

Beginning with a Proper Compass Reading

James 4:13-17 (NIV)

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.” 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. Instead, you ought to say, “If it is the Lord’s will, we will live and do this or that.” As it is, you boast and brag. All such boasting is evil. Anyone, then, who knows the good he ought to do and doesn’t do it, sins.

Psalm 119:133 (NIV)

Direct my footsteps according to your word; let no sin rule over me.

Proverbs 16:9 (NIV)

In his heart a man plans his course, but the Lord determines his steps.

Luke 12:18-21 (NIV)

“Then he said, ‘This is what I’ll do. I will tear down my barns and build bigger ones, and there I will store all my grain and my goods. And I’ll say to myself, “You have plenty of good things laid up for many years. Take life easy; eat, drink and be merry.”’ “But God said to him, ‘You fool! This very night your life will be demanded from you. Then who will get what you have prepared for yourself?’ “This is how it will be with anyone who stores up things for himself but is not rich toward God.”

Proverbs 27:1 (NIV)

Do not boast about tomorrow, for you do not know what a day may bring forth.

One (arrogant) option: *Invictus* William Ernest Henley

Out of the night that covers me, Black as the Pit from pole to pole,

I thank whatever gods may be For my unconquerable soul.

In the fell clutch of circumstance I have not winced nor cried aloud.

Under the bludgeonings of chance My head is bloody, but unbowed.

Beyond this place of wrath and tears Looms but the Horror of the shade,

And yet the menace of the years Finds, and shall find, me unafraid.

It matters not how strait the gate, How charged with punishments the scroll,

I am the master of my fate: I am the captain of my soul.

Theme: It is so easy to forge through our daily lives without remembering to begin all our planning and keep our focus on Christ. We are to commit “tomorrow” into the hands of our God because we are creatures, living in the presence of our great Creator. We are dependant, not independent, and that takes constant reminders.

Outline:

1. The future is elusive; we don't know what the next minute will bring
2. Our future and even our planning for it needs to be done self-consciously; understanding God is in control, and we are not. He is the starting point and the compass for our hopes, plans, and dreams.
3. We are to think about ourselves and our future humbly; knowing we are subject to the will and plan of God. We cannot live with the illusion that we are in control.