

God Rules! Part 2

James 4:13-17

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Let me encourage you again to take your Bibles and turn with me to James 4 as we continue our study, the end of this great chapter. This week I had the opportunity to read an excerpt from a speech delivered by then President Herbert Hoover. Now Herbert Hoover was not exactly a masterful speech maker or deliverer. But what he said I found fascinating. Listen carefully to Herbert Hoover's words.

We in America today are nearer the final triumph over poverty than anyone before in the history of the land. We have not yet reached the goal, but given a chance to go forward with the policies of the last eight years we shall soon with the help of God be in the sight of the day when poverty will be banished from the nation.

President Hoover spoke those words in 1928. Within just a few months came the day that's called historically "Black Thursday", the first one day crash of the stock market. Historians tell us that by noon on that day "Black Thursday" eleven prominent investors had already committed suicide. And the skids continued as over the weekend newspapers around the country picked up the story and spread the dramatic details of the events of those couple of days on Wall Street. So, on Monday, October 28th investors decided to get out of the market and the slide continued with a record 13% loss for the day. And Tuesday was no better; on October 29th stock prices lost another 12%.

In fact, so dramatic was the decline over those four days that it took 25 years before the stock market recovered to the same level of value that it had been before those dramatic events. As a result of those few days of crash on Wall Street combined with other economic factors from around the country, the Great Depression began. And as a result, 25% of Americans became unemployed. Poverty became constant and pandemic. I'm sure Herbert Hoover over the years to come heard those words of his resonate through his mind with chilling remembrance.

You see human history and each of our lives are filled with wonderful plans and with certain predictions, but written over each of them in bold letters should be God Rules. But you see the problem is that we want to rule. We want to be in control or at least believe we are in control of our lives and circumstances. And it's that illusion that we are really in control that James

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excoriates at the end of chapter 4. Let me read for you again these verses, James 4:13 through the end of the chapter. He writes,

Come now, you who say, “Today or tomorrow we will go to such and such a city, and spend a year there and engage in business and make a profit.” Yet you do not know what your life will be like tomorrow. You are *just* a vapor that appears for a little while and then vanishes away. Instead, *you ought* to say, “If the Lord wills, we will live and also do this or that.” But as it is, you boast in your arrogance; all such boasting is evil. Therefore, to one who knows *the* right thing to do and does not do it, to him it is sin.

As we discovered last time the theme of this paragraph is acknowledging and submitting to God’s control over our lives. It’s recognizing the supremacy of God in all the details of life. You see although I am responsible for my decisions and I am responsible for my sins. Still there is a sovereign God who works out every li every detail of my life, and every aspect of life and eternity is under His control, is under the control of a sovereign God. To acknowledge and to submit to God’s rule is in fact a very basic Christian obligation. And this is the very response that James is calling us to here in James 4.

I mentioned to you last week that the philosophy that James is condemning we call self-determinism, self-determinism. This is a very popular philosophy and mindset of our day. It simply asserts that my life is solely the result of my own will and my own decisions. I am in control. I can be anything I want. I can achieve anything I want. If I can imagine it, I can accomplish it. If I just believe enough in myself, if I have enough self confidence, if I have a healthy sense of self esteem there is no limit to what I can be or to what I can accomplish. You recognize many of those phrases because they are constantly preached at us from the culture.

For an entire generation psychologists have been selling self-determinism to our culture with tragic results. But this flawed philosophy of self-determinism isn’t anything new or modern. It’s actually been part of the human condition since Eve decided in the Garden that she could be like God, and she simply took matters into her own hands and trust her judgment rather than God’s judgment. But in a sense it even goes back further than that, it goes back into the heart of the first of God’s creation, the star of the morning Lucifer himself who decided that with his beauty and with his abilities he had every right to be like God. You see man’s problem is not that he esteems himself too little, but that he esteems himself too much.

Listen to A W Tozer in his excellent book, *The Knowledge of the Holy*. He writes,

Man's constant assertion of self, as far as he thinks of it at all, appears to him a perfectly normal thing. He's willing to share himself, sometimes even sacrifice himself for a desired end but never to dethrone himself no matter how far down the scale of social acceptance he may slide, he is still in his own eyes a king on a throne, and no one not even God can take that throne from him. Sin has many manifestations, but its essence is one - a moral being created to worship before the throne of God sits on the throne of his own self-hood and from that elevated position declares, "I am".

