 Timothy 5:18; James 1:27; 2:15-17; 1 John 3:15)
2. Effects of this selfishness. (5:1b-3; see also Ecclesiastes 2:11)
3. Elimination of this selfishness.
(5:1; 4-6; see also Proverbs 23:4-5; Matthew 6:19-21; 1 Corinthians 1:8; 2 Corinthians 3:18; Ephesians 4:28; Philippians 1:6, 10; 1 John 1:9)

In My Life This Week

As you use this daily guide, write out your observations and responses on a separate piece of paper and save them with this sheet for reference.

Monday. In our first look at James we asked you to read the entire letter and write a brief summary of the overall picture. Read the entire letter again today. If you wrote a summary earlier, review it now and compare your earlier observations with your present understanding.

Tuesday. Self-sufficiency is living a life of practical atheism. Why? Think through the different areas of your life and identify any areas or ways in which you are living as a *Christian Atheist*.

Wednesday. God tells us to look and plan ahead. Planning without seeking and relying on God, however, is an incorrect form of independence. Review your planning in this week so far—the whole spectrum from very short to very long range planning. Write down any times and specifics where you planned without God. Confess that to Him, and bring Him into these areas.

Thursday. Selfish use of our possessions comes naturally. “Every good thing given and every perfect gift” is from God (1:17), and we are only stewards, not owners of what we possess. Review your attitude toward the possessions God has entrusted to you, as well as your use of them.

Friday – Saturday. Sunday we think about being patient from 5:7-11. Read and think through this section in preparation for our time together.