

## 9. THE DANGERS OF PRIDE

### REFLECTION

Begin your study by sharing thoughts on this question.

1. What is one of your long-range goals? How would you feel if you could not accomplish it?

### BIBLE READING

Read James 4:11–17 from the NCV or the NKJV.

#### NCV

<sup>11</sup>Brothers and sisters, do not tell evil lies about each other. If you speak against your fellow believers or judge them, you are judging and speaking against the law they follow. And when you are judging the law, you are no longer a follower of the law. You have become a judge. <sup>12</sup>God is the only Lawmaker and Judge. He is the only One who can save and destroy. So it is not right for you to judge your neighbor.

<sup>13</sup>Some of you say, "Today or tomorrow we will go to some city. We will stay there a year, do business, and make money." <sup>14</sup>But you do not know what will happen tomorrow! Your life is like a mist. You can see it for a short time, but then it goes away. <sup>15</sup>So you should say, "If the Lord wants, we will live and do this or that." <sup>16</sup>But now you are proud and you brag. All of this bragging is wrong. <sup>17</sup>Anyone who knows the right thing to do, but does not do it, is sinning.

#### NKJV

<sup>11</sup>Do not speak evil of one another, brethren. He who speaks evil of a brother and judges his brother, speaks evil of the law and judges the law. But if you judge the law, you are not a doer of the law but a judge. <sup>12</sup>There is one Lawgiver, who is able to save and to destroy. Who are you to judge another?

<sup>13</sup>Come now, you who say, "Today or tomorrow we will go to such and such a city, spend a year there, buy and sell, and make a profit"; <sup>14</sup>whereas you do not know what will happen tomorrow. For what is your life? It is even a vapor that appears for a little time and then vanishes away. <sup>15</sup>Instead you ought to say, "If the Lord wills, we shall live and do this or that." <sup>16</sup>But now you boast in your arrogance. All such boasting is evil.

<sup>17</sup>Therefore, to him who knows to do good and does not do it, to him it is sin.

## DISCOVERY

Explore the Bible reading by discussing these questions.

2. Why should we not speak against fellow Christians?
3. In what ways do we judge others?
4. Why do we need to keep our plans submissive to God's will?
5. What attitude does God want us to have about the future? Why?
6. Why is God not satisfied that we simply *know* to do good?
7. How does pride deceive and destroy people?
8. Why is humility harder to practice than pride?
9. Who do you know who demonstrates a spirit of humility? What have you learned from that person?

## PRAYER

Father, forgive us for living for ourselves, for thinking that we don't need you. God, help us to embrace humility. Help us to remember that we can do nothing without you because you are the source of everything.

## JOURNALING

Take a few moments to record your personal insights from this lesson.

How am I encouraged to know that God controls my future?

## ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS

10. How has pride damaged your relationship with God or others?

11. How can you begin to bring healing to those relationships?

12. What steps can you take to develop a spirit of humility?

For more Bible passages on pride, see Proverbs 11:2; 13:10; 16:5, 18; Romans 12:16; 1 Peter 5:5.