The clearest sign of this problem the problem of independence, the problem of a spirit of arrogant independence from God a desire to exercise the prerogatives of God in our lives. You see the issue is this. When we begin to assert ourselves, we don't merely assert ourselves with the human beings around us, we assert our wills against God's will, and we exercise a spirit of independence. I am perfectly capable of being who I want to be, and I will be that person. I will do what I choose to do. That is the mindset and philosophy this whole mindset of self-determinism that James seeks to confront and to demolish in these verses.

Now we began last week to help us understand the key issues and respond appropriately, we have broken James' exhortation here in these verses into three components, or three parts. We looked at the first component last week, the underlying truth of God's rule; the underlying truth of God's rule. You see behind this paragraph is a huge body of Old Testament teaching, and James here doesn't directly teach it because he's served as the pastor of these people for more than ten years. He'd already taught them those truths, and now he's simply making the application of the truth. But if we want to understand his application, if we want to understand his exhortation in verses 13 – 17, then we have to make sure that we have a grasp on this same truth that they did. And the truth as we saw last week that underlies James 4 is the truth of God's sovereignty and His providence.

Sovereignty means that God exercises absolute, unqualified control over every event and circumstance throughout the universe in both time and eternity. There is absolutely not a stray molecule in God's universe; never has been, never will be. Providence then is how God's sovereignty works itself out in every event in life to accomplish His own perfect ends. You see God superintends as the first cause, God superintends every secondary cause like our decisions, the laws of nature as we call them, to guarantee that they fulfill His will and His plan, and yet He

never does so by violating our wills. In other words, we don't function as robots. It's not that we just sort of move wherever God says to move whether we desire to or not. You see each of us really makes decisions. Each of us really acts, but in a miracle of God's providence, God superintends those actions and those decisions so that they perfectly fulfill His own sovereign plan. So, in the end, God's sovereignty rules overall. That's the truth that underlies James' comments here in James 4.

Now that brings us to the second component or the second part of James' exhortation. Let's call it the subtle denial of God's rule. You see this in verses 13 and 14, the subtle denial of God's rule. You see there are many unbelievers who overtly deny the rule of God in the world. This week I read a number of quotations from famous atheists, and other God haters, decrying the fact that God rules over His creation. Most Christians however would never be tempted to directly overtly question God's rule over their lives. But that doesn't mean it isn't a problem for us. You see instead of outright rebellion to this truth of God, where the temptation comes for most of us as Christians is much more subtle. Listen carefully.

Our temptation is to think and act in the daily issues of life as if God isn't sovereign while at the same time affirming it to be true. You see we can say, "I believe God is sovereign." And still live as if that were not true. The fact that your doctrinal statement says that God is sovereign doesn't mean this is never a problem for you. The truth is what James touches on here is a problem for every one of us without exception.

Now to help us see how this sort of subtle denial of God's rule takes place, James gives us an example, notice verse 13. "Come now, you who say, 'Today or tomorrow we will go to such and such a city, and spend a year there and engage in business and make a profit.'"

James here, very appropriately takes his example from everyday life, specifically from the everyday life of a traveling successful merchant. His Jewish Christian readers could especially connect with this illustration since both then and now they tend to have a special pension for business savvy and success. And in God's providence this illustration works well for us as well. Here in the U.S. in our very successful capitalistic culture and in Dallas and in Southlake and Colleyville and Grapevine and surrounding communities. This is a very appropriate illustration.

Now before we look at the illustration or the example let me give you a couple of misunderstandings to avoid. James is not saying here that business is the only place we tend to question God's sovereignty. This is merely one example of many examples he could have sited

or used. Neither is it a criticism of planning. The Bible everywhere encourages us to plan. God Himself planned. In fact, we're told He did His planning in eternity past before He ever created a single thing. Jesus, in encouraging us to consider us the cost of discipleship says, "What man is there, what reasonable wise man is there who wanting to build a tower doesn't first sit down and count the cost?" And plan to make sure he has enough money, resources to finish. So, that's not what James is talking about, he's not saying we shouldn't plan.

Nor is he saying that business or travel or even profit is somehow contrary to the will and purposes of God. It's clear in the context that James is not condemning any of those things, as we'll see in a moment. Now, with that in mind, let's look back at verse 13 at the example he gives of this subtle denial of God's rule that can creep into our lives. Verse 13, "come now" Now that's simple, an attention getting device, a lot like our listen up or now listen. He says, "you who say." Now who are these people James is addressing?

