

Life Group Notes

Sunday 24 November 2019

Speaker: Liz Green

Title: Self or Submission?

Series: Faith with Legs

Passage: James 4: 11 – 5:6

James addresses 3 issues in these verses; The Tongue, Time and Treasure

Tongue

- James speaks to the issue of slander amongst the body of believers. By speaking evil against one another they effectively pronounce that God's law (love your neighbour as yourself) doesn't apply to them. They have elevated themselves above God's ruling.
- James then emphasises that God is the only one who has the right to tell them how to live (one lawgiver) and the only one who has the right to judge (one judge).
- We are motivated by SELF when we stand in judgement of others. SUBMISSION motivates us to humble ourselves under God's word and therefore love our neighbour.

Time

- James then addresses the sin of presumption; of planning the future with no regard to God's sovereign purposes. We plan, yet we don't even know what tomorrow will bring.
- Life is brief and James teaches them that their posture towards time should be SUBMISSION to God's ultimate authority and plans.
- SUBMISSION to God's will for our lives affects both HOW we plan and WHAT we plan, therefore affecting the content of our diary and our planning schedules.
- SELF doesn't consider God's will or sovereign authority over our time. SUBMISSION compels us to wisely steward our time for His glory and live mindful of His purposes.

Treasure

- James is scathing of the rich. 'The rich' were outside of the community of believers and oppressive to the church community. They are accused of hoarding, living in luxury, self-indulgence and fraud.
- Like Turkeys fattening themselves up before the Christmas season, the rich are accused of gorging themselves on wealth, naïve that a day of judgement awaits.
- Money is not wrong, but it can be dangerous as it can grip our hearts.
- We must heed the warning to the rich, and as God's people look to use wealth for that which it is given, ie. the service, blessing and provision of others as well as ourselves.
- *'Money is like muck – not good unless it's spread'* Francis Bacon
- SELF stores up treasure for ourselves. SUBMISSION sees wealth and possessions as tools for serving the purposes of God.

Questions

- What do you understand the difference to be between judging and making a judgement/discernment? How can we avoid judging other?

- How does your heart respond to James' instruction that God has the right to tell us how we should/shouldn't live? (He is the lawgiver). Do you find it easy to submit to God's law?
- How often do you reflect on the brevity of life? How does thinking about life 'as a mist' affect how you live?
- Do you think your daily routine, weekly schedule, yearly plan reflects God's will for your life? What would you like to change if not?
- Do you own your possessions, or do they own you? What is the difference practically and how can you change if you need to?
- Please think about those in your lifegroup and others that you know in the church. Are you able to bless and serve them this Christmas through what God has given you?