



Knowing and Doing the Will of God

James 4:11-17

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“Deo Volente” is a Latin phrase that means “God willing” and was once signed by Christians at the end of their letters as “DV.”

Don't Speak Evil Of One Another (James 4:11-12)

- Satan is called the “Accuser of the Brethren” (Rev. 12:10)
- **“Do not go about spreading slander among your people.” (Leviticus 19:16 NIV)**

Examples of the same Greek word “speak against”:¹

- Aaron and Miriam “spoke against” Moses for marrying a Cushite woman (Num. 12:1, 8)
- The people of Israel “spoke against” God by complaining about their conditions in the wilderness (Num. 21:5).
- The Psalmist says a wicked person will “speak against” his brother, slandering him with lies (Ps. 50:20).
- Job’s friends “spoke against” Job, insulting him and crushing him with their words (Job. 19:1-3).
- Unbelievers “speak against” Christians, slandering them as evil-doers (1 Pet. 2:12; 3:16).

2 reasons why we can't judge others: 1) We are imperfect about the facts (like motives); 2) We are imperfect ourselves. See Matthew 7:1-5.

- You are placing yourself above God’s law. You know better than God. You’ve made yourself judge.
- **“So do not make any hasty or premature judgments before the time when the Lord comes [again], for He will both bring to light the secret things that are [now hidden] in darkness and disclose and expose the [secret] aims (motives and purposes) of hearts. Then every man will receive his [due] commendation from God.” (1 Corinthians 4:5, AMP)**

Three Mistakes That Are Often Made Regarding Our Future:

1. I disregard God’s will (James 4:13, 15-16)
2. I deny the brevity of life (James 4:14)
3. I delay what I know I ought to do (James 4:17)

He planned all of this without God (James 4:13)

- **When** (today or tomorrow)
- **Who** (we)
- **Where** (such and such a city)
- **How long** (spend a year there)
- **What** (buy and sell)
- **Why** (make a profit)

What is missing in this picture? He never references God!

“Lord willing” has been immensely popular at different times in church history. “The Puritans loved it and filled their speech and correspondence with the Latin equivalent *Deo Volente*, “God willing.” And the Methodists followed the same practice. In fact, godly Methodists regularly signed their letters with the initials D.V., and placards and circulars about coming events also had D.V.”² Paul promised the Ephesians, “I will come back if it is God's will” (Acts 18:21). To the Corinthians he said, “But I will come to you very soon, if the Lord is willing” (1 Corinthians 4:19; Romans 1:10; 1 Corinthians 16:7; Philippians 2:19, 24; Hebrews 6:3).

¹ Taken from Charles Swindoll, *Insights on James and 1&2 Peter* (Carol Stream, Ill: Tyndale, 2014), 97.

² Kent Hughes, *James: Faith That Works*, (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Books, 1991), 205-206.