

JAMES - THE ART OF FAITHFUL LIVING

WEEK 9: DON'T WASTE YOUR LIFE

MIKE DRUMMOND - 11/3/24

GROWING TOGETHER *(ANSWER ALL OR JUST SOME OF THE ICE-BREAKERS)*

- When was the last time you planned something like an event, a trip, a family photo and it didn't work out regardless of the effort you put in to make it successful?
- Pastor Mike said, "In reality, church, if all you have is money, I think you're the poorest person on the planet". When you think of "poor", what do you think of?

GROWING WITH GOD *(ANSWER ALL OR JUST SOME OF THE QUESTIONS)*

THIS WEEK'S BIG IDEA: Life is short, so don't waste it—set aside pride, pursue God's purpose, and make your days count.

Read, [James 4:13-17](#), [John 4:34-35](#), [Deuteronomy 8:17-18](#), & [Matthew 25:34-46](#) aloud and go over your sermon notes with one another. (Answer all or some of the questions)

Have you ever found yourself caught up in making plans—good plans, even—only to have God step in and change everything? It can be a bit disorienting, especially when those plans seem to align with our desire to bring Him glory. But how we respond in those moments says a lot about our faith and trust in His bigger picture.

- **How did you feel when God interrupted your plans?**
- **Looking back, can you see how God might have been redirecting you for a greater purpose?**

Have you ever caught yourself living what Pastor Mike called a "Sunday faith" life? Where you feel all set because you've embraced the good news about Jesus, but you notice that those around you—friends, family, or even coworkers—haven't been affected in the same way? It's a faith that saves you but not others. It may even affect you in some way because you've planned your week around all the things you "have to do" and Jesus gets what's left over.

- **In what ways do you think a "Sunday faith" approach might hold us back from sharing the hope we have in Christ with others?**

We all make plans—big and small—but James reminds us that everything we do is ultimately reliant on God. When we seek His will first, we're reminded that our plans are only as strong as our dependence on Him. Instead of just moving forward with what seems best to us, we're called to align our lives with His purpose. Pastor Mike advised us to be God-reliant over self-reliant.

- **How often do you intentionally include God's will when making your plans?**
- **Do you approach all the potential outcomes of the plan (positive or negative) differently knowing you're leaving it up to God?**

We don't have to go far to see the mission field—it's right around us, in our neighborhoods, schools, workplaces, and even our families. We read in John 4:35 that Jesus says, "*...open your eyes and look at the fields! They are ripe for harvest*", speaking of our duty to witness to everyone around us. God calls us to recognize the people in our lives who need His hope and truth.

- **Where in your life do you see a mission field that's ready to be harvested?**
- **What's a step you can take this week to share God's love or truth with the people in that field?**

In his message, Pastor Mike reminds us that our time on earth is fleeting—like a vapor that disappears before we know it. This truth invites us to reflect on how we can make an eternal impact during our very brief time. James challenges us to recognize the "sin of omission," in verse 17 where we neglect the good we know we ought to do.

- **What's one or two ways you can step out and do something good for someone else this week? •
What are the good things that God has planned for you right now and are you doing them?**

GROWING IN SCRIPTURE AND OBEDIENCE

Here are two insights Pastor Mike gave us:

1. What you truly prioritize in your life is revealed by how you plan your life. (reference, James 4:13)
2. Seek God-reliance over self-reliance. (reference James 4:15)

GROWING IN OBEDIENCE

Submit Your Plans to God (James 4:15)

Reflect: “Do my plans reflect God’s will, or are they mostly my own ambitions?” This week, pause before making decisions, and ask, “Is this in line with God’s purpose for me?” Let God be at the center of your plans rather than following your own agenda.

Life Group Leader: Challenge your Life Group to consider what surrendering plans to God might look like in their lives. Encourage each person to pray, “Your will, not mine,” as they make daily choices, and follow up next week to share any shifts in their perspectives.

Choose Purpose Over Pride (James 4:16)

Reflect: “Am I living to build my own name or to make Jesus known?” Spend time this week evaluating how your actions align with God’s purpose. Recognize where pride may be a barrier, and choose one specific way to let God’s purpose lead over personal gain.

Life Group Leader: Help members identify one area where pride might compete with their purpose. Suggest practical steps, like journaling to see where God wants to redirect their focus, and encourage members to share how surrendering pride impacts their purpose.

Prioritize the Good You Ought to Do (James 4:17)

Reflect: “What’s one good I’ve been putting off that God’s nudging me to act on?” Identify one thing you know you should do—whether sharing your faith, helping someone in need, or serving—and commit to doing it this week as an act of obedience and faith.

Life Group Leader: Encourage your Life Group to each choose one action for the week. Suggest they pray for courage and intentionality, and let them know you’ll check in to hear how following through has impacted their faith and outlook.

GROWING IN PRAISE AND WORSHIP

This week's song list if you'd like to worship with your group.

[Praise God \(Doxology\)](#)

[All Hail King Jesus](#)

[I've Witnessed It](#)

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