I read twelve commentaries this week on this passage, and every one of them (without exception) believes that James is talking to Christians here, and I think that's absolutely right, and here's why. As you will see as we work our way through this paragraph James urges these people to a correct biblical response instead of confronting them with their need of salvation or condemning them which by the way he does in 5:1 - 6. When we get to that passage, I think he has a different audience in mind. But here he clearly has Christians in mind, he's talking to us.

He says, "you who say." Now don't be misled. You see those words, and we've come across James' admonitions about speech so often you might at first think this has to do with what comes out of our mouth, with how we talk. But that's not the heart of this passage. He's simply putting words in the mouths of these people that clearly reflect what's going on in their hearts. You see out of the abundance or overflow of the heart the mouth speaks. And so, by telling us what they're saying we can know what they're thinking, what's going on in their minds and hearts. Because behavior (as you've heard me say many times before), behavior always betrays belief.

If I really want to know what you believe, I don't listen to your words in and of themselves when you're telling what you think I want to hear, I listen to your words or watch your actions when you don't know I'm looking, when you don't know I'm listening. That tells me really what's going on and that in essence is what James is doing here. What we say and how we think when we're not thinking or speaking theologically betrays our true theology.

Now look at the thoughts and words James condemns here. “Today or tomorrow we will go to such and such a city, and spend a year there and engage in business and make a profit.” Now, in essence, that is nothing more than a simple business plan. A successful merchant has a plan to expand his business to a nearby city. He’s considered every detail. Look again at what he says. Today or tomorrow, he has selected a start date for this new enterprise. We will go to such and such a city.

Now that’s not as indefinite as it sounds in English. The Greek words have this businessman, as it were, sort of pointing to a map and at a particular city on the map where the start up’s going to be. He says on today or tomorrow we’re going to go to this city right here the one I’m pointing to and then if it should allow and I continue to expand, we might go to this city over here as well.

“We will spend a year there.” In his project planning this businessman has decided that it will take a full year to build up enough clientele to make the business successful. He says, “we will engage in business.” This is the most interesting word. It’s a Greek word from which we get the word “emporium”. We don’t know what this man’s business was. Whether he was selling widgets or whether he offered some service; regardless, he is a businessman, and this word essentially means to trade or to do business.

And finally he says, “and we will make a profit.” You see this man is confident that given his product or his service and the market he’s selected and the right amount of time, he will make a profit. Here’s a man who is a strategic planner. He’s very deliberate, very confident. Now what’s wrong with that? I mean what’s wrong with what this man says? What these people that James is describing are thinking and speaking? We do exactly the same thing all the time, don’t we? We do that in our work and in our school and in our families, even in ministry as well as every other area of our lives. There’s nothing wrong with planning or with having a strategy. The problem here isn’t so much with what these people say and think, as what they don’t say or think. The fatal flaw in this plan is ignoring the sovereignty of God in their lives. They don’t in any way recognize or express their utter dependence on God.

D Edmond Hiebert on his excellent commentary on James puts it this way, “The language reflects assurance and self-confidence. They assume that the execution of their plan is entirely in their control. No thought is given to their dependence on God.” This is an arrogant attitude of self-sufficiency. As these merchants plan their daily activities they do so in total disregard of God. How do we know that?

Well look down in 4:16, here is the issue. “As it is”, James says here’s the circumstance, “as it is now” if you don’t do what I’ve told you to do, you are “boasting in your arrogance.” They were taking confidence in their self-confidence. They were confident of their own abilities of their own plan of their own control of their life and circumstances to make this thing happen. You know as these merchants planned their daily activities, they simply ignored God. They were practical atheists. You see it is possible to come on Sunday (as you’re here today), worshiping God acknowledging your dependence on God and then leave this place and ignore Him in the daily routines of life. That’s the very spirit and attitude of pride that James is attacking here.

John Blanchard writes, “James was not condemning their business but their boasting. Not their industry but their independence. Not their acumen but their arrogance.” Here is a world view that leaves God completely out; that’s marked, instead, by a kind of arrogant self-reliance. Planning for the future that assumes I’m in control, and I can make this happen. It’s irrational folks. It is irrational to live daily life today or to plan for the future without a constant internal recognition that we are not in control, but God is.

