

A Time to Plan

We give our best to God when we plan. “The plans of a hard worker lead to abundance, but everyone in a hurry rushes toward scarcity” Proverbs 21:5. **Anything good that comes from our planning is solely because of God’s blessing.** “A person’s heart plans his way, but the LORD makes his steps secure” Proverbs 16:9.

What would it look like if a restaurant did:

- No planning
- Poor planning
- Great planning

What would it look like if a church did:

- No planning
- Poor planning
- Great planning

God Plans, So We Plan

Throughout Scripture we see time and again that our God makes very specific plans. God created the world with the plan to live with humanity in perfection, but when sin ruined the world, God immediately announced his plan to send a Savior, thousands of years in advance.

Identify how God is a planning God in the following verses.

Genesis 41:34-36 ³⁴When Pharaoh does this, let him appoint overseers over the land to collect one fifth of the produce of the land of Egypt during the seven years of abundance. ³⁵Let them collect all this food from these good years that are coming. Accumulate grain under the authority of Pharaoh to provide food for the cities, and let them store it. ³⁶The food will be a reserve for the land against the seven years of famine that will take place in the land of Egypt so that the land does not perish because of the famine.”

John 14:1-3 “Do not let your heart be troubled. Believe in God; believe also in me. ²In my Father’s house are many mansions.[Ⓜ] If it were not so, I would have told you. I am going to prepare a place for you.[Ⓜ] ³And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and take you to be with me, so that you may also be where I am.

We Plan, Trusting God

Is there such a thing as bad planning?

Luke 12:16-21 He told them a parable: "The land of a certain rich man produced very well. ¹⁷ He was thinking to himself, 'What will I do, because I do not have anywhere to store my crops?' ¹⁸ He said, 'This is what I will do. I will pull down my barns and build bigger ones, and there I will store all my grain and goods. ¹⁹ And I will tell my soul, "Soul, you have many goods stored up for many years. Take it easy. Eat, drink, and be merry.'" ²⁰ "But God said to him, 'You fool, this night your soul will be demanded from you. Now who will get what you have prepared?' ²¹ "That is how it will be for anyone who stores up treasure for himself and is not rich toward God."

How do God's plans compare with our plans?

Acts 16:6-10 They went through the region of Phrygia and Galatia, because they were prevented by the Holy Spirit from speaking the word in the province of Asia. ⁷ When they went as far as Mysia, they tried to go into Bithynia, but the Spirit of Jesus did not allow them. ⁸ So they passed by Mysia and went down to Troas. ⁹ A vision appeared to Paul during the night. A Macedonian man was standing there, urging him, "Come over to Macedonia and help us!" ¹⁰ As soon as he had seen the vision, we^a immediately made plans to proceed to Macedonia, because we concluded that God^b had called us to preach the good news to them.

What does it mean to commit your plans to the LORD?

Proverbs 16:3 Commit what you do to the LORD, and your plans will be established.

James 4:15 Instead, it is better for you to say, "If it is the Lord's will, we will live, and we will do this or that."

We Trust, God Blesses

Guided by God's Word we plan, making use of our reason and logic. What encouragement does God give us as we make personal and congregational plans?

Proverbs 3:5,6 Trust in the LORD with all your heart, and do not rely on your own understanding. ⁶ In all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make your paths straight.

Matthew 6:33,34 But seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well. ³⁴ So do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will care for itself. Each day has enough trouble of its own."

Philippians 4:6-8 Do not worry about anything, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God. ⁷ And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus. ⁸ Finally, brothers, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is commendable, if anything is excellent, and if anything is praiseworthy, think about these things.

- Think of one thing your church does well/could improve when it comes to planning.
- What is one thing you wish (goal) for your congregation in the future?