

Becky Combee Ministries, Inc.

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What's The Plan?

BY BECKY COMBEE

Wayne and I begin many ordinary days by asking one other, "What's the plan?" Some days there is no plan. At other times, he has furniture to refinish or the yard to mow and I have lessons to prepare, outlines to complete, or papers to successfully shuffle. These are very simple daily tasks. But, what about a plan for the year?

Recently, Wayne and I were listening to a sermon that prompted us to think about our goals for the year. We both laughed. The only thing we could think of was a conversation that involved moving our roses from the front yard to the back yard. We thought they might grow better in more sunlight (This proved to be true). After we moved them, we had completed our plan. I mean, we had completed our plan for the year. After several less-than-serious chats, we couldn't think of anything else.

In Jeremiah 29:11, Almighty God says, "For I

know the thoughts that I think toward you." The Jerusalem Bible interprets this magnificent verse, "I know the plans I have in mind for you." The New English Bible declares, "I alone know my purpose for you." I love the words chosen by these learned scholars. Think about it. **God has thoughts, plans and purpose for our lives.** In addition to these words, Strong's Exhaustive Concordance of the Bible offers us the words "advice" and "intention."

It is overwhelming to think that God has a plan for me! He has advice for me. He has a purpose for my life. Years ago, there was a radio advertisement that always ended with the statement, "Think about it." When I read, "thus saith the Lord," as recorded by Jeremiah, I say the same thing to myself. "Think about that, Becky." Just think about that. God has a wonderful plan for your life.

I now ask, "How can I access God's plan? Can I determine God's goal, purpose and intention?" The psalmist says, "The steps of a good man are ordered by the Lord."¹ The apostle Paul clarifies this truth when he declares that the wonder of God's

God Is Good All The Time

BY SUZANNE WILLIAMS

I read a true story written by someone who had been through a terrible time in their life. I cried for them and was touched by their sorrow. Yet in the midst of their story, they said what I have heard so many say - that God wanted them to learn something from it.

Sigh. To be entirely truthful, despite the platitudes they offered at the end - how they found healing from their grief through faith in Christ - I couldn't get past that one comment because it is so WRONG.

Let's settle it here. **God is good all the time.** Until you have placed the foundation of that in your heart, you will never be able to overcome through

faith in Him whatever the devil throws your way. For there's the truth of it. The devil is the enemy. If it's bad, it came from him.

There are numerous proofs of this in the Bible. Jesus gave an example in his ministry. In it, He referred to Himself as the shepherd. Then He spoke about the purpose of the thief.

The thief cometh not, but for to steal, and to kill, and to destroy: I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly. ¹¹ I am the good shepherd: the good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep. (Jn 10:10-11)

It seems pretty apparent that if He is the shepherd, come to give abundant life, then He cannot be the thief, come to steal. Anything or

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provision is spiritually discerned. God's glorious bounty is revealed to us by His Spirit.²

I certainly know this is true. After Christmas, I assembled my gift list, address book, and note cards with the INTENTION to write thank-you notes. I conscientiously write thank-you notes because I am truly grateful for each gift given to me and because I know that ingratitude is a sign of end-time events.³ I don't want to be caught in that trap! Yet in spite of my PLANS to write each person, I wrote only one note. My mind was in a fog. I couldn't remember who I was going to write. Finally, I gave up.

As I was praying the next day, each person, gift, and word of thanks was easily remembered. What

was the difference between that moment of clarity and the previous day's fog? Through prayer, I yielded to the Holy Spirit, and He enabled me to remember.⁴ Our great God who leads us as we address major decisions also oversees the simplest daily task. He revealed to me the information needed. What a wonderful Father!

We can depend on God to "work in us to will and to do of His good pleasure."⁵ As we march forward into 2012, we are encouraged to spend extra time in prayer listening for His instructions. We seek His ADVICE, covet His PURPOSE, and cherish His THOUGHTS. God's plan will build His Kingdom. It will bring joy unspeakable into our lives. *I choose to labor with Him.* He is Lord!

¹ Ps 37:23 ² 1Co 2:10 ³ 2Ti 3:2 ⁴ Jn 14:26 ⁵ Php 2:13, paraphrase

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anyone that is stealing, killing, or destroying in your life, is the work of the thief - not God.

Jesus gives another example in the book of Luke. Here, He states that earthly parents, that'd be you and I, give their children GOOD gifts, therefore the heavenly Father gives GOOD gifts. (Lk 11:13) You'd think that'd be clear enough. However, someone in the crowd then stands up and accuses Him of casting out devils using the devil's power. I can just see Him shaking His head.

But he, knowing their thoughts, said unto them, Every kingdom divided against itself is brought to desolation; and a house divided against a house falleth. ¹⁸ If Satan also be divided against himself, how shall his kingdom stand? (Lk 11:17-18)

Think for a minute. If every kingdom divided will fall, then God does NOT use the devil because that makes Him divided against Himself.

Jesus also told us what the power of God in our lives is called to do. Given we now know it does NOT steal, kill or destroy, because that is the department of the thief, and He is not divided against Himself to use any of those things against us, then what IS His purpose?

We find this in Luke 4:18. Here, Jesus states exactly what He came to do. To preach. To heal. To deliver. To recover. To set at liberty. That about covers it.

So who is to blame when things go wrong in our

lives? Well, I caution you against always saying, "The devil made me do it," because sometimes we do it of our own accord. Most know what I went through with my battle against fear. Do you know at no time did I blame that on God? I did learn something from it, but guess what I learned? I learned that God loved me - always - that God wanted me free - always - that God is bigger and stronger and higher than the devil. I learned I was wrong in the way I behaved, the way I spoke, the way I acted. I learned that fear isn't that big, only seems like it, and that through the power of repentance, a mighty, powerful, omnipotent God would sweep in, give me complete repentance, and heal me physically, mentally, and spiritually.

But I could have gotten all of that by listening to what I'd heard growing up. My mother taught it. My pastors preached it. The Bible in my lap said so. However, I didn't believe any of it. I did what I wanted to do and eventually paid the price for my sin. And that had nothing to do with God's will for me.

Sometimes our limited human knowledge prevents us from knowing the path of our feet. Sometimes we can't see God's plan, and sometimes bad things happen. This is where faith steps in. No matter what I do or don't understand about the evil in the world, I know that I know that I know that it wasn't God's desire for me.

I like the words of Psalm 52:1, "The goodness of God endureth continually." That, my friend, sizes it up. God is truly good all the time. Do you believe it? I do!