

## God's Plan from the Foundation of the World

Last week we looked at how God miraculously established a record and testimony in His Word about the coming of Christ. This provided two important principles. First, that God's Word is trustworthy. Over time, as you attend to God's Word, many things that you wonder about will get answered, but some will not. You can be sure that there *are* answers for all of your questions. If you should die before all your questions are answered, you will have those answered by Jesus Christ Himself. The second principle is that God gave us the ability to recognize Who the Messiah was when He came.

In God's preparation for the coming of Christ into the world, we read that he came "in the fullness of time."

Gal 4:4-5 But when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law,  
5To redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons.

When the time was ready for Christ to fulfill God's plan, Jesus came.

Psa 119:152 Concerning thy testimonies, I have known of old that thou hast founded them for ever.

Psalm 119:152 does not merely refer to how God's plans are enduring, but that they were founded for ever, or from eternity.

### 1. God's plan and providence for man -

Like the preparation of the Magi, the preparation of Christ for the world began long ago. The preparation of the Magi was in antiquity, but the preparation of Christ began in eternity, before the foundations of the world were laid.

1Pet 1:18-21 Forasmuch as ye

know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, *as* silver and gold, from your vain conversation *received* by tradition from your fathers;

19But with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot:

20Who verily was foreordained before the foundation of the world, but was manifest in these last times for you,

21Who by him do believe in God, that raised him up from the dead, and gave him glory; that your faith and hope might be in God.

Adam and Eve's sin did not take God by surprise. He was not looking down from heaven saying, "Oh no! Oh no! What shall I do?" He knew what was coming and had already prepared for their fall.

Heb 10:5,6 Wherefore when he cometh into the world, he saith, Sacrifice and offering thou wouldest not, but a body hast thou prepared me:

6In burnt offerings and *sacrifices* for sin thou hast had no pleasure.

In Rev 13 we read about how God's plan was so sure that Jesus was called the Lamb slain *from the foundation of the world*.

Rev 13:8 ...the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world.

When Peter preached to the Jews at Pentecost, he indicated that they were only fulfilling what God knew they would do because He had determined that Jesus was going to be sacrificed for us.

Acts 2:21-23 And it shall come to pass, *that* whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be saved.

22Ye men of Israel, hear these words; Jesus of Nazareth, a man approved of God among you by

miracles and wonders and signs, which God did by him in the midst of you, as ye yourselves also know:

23Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain...

God has planned a reckoning for our sin. It will either be reckoned with by Christ taking our judgement or by taking our judgment ourselves. God had prepared for Jesus to offer Himself as a sacrifice which brings us to God's plan for you.

## 2. God's general plan for you -

We often hear it preached that God has a plan for you. The general plan of God for each of us is that we should get saved. Once that salvation is secured, there is no more sacrifice necessary.

Heb 9:24-26 For Christ is not entered into the holy places made with hands, *which are* the figures of the true; but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us:

25Nor yet that he should offer himself often, as the high priest entereth into the holy place every year with blood of others;

26For then must he often have suffered since the foundation of the world: but now once in the end of the world hath he appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself.

This plan for us was from the foundation of the world.

Eph 1:3-5 Blessed *be* the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly *places* in Christ:

4According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy

and without blame before him in love:

5Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will,

Once we are *in Him*, in Christ, we are destined to the adoption, which is the resurrection. For those who become "in Him," Rev 17:8 says their names are written in the book of life from the foundation of the world. The names of the rest of mankind will not appear in that book.

Rev 17:8 The beast that thou sawest was, and is not; and shall ascend out of the bottomless pit, and go into perdition: and they that dwell on the earth shall wonder, whose names were not written in the book of life from the foundation of the world, when they behold the beast that was, and is not, and yet is.

God's plan is further fulfilled by serving Him.

Phil 3:8-10 Yea doubtless, and I count all things *but* loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them *but* dung, that I may win Christ,  
9And be found in him, not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith:

10That I may know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable unto his death;

Eph 2:10 For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them.

### 3. God's particular plan for you -

God's general plan for you is to be saved, serve God, and be resurrected into glory. Apart from that, there is not just one plan that if you mess up you lose out on the one opportunity to be part of that plan. God doesn't plan for you to fail, but when you do, it does not mean that there is no plan for you anymore to fulfill. God's plans are adaptive. He knows how you are going to react and He is no more taken by surprise by you as He was by Adam and Eve. He will work with each decision you make with the appropriate action to fulfill His *ultimate* plan of redemption. God's calling is without repentance.

