

See if you can pick something from your list that *could* be a problem for you.

Back to James 4

Jim spoke of holding plans too tightly. Have you ever had a plan that either 1) blew up, or 2) changed so much it was hardly recognizable as your original plan? If not, is there someone close to you who faced major changes to their plans? Give a brief description.

Can you identify any lessons you learned or saw in someone else that resulted from God's alteration of the plan?

Think of the lesson of the open hand: a loose shape to your hand so than you can actually hold the plan, but not so much that it can't be altered by God. During your prayer times this week pray with open hands, ready to move on the plan that you believe God has given you, but also ready to receive his *reshaped plan* for even greater blessing.

If there are things that you are holding onto too tightly, picture yourself releasing them to God.

If anyone, then, knows the good they ought to do and doesn't do it, it is sin for them. James 4:17 (NIV)



Living Life with Open Hands

"There are two kinds of people: those who say 'Thy will be done,' and those to whom God says 'All right then, have it your way.'" C.S. Lewis

HOLDING ONTO OUR PLANS WITH TIGHT HANDS

We lay out the _____ of our plans

We lay out the _____ of our plans

We lay out the _____ of our plans

We lay out the _____ of our plans

When we presume to know the future, we are _____ and _____ for life's surprises.

THE PROBLEM WITH PRESUMPTION

Life is uncertain in terms of _____

Life is uncertain in terms of _____

Life is uncertain in terms of _____

OPENING UP OUR HANDS

Loosening our grip doesn't lead to _____ it leads to _____

Submitting our plans to God's will means that

We _____ our _____

We _____ our _____

We _____ our _____

When it comes to God's will, he often doesn't _____ but he does _____.

THE ALTERNATIVE ISN'T PRETTY!

It is evil because we _____ and we _____.

It is foolish because overconfidence can cause us to _____ when he _____.

As you look back over this study, identify the person, plan, or goal in life on which you have the tightest grip. What does James 4:17 call it when you know what you should do, but don't?

Small Group Homework For the week of May 31, 2015

Plans and dreams ...

When you were younger, what did you want to be when you grew up? Did you ever take any steps toward that dream?

Getting into the Word

Read Matthew 6:25, 30-34.

- Is Jesus against making any plans for the future?
- What (if anything) does this passage have to do with our plans?
- What are the top three things you tend to worry about?

Read Luke 12:16-21

Give a *brief* description of the problems that the rich man showed in this passage.

What things besides money do people (even Christians) tend to store up for themselves?