Unfortunately, (because it’s so much a part of the culture around us) it permeates our lives and hearts as well doesn’t it? I mean, we begin to think and act like unbelievers. It becomes such a pervasive part of the culture that even Christians begin to make decisions and think this way. We begin to choose a church to attend, to marry, to choose our occupations and career paths, to have children, to buy and sell homes and real estate and to extend our portfolios, to ride the currents of culture without any reference to the will of God.

Let me ask you, do you freely and gladly acknowledge God’s sovereignty over all of those daily decisions of life? Do you ask (as our Lord taught) for God’s will to be done in your life? As Jesus did on the in the garden of Gethsemane, “not My will but Yours be done?” Or do you live independent of God, like a practical atheist, showing up on Sunday and essentially ignoring Him in all of your plans in all of your decisions through the week?

Now why is this spirit of independence a problem? I mean after all sounds almost American doesn’t it? The problem is that it is irrational and in verse 14 James tells us why it’s irrational. There’re two reasons it’s irrational not to acknowledge God, to have the spirit of independence from God.

The first reason it’s irrational is because we don’t know what will happen tomorrow. Notice “yet you do not know what your life will be like tomorrow.” Now notice the stark contrast James

makes between verse 13 and verse 14. In verse 13 you have a year. We're planning out a year in advance. In verse 14 he says "tomorrow". You know what he's saying? He's saying how irrational to plan our lives a year out without acknowledging God's control when you and I don't even know what's happening tomorrow. The fact that we don't have any idea what's going to happen tomorrow should serve as a constant reminder that we are not in control. You remember Proverbs 27:1? "Boast not about tomorrow, for you do not know what a day will bring forth."

This week I came across the interview of a famous maritime captain, E J Smith, his name might be familiar to some of you, famous ship's captain. In the interview Captain Smith said this,

When anyone asks how I can best describe my experience in nearly forty years at sea, I merely say uneventful. Of course, there have been winter gales and storms and fog and the like, but in all my experience I have never been in any accident of any sort worth speaking about. I never saw a wreck and have never been shipwrecked nor was I ever in any predicament that threatened to end in disaster of any sort. You see I'm not really very good material for a story.

Captain Smith gave this interview just before his new ship's maiden voyage in 1912. The ship was called the *Titanic*. Forty years and never a single accident, we don't know what tomorrow will bring. We understand this not merely in the extraordinary story of a captain Smith but even in the ordinary flow of our own lives.

I was thinking about our lives, Sheila and mine together this week. I thought of, there were at least three or four occasions when we made significant life changing decisions. And they never turned out like we planned. God had a different plan in mind. Life just doesn't always turn out like you expect or plan. When I left for college from Mobile, I had certain assumptions about where life would take me. I expected to become an attorney and settle down in or near my hometown, Mobile, Alabama. But after Sheila and I married we decided that we would move to Los Angeles, and our plan was clear. We're going to move to LA, we're going to get secular jobs, we're going to be there two years, and then we're going to go pursue the pastorate.

Well that didn't work out either. We got to Los Angeles and within two weeks I was working at *Grace To You*, I spent twelve years in Christian radio and at Grace Church, and then we'd made a decision that it was time to leave. So, in 1999 we decided to leave and return to the South. We'd made our plans; we'd made our decision. I went to tell John and John threw a wrench in my decision. Instead he asked if I'd join the church staff and work with him as his assistant. So,

we spent four more years in Los Angeles. Four years later we decided that it was really time to pursue the senior pastorate, and this time here we are. Today I'm a pastor and not an attorney, thank God.

After graduate school, I never lived in the South. I spent sixteen years in Los Angeles, did I say Los Angeles? A Mobile boy in Los Angeles? And here I am today in Dallas, Texas. You see your life is probably every bit as circuitous a route as my own because we are not in control, God is. We don't know what tomorrow will bring, you don't know what's going to happen to you tomorrow, and I don't know what's going to happen to me tomorrow. Our lives are out of our control. They're in the hands of our God. So, it is irrational not to live moment by moment with the spirit of dependence on God.

