

A devotion given by Brother Robert Ching at the Wed night prayer meeting on March 28, 2018

If the Lord wills

*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." **James 4:13-15***



Portrayed in verse 13 is a prideful person. This verse starts with "Now listen" to wake us up because many people if not outwardly but inwardly are like him. But he is a successful and business savvy person. He cherishes a life style made famous by Frank Sinatra's all time hit "I did it my way." He has several desirable characters that parents wish their children would have. He typifies an ideal new hire for an employer.

He is clear about his goal which is to make money. He has an actionable plan – who, what and when are all laid out. Some people have a vision but no plan. Some people have a plan that is not actionable. Some people have an actionable plan, but do not take action. But this man actions his plan if not today, will for sure tomorrow. He has a clear roadmap of success.

Yet the Bible has something against this person. His goal is self gratification. He is confident and depends on no one. His outcome is self deterministic; his plan will guarantee success. Contrary to the teaching of Proverbs 3:6, he leans on his own understanding, and wise in his own eyes.

The Bible uses "life" as the big caveat. Verse 14 describes life is brief and transient as a mist. Has this man considered if he can live to deliver the plan? In Luke 12:20, God frustrates the rich fool by demanding his life. Life and death is God's domain and we can't control.

Tonight we pray with verse 15 in mind - "if the Lord's will":

1. First our prayer requests must align with His will so that "He will" grant our desires.
2. Second, we must submit to His will, because He is sovereign. Psalm 135:6 "The LORD does whatever pleases him, in the heavens and on the earth, in the seas and all their depths".
3. Third, we must ask for God's help. Psalm 127:1 reads "Unless the Lord builds the house, those who build it labor in vain. Unless the Lord watches over the city, the watchman stays awake in vain."