

Spiritual Recession – The Arrogance of this Age

James 4: 13–17 [NIV]

“13 Now listen, you who say, "Today or tomorrow we will go to this or that city, spend a year there, carry on business and make money."

14 Why, you do not even know what will happen tomorrow. What is your life? You are a mist that appears for a little while and then vanishes.

15 Instead, you ought to say, "If it is the Lord's will, we will live and do this or that."

16 As it is, you boast and brag. All such boasting is evil.

17 Anyone, then, who knows the good he ought to do and doesn't do it, sins”

James in his epistle, is speaking of a spiritual recession in the land

A recession can be defined as “a withdrawal, a period of reduced activity.”

The roots of spiritual recession according to James 4:13-17

1. Foolish presumptions

James 4: 13,16

“[13] Now listen, you who say, "Today or tomorrow we will go to this or that city, spend a year there, carry on business and make money”

[16] “As it is, you boast and brag. All such boasting is evil”

* The man described here lives as if tomorrow will never come. He is motivated by money and greed.

* Self-Sufficiency is planning without God and will most certainly bring spiritual recession / “a withdrawal, a period of reduced activity.”

Psalm 22:10

”From birth I was cast upon you; from my mother's womb you have been my God”

Psalm 71:6

“From birth I have relied on you; you brought me forth from my mother's womb. I will ever praise you”

2.

Psalm 18:2

“The LORD is my rock, and my fortress, and my deliverer; my God, my strength, in whom I will trust; my buckler, and the horn of my salvation, and my high tower”

Psalm 73:28

“But it is good for me to draw near to God: I have put my trust in the Lord GOD, that I may declare all thy works”

2. Forgotten perspectives [Attitude]

[14] Why, you do not even know what will happen tomorrow. What is your life? You are a mist that appears for a little while and then vanishes.

- * Life has its uncertainties. James asks, “What is your life?”
- * Life has its certainties. *“It appears for a little while and then vanishes away.”*
- * Self-sufficiency is failure to recognize the uncertainty of life.

3. Forsaken priorities

“15 Instead, you ought to say, "If it is the Lord's will, we will live and do this or that.”

16 As it is, you boast and brag. All such boasting is evil.

17 Anyone, then, who knows the good he ought to do and doesn't do it, sins”

- * James calls upon us to get our priorities in order.
- * Some have forsaken the priority of God’s will (15) and God’s way (17).
- * Self – sufficiency is failure to acknowledge God
- * Self – sufficiency is boasting bragging – showing arrogance
- * Self – sufficiency is sin

Conclusion

If we look closer with a microscope we will see that recessions of the heart are rooted in forsaken priorities. We need to take James’ advice and do not make foolish presumptions about tomorrow. And to avoid spiritual recession maintain a proper perspective upon life and keep your priorities in order. Guard against the arrogance of our age.