But there's a second reason it's irrational to fail to acknowledge God's sovereignty. Not only because we don't know what's going to happen tomorrow, but secondly, because we can't be certain about life itself; we can't be certain about life itself. Look back at verse 14, "you are just a vapor that appears for a little while and then vanishes away." The Greek word for "vapor" is only here and in Acts 2:19 of the New Testament. It's a word that can mean "mist", like the morning mist. It can be a word that refers to "vapor" like the steam off of a tea kettle, or it can be a word that refers to "smoke". In the end it doesn't really matter, the point is the same. Human life is brief, it's insubstantial. Our lives are like that morning mist that the sun dries up and dissolves. Or they're like smoke, wafting out of a chimney, that a gust of wind carries away, here today, gone tomorrow.

That is the constant message of Scripture. You see these Christian merchants in James 4, they saw life as a continuing right rather than as a daily mercy from God as one commentator says. But our lives are just like vapor, mist, smoke.

In fact, Scripture uses a variety of metaphors to describe the brevity and uncertainty of life. Let me give you just a few. God obviously wanted to get this point across to us. He wanted us to live wisely in the days we had. First Chronicles 29:15, David says, "Our days on the earth are like a shadow." You remember as a kid chasing shadows? That's a picture of what life is like.

Job 7:6, Job says, "My days are swifter than a weaver's shuttle." We don't experience that much today. We buy our clothes at the mall. But in the ancient world they would have understood that. All of them would have been very much connected to this routine, and a weaver's shuttle

moves back and forth very quickly operated in that time by a foot pedal. And he says that's what life is like; it's the duration of the movement of the weaver's shuttle.

Job 7:7, "My life is but breath." Job 9:25, "Life passes swifter than a runner." Most mornings as I'm sitting in my office at home, I can look out my window and watch runners out for their health pass my window. And they're here one moment, and they pass, and they're gone. That's what life is like. Psalm 39:5 describes our days as hand breadths. It's like the distance across your palm. Psalm 102:11 says it's like a length in shadow, Psalm 144:4, breath in a passing shadow or there's Peter in 1 Peter 1:24 who says, "our flesh, all flesh is like grass and its glory like the flower of grass, the grass withers and the flower falls off."

Now you and I don't really understand that as much here in Texas as his original readers would have understood. We understand it a little better after the drought that we're experiencing. But in southern California (where I was for so many years), the climate there is very much like Israel. And what happens is the spring rains come and with the spring rain all of the hillsides begin to sprout this beautiful green grass, and it just covers the hills. And if you go in that time of year to southern California, you are left with the deception that it looks that way all year long.

But in fact, what happens is in the late spring, early summer it only takes a couple of days of Santa Anna winds (those hot dry desert winds to blow and the scorching of the sun), and all of that beautiful grass on the hillside that looked so nice (like a carpet you could go lay on and have a picnic turns brown), it withers and dies. Peter says our lives are like that grass that springs up on the hillside with the spring rains and by summer is gone.

This is why Thomas Gray wrote, "The boast of heraldry, the pomp of power, and all that beauty and all that wealth there gave awaits alike the inevitable hour the paths of glory lead but to the grave." This is the reality. Life is brief. I don't think we can fully appreciate that because in God's mercy to us we live in a most unusual time and in a most unusual circumstance. For us sitting here this morning the life expectancy of the average woman sitting here this morning is 78 years. The average life expectancy for the men sitting here this morning is 73 years. That's nothing like most of history or even much of the world today.

For example, in 1776 in the US, the year this country was founded, the average life expectancy was 35. Some of you would already be gone. Some of you would be pretty close, 35. And in 1900 (in the year 1900) the life expectancy in the US was 47. In other places in our world even today the average life expectancy is incredibly brief. I just picked a few out of my world

almanac. Rwanda for example the average age is (life expectancy is) 38, Uganda 43, Tanzania 50. You get the point. Life here is brief.

Here is James' point. The fact that we don't even know whether we will be alive tomorrow should remind us that we are not in control. And then you add to that the fact that if we do live, we have no idea what tomorrow will bring, what will happen tomorrow. That too should remind us that we are not sovereign over our lives, but God is. On the other hand, we don't know. God not only knows but decides what will happen tomorrow and how long we will live. Moses (in his great song in Deuteronomy 32:39) says, "See now" putting words into the mouth of God, "See now that I, I am He and there is no God's beside Me. It is I who put to death, and it is I who give life." That's the prerogative of God, He does as He pleases.

