

THRU THE BIBLE EXPOSITION
James: A Sermonic Call Unto Practical Godliness
Part VIII: Choosing Godliness Over Worldliness Regarding Business Income, James 4:13-5:12
A. Choosing Godliness Regarding GAINING Employment Income
(James 4:13-17)

I. Introduction

- A. Worldliness is a sizable problem in business dealings, Ryrie Study Bible, KJV, 1978, fn. to Jas. 4:13-17.
- B. James 4:13-17 begins to address this issue, exposing the worldly way of **gaining** employment income or an income stream and offering godly directives on overcoming such sin in the believer (as follows):

II. Choosing Godliness Regarding GAINING Employment Income, James 4:13-17.

- A. The NIV expression "Now listen" that begins both James 4:13 and 5:1 literally means, "Go now," and is "a colloquial phrase used only by James in the New Testament," Bible Know. Com., N. T., p. 831.
- B. This phrase "goads the reader and gains his undivided attention," (Ibid.) for James used it to correct the self-sufficient believer who thought he had full control of his income when the reality was far different!
- C. These introductory phrases mark two sections where James handles worldliness regarding business income, and the first section, James 4:13-17, calls for choosing godliness on **gaining** employment income:
 - 1. James countered the worldly boast of Christians who claimed that at a given point in time, they would go to a specific city, stay for a specific time period and buy and sell and turn a profit, James 4:13.
 - 2. In reality, no one knows what will occur tomorrow, or even that he will live the next day, James 4:14.
 - 3. In view of these uncertainties over which the believer has no sovereign control, James 4:15 notes that the **godly way** to view **gaining employment income** is to apply the phrase, "If the Lord will" to each of the variables mentioned in James 4:13. We do this for effective application as follows:
 - a. The godly believer will say, "If the Lord will, I will live to see tomorrow."
 - b. The godly believer will say, "If the Lord will, I will have the health and opportunity tomorrow to be able to seek employment income."
 - c. The godly believer will say, "If the Lord will, I will enter a certain place to conduct some form of business in an effort to gain employment income or an income stream."
 - d. The godly believer will say, "If the Lord will, I will stay at that effort for a period of time that makes me able to earn an employment income or an income stream."
 - e. The godly believer will say, "If the Lord will, I will buy raw materials to conduct my business."
 - f. The godly believer will say, "If the Lord will, I will sell the produce of my business effort."
 - g. The godly believer will say, "If the Lord will, I will turn a profit in this whole business enterprise."
 - 4. However, if the believer rejoices in his boasting in any one of these realms instead of looking to the Lord for His provision and leading, that believer's boasting and rejoicing is evil, James 4:16.
 - 5. Thus, the believer who knows the right ways versus the wrong ways to gain an employment income or income stream in these realms, but who opts for the worldly way at any point, he sins, James 4:17.
- D. In concord with James 4:13-17, Psalm 62:11-12 states that God recompenses each man according to his work. The context deals with income (Psalm 62:10), so David here reveals that God directly affects the income or income stream of the believer as a reward for doing His will in his business endeavors! (cf. also Colossians 3:22-24) Thus, it is fitting that the believer humble himself like James 4:13-17 teaches and heed God's leading in all realms in the workplace that he might see God financially recompense him!

Lesson: *Gaining an employment income or an income stream depends on numerous variables over which no human being, let alone any professing Christian, has any real sovereign control. Thus, instead of boasting about accomplishing a certain objective in gaining employment income or an income stream, the believer must realize his full dependency on God for every aspect involved, and so seek the Lord's guidance and enabling every step of the way that he might enjoy God's blessing!*

Application: *May we approach every issue on gaining employment income or an income stream with an awareness of our total dependency upon God and His will, and so humbly order every step we take to be in full alignment with Scripture, that God might provide all we need to fulfill His assignments for us!*