

# How to Make God's Priority Your Priority

*James 4:13-5:6*

Intro:

1. We all have our priorities in life: our families, our jobs, our possessions, our money, entertainment, sports or hobbies.
2. But God redeemed you so that He could be first in your life. You know that is true!
3. v17 says **Anyone, then, who knows the good he ought to do and doesn't do it, sins.**
4. So - if you know what to do - put God first in your life - but fail to do it, it is sin!
5. Let's look at two activities in our lives that are often top priorities - but shouldn't be.

## I. 4:13-17 - Consider the Sin of Putting Your Employment Before God

- A. Examine this statement: "I have all the time in the world to plan my business or employment, make long time goals & set up objectives for my life".
1. There's nothing wrong with what I just said as long as it doesn't become the # 1 priority in your life.
  2. Good stewardship involves good planning! God wants you to do that.
- B. v14 - But you are not in control!
1. You don't have the final say about finding a job, staying employed, where you will live or how much of a salary you will make.
  2. You're not in control of your time. You may be living as though the Lord will never come again - time will continue on indefinitely.
  3. You are not in control of your lifespan. You may be living as though you are certain you will be alive until you're at least 85!
  4. ILL: **Parable of the Rich Fool (Lk 12:16-21).**
  5. ILL: **My plans to settle in San Diego.**
  6. Someone coined this popular phrase: "You want to make God laugh - tell Him your plans!"
- C. v15 - Therefore - use the time you have to do whatever is in the scope of the Lord's will.
1. A carpenter once said, "I am employed by God. I simply make cabinets to put food on the table".
  2. If your life belongs to God - use it for Him!
  3. v16 - Whenever you boast about your accomplishments, your successes or your career, it is evil.

## II. 5:1-6 - Consider the Sin of Putting Your Possessions Before God

- A. Examine this statement: "Since I have a lot of money & possessions, I am rich!"
1. On April 25, 1972 in Barcelona, Spain, the British actor, George Sanders, committed suicide. The note said, "It's because I'm bored!"
  2. You are not rich because you have money, influence & possessions - you are rich when you are committed to God's will for your life!
- B. v2-3 - But you are not in control.
1. You can have crops but they can rot. - ILL: **Citrus trees freezing in CA & FL.**
  2. You can have money but it can be eaten away.
  3. v3 (Living Bible) - **The value of your gold & silver is dropping fast . . . Could this be inflation?**
  4. Your money can be a witness against you! ILL: **The Rich Man & Lazarus (Lk 16:19-31).**
  5. You can be so focused on yourself that you become insensitive to others.
    - a. v4 - You may cheat, lie or step on others to get to the top.
    - b. You may just forget about the needs of others.
    - c. ILL: **Parable of the Judgment Scene (Matt 25:31-46).**
  6. v5 - You can get so wrapped up in the pleasures that possessions bring that you **fatten yourself up in the day of slaughter.** - ILL: **The farmer dropping beans along the path in front of the pigs.**

C. Therefore - if your possessions stand in your way:

1. Remember what the Lord said to the Rich Young Ruler, **Go, sell your possessions & give to the poor, & you will have treasure in heaven (Matt 19:21).**
2. Then - you will be free to seek first His kingdom & His righteousness; & all these things shall be added to you (Matt 6:33).

ILL: “Let Go and Find Out”. You might need to LET GO of your own goals so that God can fulfill His purpose for your life!

<http://biblelifemessages.org/>