Let me ask you this morning. Do you affirm God's sovereignty? Do you believe what I've taught you this morning? That's wonderful. I rejoice in that. But let me ask you. Are you like the Christians James is addressing here who, perhaps, would have said that they too embrace God's sovereignty, and yet (as they lived out their lives through the week), they refused in very practical ways to acknowledge it? For all intents and purposes, they subtly denied God's sovereignty in how they lived and the decisions that they made. Look again at verse 13. Let's take a little quiz. Because in verse 13 there are several different categories in which we are tempted to deny the sovereignty of God in our lives as well as they in theirs.

Do you deny God's sovereignty in your decisions and plans? Notice the one saying, "we will go." Do you make your decisions and plans like that? Without any acknowledgement of God's control, His sovereign purpose that this may or may not be His plan, or do you think you have it within your power to make it happen?

What about your daily schedule? Verse 13 says, "today or tomorrow we will go." Do you acknowledge God's sovereignty in your daily schedule? Both in what you plan and those things that come into your life that you didn't plan? Do you acknowledge that God is sovereign and in control and that those things are no accident and that to whatever degree your own plans worked out that's because of God's providence enabling that to happen?

What about your future? These people say, "we will be there a year." We've laid out a plan for a year (when you look at your future). Some of you are young people looking at planning your futures in terms of school and marriage and career. Do you acknowledge God at all in that? Do you seek His will? Do you reflect on the reality that He has a plan and purpose, and do you

humble yourself before Him and acknowledge that and ask for His direction to be done? What about the rest of us, as we contemplate the future, do we embrace the sovereignty of God, the control of God over all of those facets of life?

What about major changes? Here's a merchant making a major change. He's changing cities, he's starting a new business. He's going to move somewhere for a year. As you look at major changes in your life (whether they're changes you plan or changes God sovereignly brings into your life) do you acknowledge the sovereignty of God in those things? Do you humbly submit yourself to that?

What about your location? Whether it's the home in which you live whether it's the city in which you live or even the nation in which you live, notice these people said, "we're going to go to such and such a city." Do you freely acknowledge and submit to God's sovereign purpose and will in that part of life?

Your occupation. These Christians said, "we're going to go and engage in business." They had a particular business in mind. We need to acknowledge God in our occupation, both in the career path we're on as well as the place in which we fulfill that career and the plans we make to change it and the results of your decisions, plans, and activities. Notice they had results in mind. We're going to be there a year, and at that time we're going to start turning a profit. Listen, do you understand that to whatever degree your plans are successful, you should plan. We all should plan, but to whatever degree your plans are successful do you understand that the results of that good or bad will be the out working of the plan and purpose of a sovereign God?

Now why is all this important? Why is it so important that you and I acknowledge and submit to God's sovereign providence in our lives? Well remember the context, back earlier in chapter 4, James has told us that the one thing we most need is grace (grace for forgiveness, grace for power to live in a way that honors God). And God gives that grace to whom? The humble and He withholds it from the proud. Well guess what folks here is one way that we can assert our pride and destroy the grace of God in our lives. It's by living with a spirit of arrogant independence and self-sufficiency as opposed to a constant moment by moment humbling to the sovereign will and purpose of God. Now, next week, we'll learn what the biblical response to God's rule is.

Let's pray together.

Father, we confess to You that we are so proud because we often exercise an independent spirit. We often make our decisions and our plans about various things in life without any eye to who You are, to Your sovereign plan and purpose. Father, I pray You would forgive us. Give us a fresh insight, a fresh view (even from this passage and what we've been studying together) that You are in control and that we are not.

And Father, help us to live moment by moment and day by day with that awareness ever in our minds so that we would humble ourselves before You so we could experience Your grace and not Your opposition.

Father, I pray for the person here today who has lived in an arrogant spirit of self-sufficiency and independence, who has assumed that he or she is the master of their own destiny, the captain of their own fate who has bought self-determinism hook, line, and sinker. Father, I pray that today You would strip away all of that self-confidence, all of the self-esteem, all of the arrogance that sets them against You, and Lord, produce true humility, the humility of repentance and the humility of faith in our Lord Jesus Christ. Lord, I pray that You would work in someone's heart today. We pray that You would do it, not for our sakes or for that matter even for the sake of the person, but for Your own great glory.

We pray in Jesus' name, Amen.