

Faith in Real Life 11:
Honest, realistic and practical words about faith from the epistle of James
“God’s Will and Our Plans” (9/17/17)
James 4:11-17

James describes two additional characteristics of mature believers:

1) Mature believers refuse to speak evil against their brothers and sisters in Christ (4:11-12)

- a) Slandering or defaming each other. (Eph. 4:31; 1 Pt. 2:1)
- b) Criticizing, condemning, or complaining about each other.
- c) Backbiting or gossiping about each other.
- d) Anything that tears down one another is forbidden.(Eph. 4:29)
- e) Closely associated with the sin of slander is that of being judgmental.

2) Mature believers seek and submit to God’s will (vv. 13-17)

- a) Mature believers do not ignore God’s Will (4:13-14)
- b) Mature believers do not deny (reject) God’s Will (4:16)
- c) Mature believers do not disobey God’s Will (4:17)
- d) Mature believers choose to obey God’s Will (4:15)

Conclusion

Some common ways we talk about the future and make our plans, while leaving God out: *(sourced from the Life Application Bible Commentary)*

- 1) When we describe retirement in selfish terms as our time to enjoy the fruits of our labors.
- 2) When we see work and careers as ways we can make money in order to buy what we want.
- 3) When we define money as a symbol of independence.
- 4) When we imagine ourselves in control of major areas of life under the rationalization that God is not interested in such mundane matters.
- 5) When we make practical decisions about education, job changes, moving, investments, and spending—all without prayer.

Next Steps

- 1) In every aspect of our lives, in every plan we make, in every decision we face, consult the Lord throughout the process asking Him to redirect us in any area that is contrary to His will for us.
- 2) Submit to and obey the will of God even when it doesn't align with our will.