

PRESS

FORWARD

JANUARY SEARCH SERIES

1.5.25

STEPS TO SPIRITUAL FORWARDNESS



COMMUNITY BAPTIST CHURCH EQUIPPING FOR LIFE

James 4:13-15 CSB

[13] Come now, you who say, "Today or tomorrow we will travel to such and such a city and spend a year there and do business and make a profit."

[14] Yet you do not know what tomorrow will bring-what your life will be! For you are like vapor that appears for a little while, then vanishes.

[15] Instead, you should say, "If the Lord wills, we will live and do this or that."

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1. HEALTH AND FITNESS
2. FINANCIAL IMPROVEMENT
3. PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT
4. RELATIONSHIPS
5. TIME MANAGEMENT

Many people say they believe in God, but, in reality, they are practical atheists. That is, in the way they make decisions and plan for the future, they live as if God didn't exist. They take no account of God's sustaining care or common grace; they act as if they are self-sufficient and in control; and they take credit for all the good they experience. Listening to these people speak, we would have no idea that God is a factor in their lives. How much better it is to actively recognize God's right to order and direct our lives as he pleases. Self-reliance and independence rightfully belong to God alone. Why do believers and even churches so often want to take matters into their own hands? When do you tend to leave God out of the picture?



The fact is that God has a prior claim on our lives. First, because he is our Creator, his purposes can demand precedence over our priorities. Second, for believers, this claim is reenforced by the knowledge that we no longer belong to ourselves: “You are not your own; you were bought at a price” (1 Corinthians 6:19-20 NIV). God’s claim on us is both as Creator and Savior. Our submission to God must be expressed in every area of our lives.



It is good to have goals, but goals can disappoint us if we leave God out of them. There is no point in making plans as though God does not exist because the future is in his hands. The beginning of good planning is to ask: “What would I like to be doing ten years from now? One year from now? Tomorrow? How will I react if God steps in and rearranges my plans?”



We can plan ahead, but we must hold on to our plans loosely. If we put God’s desires at the center of our planning, he will never disappoint us.