

Before the Lesson

Read the Scriptures and overview below before your LIFE Group meets.

Scripture passages: James 4:13-17

There is within each of us the innate desire to be known, loved, understood, and purposeful. We often go about our days plotting and planning to that end, hoping to get to the final days of our lives and feel that “we’ve mattered,” “we’ve made a difference,” “we’re important.” We presume that this kind of process is God’s will; after all, living meaningful and purposeful lives is biblical, right? At the crux of this type of self-contained, self-absorbed way of life, however, there is little room for God and His purpose and plan for our lives if we choose not to seek Him in our search for significance.

At the end of chapter 4, James addresses this misguided method of living and points us in a new direction. Rather than asking ourselves such questions as, “What can I do to be important? What must I do to feel loved? What can I do to make a difference?” James turns our focus back to God and His royal *Law of Love*. He emphasizes that to make a real and lasting difference one must look to Jesus and follow His example of a life well-lived for the glory of God and for the sake of others.

Focus question:
What makes a life significant?

Group Discussion

- Discuss this maxim: Life is a gift to you, but your life is not all about you.
- Read James 4:13-17 and talk through the following questions:
 - What or who determines your daily, weekly, monthly, and yearly plans?
 - Do all of those plans line up with Scripture?
 - Do those plans seek to further *you*, or are they “other”-focused?
 - If a non-believer could “spy” on your life, what would they learn about you and the way you go about your daily life?
 - Would they see a life focused on God and others, or on self?
- Read Luke 12:16-21. Is it really possible to manage the circumstances of your life? Explain.
- Where did the rich fool go wrong? How do we go wrong in our planning and preparing?
- Read Luke 12:22-34. What is Jesus saying to His disciples based on these two passages from the Gospel of Luke?
- What does Jesus mean by “money bags that do not grow old” from verse 33?

- Based on this passage, how can we assure that our lives have *Kingdom-like* meaning and purpose?
- How does what you plan reflect “what your treasure is”?
- In what ways are you blinded by the fatal attitudes of pride, presumption, and procrastination?
 - Pride = I’m the master of my fate.
 - Presumption = There is always tomorrow.
 - Procrastination = What I am doing today is more important than how it affects tomorrow.
- From Proverbs 1:7 what clue are we given that will help us live righteous before God rather than righteous before man?
- If we “fear the Lord,” we honor Him and give ascent to His sovereignty and power over our lives. What does this look like in your life? How do others see this truth lived out in your life?
- James 4:17 speaks of “the right thing.” What is the “right thing” when it comes to a life well-lived for the glory of Christ and for the sake of others in your life? (See these passages below.)
 - James 1:22-27 = Do what the Bible says
 - Luke 10:25-37 = The Royal Law of Love
 - Luke 11:28, John 14:15, Romans 2:6-8, James 1:25, 1 Peter 1:14, 1 John 2:17, 2 John 1:6 = Obedience to God

Further Study (to be used in your personal Quiet Time)

Take time this week to reflect back on your notes and discussion from your Life Group and consider these questions:

- Is God calling you to step outside of yourself and love others in a greater way?
- Perhaps God is calling you to minister through foster care support, orphan care, adoption, volunteer work at a local service agency, or Operation Christmas Child. Will you obey?

Consider the following opportunities this week at our Warren Augusta Campus:

- **The Church, The Bible, and The Orphan**
Wednesday, November 5 | 6:30-7:30 PM | Simmons Hall (Augusta Campus)
- **Reaching Hands Adoption Celebration & Benefit Auction**
Thursday, November 6 | 6:00-9:30 PM | Simmons Hall (Augusta Campus)

For additional resources, visit warrenlifenotes.com.