

# JAMES MANDATE & MISSION

*New City Church: Study Guide*

*Week 8 – August 5<sup>th</sup> 2012*

**Read:** James 4:13-17

*“Many are the plans in the mind of a man,  
but it is the purpose of the Lord that will stand.”*

*- Proverbs 19:21*

## **Reflection:**

There are not many absolutes in life, but one thing you can be sure of is that things will not always go as planned – the stock market crashes, the weather turns, the car breaks down, the power goes out, and there’s always those unexpected medical emergencies. As Christians, we can also be sure of the fact that God is in control and “is faithful, and...will not let you be tempted beyond your ability...”<sup>1</sup> Additionally, “we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose.”<sup>2</sup>

In this week’s reading, James again pushes his readers to a place of self evaluation when he says, “Come now, you who say, “Today or tomorrow we will go into such and such a town and spend a year there and trade and make a profit” - yet you do not know what tomorrow will bring.” This is not meant to be a reprimand for planning or an indictment against capitalism, but rather James is intending to challenge those who live their lives and determine their plans as if there were no all powerful, sovereign God who is ruling over the universe.

## **Questions:**

1. “So whoever knows the right thing to do and fails to do it, for him it is sin.” What does James mean by this statement? What affect does this have on our view of sin?
2. Read Proverbs 19:21. How does this verse interact with American ideals? How is this challenging to our culture? How should this verse give us hope about our future?
3. What is the balance between being planned out and goal oriented while also being lead by the Spirit making Gods plans your plans? Is it possible to find this balance in our society? Please explain.
4. Is James’ message this week personally challenging for you? Please explain. How should this verse cause you to function in our daily life?
5. How can we as Christians know the will of God for our lives?
6. How can we encourage each other to reject the autonomous mindset of our culture and live according to the will of God, acknowledging that He is in control?

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<sup>1</sup> 1 Corinthians 10:13

<sup>2</sup> Romans 8:28