Jas 4:13-16 Go to now, ye that say, To day or to morrow we will go into such a city, and continue there a year, and buy and sell, and get gain:

14Whereas ye know not what *shall be* on the morrow. For what *is* your life? It is even a vapour, that appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away.

15For that ye *ought* to say, If the Lord will, we shall live, and do this, or that.

16But now ye rejoice in your boastings: all such rejoicing is evil.

Don't be so adamant about how God is working His plan for you. If God doesn't jump through the hoops you set for Him, you might make the mistake of being disappointed when things don't work out the way *you* and not God determined. We know in general that we are called to salvation and service and that is not going to change.

Rom 11:29 For the gifts and calling of God *are* without repentance.

We work with how God is directing us. We *can* say for sure that no matter where God is directing us we have to

heed what Peter wrote.

1Pet 3:15 But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts: and *be* ready always to *give* an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear:

This brings us to a particular problem. One of the things that confuses people is that the Bible speaks of God's repentance, or changing His mind about our calling.

1Sam 15:11,26-29 It repenteth me that I have set up Saul *to be* king: for he is turned back from following me, and hath not performed my commandments. And it grieved Samuel; and he cried unto the LORD all night.

26And Samuel said unto Saul, I will not return with thee: for thou hast rejected the word of the LORD, and the LORD hath rejected thee from being king over Israel.

27And as Samuel turned about to go away, he laid hold upon the skirt of his mantle, and it rent.

28And Samuel said unto him, The LORD hath rent the kingdom of Israel from thee this day, and hath given it to a neighbour of thine, *that is* better than thou.

29And also the Strength of Israel will not lie nor repent: for he *is* not a man, that he should repent.

On the one hand, in vs. 29, Samuel points out that God does not repent. But then, in vs. 11, God said that He *did* repent. God had selected Saul, Saul had sinned, and God repented, or "changed His mind," about Saul as king. You have to read the Scripture carefully and will discover that God does not repent the way *men* repent. Men repent over their sinfulness. In a way, you can say God repents over man's sinfulness.

God's repentance is not based on *Him* changing. God's will stands, it is us

changing with respect to Him. It has been illustrated by a car driving past a tree. At one point the tree is to the left of the car. Then, the tree is to the right of the car. It was not tree that moved, but the car and the relationship of the tree to the car is now changed. It has been said that if you feel you are far from God, guess who moved?

It might be more appropriate to say that besides God's plan for salvation for you, God has *plans* for you. Is it possible to mess up so badly that you ruin God's plans for you? Not His general plan, but you might get to the point where God takes you home to the ultimate fulfillment of that plan.

1Cor 11:28-31 But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of *that* bread, and drink of *that* cup.

29For he that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh damnation to himself, not discerning the Lord's body.

30For this cause many *are* weak and sickly among you, and many sleep.

31For if we would judge ourselves, we should not be judged.

1Cor 9:24-27 Know ye not that they which run in a race run all, but one receiveth the prize? So run, that ye may obtain.

25And every man that striveth for the mastery is temperate in all things. Now they *do it* to obtain a corruptible crown; but we an incorruptible.

26I therefore so run, not as uncertainly; so fight I, not as one that beateth the air:

27But I keep under my body, and bring *it* into subjection: lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway.

The message of hope that we have is that even though you have moments when you stumble, don't think that God

is through with you. We shouldn't use this to make us take God for granted. But, when we fall, we should get up and go again with a zeal for God with a view to victory. We don't have to live a life of defeat. God will get the glory out of our lives no matter what. When Pharaoh sinned, God was glorified in His judgment of Pharaoh. That is not the way you should want God to get the glory. Live your life studying, preparing, serving and God will use you for His glory in a way that is also glorious for *you*. This is why you should be baptized, as a testimony of that commitment. This is why we go to church, to learn God's Word so we can be part of the ministry *delivering* that Word. This is why we take time to be with, talk with, and work alongside each other, so we can help each other along the way. This is why we take time to confess our sin to God so we can put it behind us and get back on track.

Gal 4:4-5, Psa 119:152,

1. God's plan and providence for man - 1Pet 1:18-21, Heb 10:5,6, Rev 13:8, Acts 2:21-23
2. God's general plan for you - Heb 9:24-26, Eph 1:3-5, Rev 17:8, Phil 3:8-10, Eph 2:10
3. God's particular plan for you - Jas 4:13-16, Rom 11:29, 1Pet 3:15, 1Sam 15:11,26-29, 1Cor 11:28-31, 1Cor 9:24-27