

1. We have to exercise right behavior in our speech to one another. (James 4:11-12)
  - a. James comes back to this topic because speech is so hard to control. Even when we have been able to exercise control of our tongues for a season, we have to place a watch over it because we can lose control quite easily.
  - b. What evil we say about others indicts the law that protects them. God made us brothers and sisters can be problematic for us because we are the Lord's children and what God's Words says about us is who we are. When we say something contrary to the Word of God, we speak against the Word of God.
  - c. There is only one God, one lawgiver, one able to save and destroy, what we say about others for good or for ill must first be validated by or confirmed by what the Lord has already said.
2. We have to exercise right behavior in what we say we *will* do. (4:13-15)
  - a. No one know the future except God. We have to be careful not to be presumptuous about our plans. Our plans, though often well-intentioned, may not be the plans of God.
  - b. Life is not guaranteed except eternal life. Our lives are but a vapor: they are here today and gone tomorrow. We cannot demand more life nor determine how long we will be here. We must be humble before the Lord and trust him to guide our footsteps. That's why we have to be careful about guarantees for jobs and business partnerships as well. The Lord is our master, he tells us where to go and what to do.
3. Our boast should always be in the Lord and not what we *think* we know. (4:16-17)
  - a. Improper boasting is always a problem with God. God does not want us to be arrogant about ourselves, our things, or what we hope for. Our focus should always be on lifting up the name of the Lord, not on our desires.
  - b. Choosing to do wrong when we know right is the worst kind of sin. God often gives grace for ignorance. But we can be sure that punishment follows doing wrong when we know it is wrong.