

SERIES TITLE: WISDOM IN THE MAKING

PART THREE: DECISION MAKING

TEXT: JAMES 4:13-17

INTRODUCTION TO STUDY

James is the wisdom book of the New Testament. This series focuses on a section of the book that deals with four practical subjects: interpersonal conflict, prayer, decisions, and finances. In this text we find God's wisdom for each of these areas.

CONTEXT OF SCRIPTURE

God also wants believers to exercise His wisdom in their decision-making, for often this is the clearest expression of obedience. Do we do what we want or do we seek to do *God's will*? James illustrates with a scenario that seems especially relevant in this season of our lives.

FOCUS QUESTION

Describe a bad decision you made and share how it could have been avoided.

EXAMINATION

4:13 What stands out to you about the plans these businesspeople are making?

4:14 What point does James make here that criticizes their plans?

4:15 How does saying, "If the Lord wills..." address that criticism?

4:16 How is this boasting, and what makes it evil?

4:17 How does this relate to the subject of decision-making?

EXPLORATION

- Proverbs 16:9
- Jeremiah 9:23-24
- Luke 12:13-21
- John 5:30

- Romans 12:1-2

APPLICATION.

- Which of the “Three Questions for Decision-Making do you find the most helpful and why?
- How would you define practical atheism, and have you ever been guilty of it?
- Are you able to think of any ways that you could practice “holding your plans with open hands” in your daily life?
- What do you think it means to “act on what God makes clear” and how would you practice that?
- Of the suggested ways to seek God’s direction, which do you find most challenging?
 1. Start with Scripture
 2. Examine your motive
 3. Seek wisdom
 4. Make a responsible decision
 5. Stay ready to adjust

SUMMATION

- Fact: What is a key truth that you understood from this passage?
- React: What did you feel?
- Act: What are you going to do?