



SERIES: FEBRUARY – MARCH FAITH IN REAL LIFE

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Scripture: James 4:15-17

TITLE: Wise Living

How can you know if you're living inside God's will? This is a common struggle. Sometimes it's evident while other times it is just hard to do.

So should we live with wisdom? How should we live within God's will? James has the answer for us in James 4:15-17, (CSB).

Instead, you should say, "If the Lord wills, we will live and do this or that." But as it is, you boast in your arrogance. All such boasting is evil. So it is sin to know the good and yet not do it.

We live in disturbing times. It's as if the book of Judges was being lived out all over again. People are doing what is right in their own eyes. The people have either forgotten God, acknowledged God but ignored Him, or acknowledged God and His will but rejected it.

James here puts a bow his teaching on submitting to God's will. Last week we observed that planning is no sin but playing God is. So today, he says, "as it is, you boast in your arrogance. All such boasting is evil."

To ignore God's existence is a sin. To know God exists but reject Him is a sin. To play God is a sin. Now, for the world, that's to be expected. Inexcusable but expected. And here's the problem: it doesn't work to play God. This is why the world is so broken. This is why we have so many recovery groups. This is why we find self-help and religious books overtaking our book stores. We are trying to do life our way, and it ends in failure.

But for the Christian, we know God, and we know His will. For us to reject it or, as James puts it, "it is sin to know the good and yet not do it." It doesn't matter what the issue or opportunity is: if it's outside the will of God, it is a sin. When we say "no" to God or to His Word, we sin. No way around it.

So what's the alternative? James told us in verse 15. "If the Lord wills, we will live and do this or that." In all requests and planning, we should have a posture of God knows best. We will follow God, not ourselves. Many times we throw that on as an insurance policy or as a pass to live for ourselves "until God stops us." But that is dangerous and offensive to God.

So what should we do?

Well, my challenge for you today is to submit to God's authority. This is not easy. It's not easy for me. It's not easy for anyone. We like to push the limits with God. So today, we need to pull

back and say, "God, you're in charge. I want your best for my life. Show me what I need to do and not do today, so live in a way that's pleasing to you."

When we live within God's will, we will win the day.