



SAFE HARBOR

A Publication of Cove Fellowship Ministries

William E. Lang Jr., Director

VOLUME 16.4

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2018

The Plan of God

What is God's plan for your life? How do you know what it is?

Interesting questions that are asked again and again. The question I would pose would be, is what you are calling truly God's plan or in reality the wishes and desires that stem from our own wants?

When I was working as a project manager, each project involved a high degree of planning, viewing each project from its beginning all the way through to its end. A tool called a Gant Chart formed the details of the planned installation including specific dates, manpower estimates, cost estimates etc. Once the project began, however, that Gant Chart would be reviewed and revised. This because planning on paper and the reality of the project never seemed to match. Or take into the consideration the thousands of pages which formed the basis for any military operation and then when the first shots were fired those pages, which had been so carefully prepared became almost meaningless.

Having said this, it is time to turn our attention to God's plan and how to know it and to meet the uncertainties that life throws into our path to heaven.

First off and contrary to popular opinion, God has not made us puppets that he controls and dictates every action along our journey in life. In the Garden he told Adam and Eve to be fruitful and multiply and subdue the earth as well as following his instructions not to eat of the fruit of one tree. To think that our lives are predestined by God removes the freedom of our wills in making decisions. So we must consider the reality of God's plan.

In making his unique creation, humanity, God made the crown of his creation, a race that was a mirror in spirit and would be in communion with Himself. Here was God's ultimate plan for his Creation. He created a physical being that would be the mirroring presence of the Divine upon the earth. Humankind was also to be in communion with God

The Genesis account then records the exile from the Garden and the subsequent generations that arose from Cain and then Seth. With the birth of Seth's son Enosh we are told that the "people began to call upon the name of the Lord" implying a desire to restore the relationship with God. Yet through the ages which followed humanity strayed into further disunion with God. There was further corruption and God declares that "***My Spirit shall not abide in man forever, for he is flesh: his days shall be 120 years***". There is a vagueness in the account but it summarizes from Adam through Seth to Enoch who walked with God even as wickedness grew. This progressed until the time of Noah when as Jesus said, "For as in those days before the flood they were eating, drinking, marrying, and giving in marriage until the day Noah entered the ark". These inhabitants of the earth seemed to be enjoying life but without thought to God which led to increasing evil in the growing intentions of hearts without God. But Noah found favor with the Lord and became the party of a new covenant with the Lord. After the Flood humankind strives to reach the heavens by constructing the Tower of Babel. In doing do they clearly defied God.

Yet God continued to try to meet and establish communion once again with his cherished creation. He reaches out and enters into unique covenants. To understand this communion we need to understand the term covenant.

Covenant is a strong key word in Scripture. It is the given in the establishment of the relationship between humanity and God. It progresses from Noah through Abraham, Isaac, Jacob to Moses and the nation of Israel. Its precepts describe the requirements of God and man for the building of the relationship whereby spiritual communion are set forth. Jesus comes and fulfills the Covenant and brings the New Covenant where God's Spirit is restored to those who enter in.

It is this New Covenant that restores the possibility for the realization of God's plan for us to have the intimate fellowship with God through the indwelling of the Holy Spirit.

Jesus spoke about the foolishness of relying upon one's earthly plan for their lives. Obviously if we look at the Apostles and other believers when can see that God often has very different plans for our lives and gently guides one to the fulfillment of that plan.

There are expectations of living one's life and doing things that we ought to do but we must make allowance that God has a plan that is above that which we can see. But we must always keep in mind that the plan of salvation is to bring restoration to fellowship with God. This may present opportunities that might require one to go beyond the normal or to extend oneself beyond the familiar circle of comfort that we all have in order to fulfill God's plan.

The requirement of God is that we be open to his plan, listen to his directions and walk in his steps. In doing this he seeks to bring our lives into a harmony with our Creator. Nor does he force himself on us. Rather he extends his hand in faith looking for a response of faith from those he loves. Then we might enter into His Rest and be made safe by faith.

Reflections

John Wesley, founder of Methodism, was a most interesting person. A minister's son, graduate of Lincoln College, Oxford, member of the "Holy Club", missionary to the colony of Georgia, multi-lingual he served a parish that extended beyond church walls to a people who needed to find the truth of God's love and salvation. He wrote many pamphlets, books and letters touching on many topics including books on medicine. From a very early age he ministered to the convicts, the poor and distressed. His class meetings provided education and understanding.

For all of this he should be remembered to one phrase, "Let me be a man of one book (the Bible)". Within its pages he found the grounding for his faith and the guidance for his life. In the turbulent times he lived in, the Bible provided a solid rock upon which his life could be based. We would do well to also adapt this wisdom to our own lives. We are continually assaulted by the diversions which would lead us away from God's truth. There are many espousing dogma, often with great vehemence, that would chip away and eventually destroy faith. Such threats can only be meant by being grounded in God's Word and carefully weigh what popular beliefs are in light of the Scripture.

We should look to the Scriptures as the precious gift from God. As Paul writes to Timothy, "***All Scripture is breathed out by God and is profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction and for training in righteousness that the person of God shall be complete, equipped for every good work.***" (2Tim.3:16-17)

Words of Encouragement

Do your best to present yourself to God as one approved, a worker who has no need to be ashamed, rightly handling the word of truth. (2Tim.2:15)

Just a side note: October 31 is celebrated as Halloween, or A Holy or Sanctified Evening before All Saints Day on November 1. The association we find with the demonic comes from the tradition that goes back to the Dark Ages that this was an evening where witches and goblins and devils reveled in a worship of Satan.

Unfortunately our culture has forgotten the meaning of Halloween as a time of piety and soul searching before the celebration of the saints. Sometimes our acceptance of something society would stir us away can be most destructive to our faith.

Also a footnote: My book of poetry, **Midnight Musings: Thoughts from a Restless Mind**, is available on Amazon and also Amazon Kindle. Your patronage and thoughts would be appreciated.

