NEVER PLAN APART FROM GOD'S WILL (James 4:13-17)

(We need to be get of the driver's seat and let God direct your life!)
This does not mean that you should not plan. You must! But you should seek God's plans and make them your plans.

The sin described now is planning without God - this is sheer secularistic behavior - it is worldliness!

"Go to now" = come now, listen now.
(Move [change] the way you're thinking)

V. 13 describes a traveling business man, who has all the details of part of his future worked out. He has everything predetermined!

1) He has a predetermined plan - "Today or tomorrow"
2) He has a predetermined place (destination)
   He plans to travel - Do you seek God's will before you decide to move?
3) He has a predetermined period of time
4) He has a predetermined program (he plans what he will do.
   Do you ask God for His will for your career?)
5) He has a predetermined purpose (he plans how much he will prosper.
   Are you dependent on God's will?)

He displays "calculated arrogance" (cp. v. 16). No one can alter his plans - not even God.

3 Questions to Answer:

A. WHEN WE MAKE PLANS,
DO WE CONSIDER THE UNCERTAINTY OF LIFE? (v. 13-14a)

The language reflects assurance and self-confidence; they assume that the outcome of their plans will occur exactly as planned.

Nothing in the future can be predetermined by you! Jesus said, "Take no thought for the morrow."
"Boast not thyself of tomorrow . . ." (Prov. 27:1)
READ Luke 12:16-20.

We should never make plans and then ask God to bless them!

B. WHEN WE MAKE PLANS,
DO WE CONSIDER THE BREVITY OF LIFE? (v. 14b)

Vapor = ex. breath appearing momentarily in the cold air; ex. smoke that quickly dissipates; ex. steam from a tea kettle.

Other figures applied to the duration of human life:
"a shadow that declineth" (Ps. 102:11)
"a breath" (Job 7:7)
"the cloud" (Job 7:9)
"grass" (Ps. 103:15)

God tells us to number our days (Ps. 90:12 - "So teach us to number our days--that we may apply our hearts unto wisdom")

If we would remember how short life is, we would put a different priority on our planning (ex. you pack a suitcase differently when you have much time, than you would if there was a fire in your house).

C. WHEN WE MAKE PLANS,
DO WE CONSIDER GOD'S WILL FOR YOUR LIVES? (v. 15-16)

We tend to make our own decisions, then get ourselves in hot water, and expect God to "pay the bill."

People say: I want God's will for every area in my life--and then they are mad, disappointed, etc., when God gives it to them. EX: "I'm willing for God to break up this dating relationship." (yet they are not really) . . . "I am willing to do God's will just as long as it is not _____."

1. When you seek God's will, it shows your dependence upon God (v. 15)
   "If the Lord will" = shows God's sovereignty.
   God alone can make our plans prosperous!

   "If the Lord will" = 2 ideas:
   1) We are saying "If God permits me, I will . . ."
      Acts 18:21 - After going to Jerusalem, Paul said, "I will return again unto you if God will (permit)
      I Cor. 4:19 - "I will come to you shortly if the Lord wills."
   2) We are saying "If God gives me life, strength, opportunity, I will . . ."

   Paul said: "I trust in the Lord that I will come to you shortly" (Phil. 2:19, 24). That is, "if it is the Lord's will."
   We depend upon God for life itself ("we shall live"), and we depend upon Him for ability ("and do this or that")

2. When you don't seek God's will, it shows your arrogance against God (v. 16)

   Such worldly (secular) overconfidence reveals pride and dethrones God out of your life!