

God's Plan

Acts 2:23,24

Drake...my kids brought this song to my attention. I wanted to see this video where this **rapper** was handing out almost **\$1M** to strangers on the street.

I am not a Drake fan, I don't listen to his music...but **if God spoke to Balaam through a donkey, I figured that** it was worth a listen just because of the title...

The song **reminded** me of this: God definitely has a plan, a specific plan for each and every one of our lives.

In this second chapter of Acts, Peter is preaching to a large crowd of people who have made the **pilgrimage** to Jerusalem to celebrate Pentecost.

This was also a **redemptive** moment in Peter's life! What he may have viewed as the ultimate act of **betrayal**....to **walk for three years with Jesus** and end up denying him

to a **peasant** girl around a **charcoal** fire, he probably thought he blew it!

But that was all a part of the plan of God! That is **good news** to anyone this morning who believes that you've somehow **made a bigger mess than God is able to clean up!**

He is the **quicker picker upper**—Like Bounty! He **CAN** and **WILL** pick us up after every misstep!

Someone in here has made some **mistakes** along the way to getting the degree or getting out of high school...but if you are **here**, you are **blessed** and **God's plan** is still in effect!

A young group of **untrained, uneducated disciples** were speaking of the **mighty** deeds of God- **but** they were doing **so in languages that they hadn't been taught!**

They were **defying the odds!** They were **instruments** of God to accomplish the goal of spreading the gospel message from Jerusalem, to Judea and to the ends of the earth.

This moment was God showing **we cannot tell Him who to use! HIS PREROGATIVE!** [came from nothing]

His name is **wonderful counselor...**so He **does not need** anyone to tell Him **how** to plan.

No one has ever given unto him that He should have to repay them...so He does not need anyone to **tell Him what to plan.** His judgments are unsearchable and His ways are unfathomable!

What are **some characteristics** of God's plan (**P.A.R.O.**)?

★ God's plan is **personalized!**

He says **through Jeremiah** for I know the plans that I have for **YOU!**

★ God's plan is **actionable!**

What that means is that God makes plans for us that we are **able to act on!** God's plan is actionable because **He empowers us** to complete the action! Today, we are celebrating graduates so that means that **God said GO, and you went!**

★ God's plan is **real!**

God transcends reality! He **causes things to occur** in the **natural** realm that He has **super-naturally** planned! ALL of God's plans are real because He is able to speak those things that are not as though they are! He controls reality!

★ God's plan is **obtainable!**

Whatever God shows us that is for us, He will *make a way* for us to obtain it! God **sets the objective** and the pathway to it!

What does **this passage of scripture** tell us about God's plan *here* on this day of Pentecost? The **Pharisees** and religious leaders **somehow believed** that they were the ones who controlled the fate of Jesus! Peter is now telling them that **contrary to what you think**, this was *God's* plan!

This **same man** who was attested to you, whom you **rejected**, who was right here in our **midst**...He was only **delivered over** to you because it was God's plan!

1. God's plan is predetermined (Verse 23a)

To get an idea of **how God predetermines** things, think about this situation. The **commotion** of the **120 upper room occupants speaking in fifteen different languages** drew a huge crowd!

NOW...Peter's preaching to a **captive audience**.

The crowd was not only **stunned**, they were **in a position to receive the higher message** that God had implanted into Peter.

This **crowd** meant that God would touch the maximum number of lives and send the gospel into more areas that if Peter had simply gone on a missionary journey!

The word used by Luke literally means **fixed or set**. The way that it is written, it *was fixed by someone else at some time in the past BUT it's ramifications* are felt in the **present**:

What am I saying? God set the plan the plan from all eternity- and revealed it in time.

If we read the **prophets**, **Isaiah 53** says that He would be **silent like a sheep** before the shearers. **David wrote** in the **22nd Psalm the very words** that Jesus would say on the cross...**My God**, My God, why have you forsaken Me?

Jesus even **said it Himself** that he must be handed over to the chief priests and be killed!

The fact that there was a plan to begin with is a testament to the grace of God!

You might be wondering how this affects you?

You are a part of the plan of God!

Your **achievements, as much as were BY the grace of God, because of His plan! They are meant to bring glory to God.**

You were **known BY God before you were formed in your mother's womb!**

He **knitted you together, knows the **innermost** parts of your being...and He loves you with an everlasting love!**

God already saw the future for you and God will bring you to that future!

2. God's plan is Foreknown (Verse 23)

Not only was it a plan that was pre-determined, but God **saw how it would play out!**

To give you an idea about the foreknowledge of God, look no further than **Mary and Joseph!**

God already knew that **Joseph could not be the biological** father of Jesus due to the side of the family that He was from. God also knew that **Mary couldn't be walking around pregnant without a husband** so He **spoke** to Joseph in a dream and said to him, "don't leave her, take her as our wife"...and it **just so happened that Mary was from the right side of the family!**

So God **brought them both together** to **fulfill** His word!

BY Joseph, Jesus was the LEGAL heir to the throne of David (through adoption) but **BECAUSE of Mary**, the He was **exempt from the curse** on Joseph's side of the family!

BY His foreknowledge of Adam's sin, Jesus was already offered up and the antidote to sin's venom!

1 Peter 1:20 says that Jesus was foreknown from before the foundation of the world! He is also the lamb that was **slain from before the foundation** of the world! In His foreknowledge, God plans all things well!

This **prior knowledge** makes God **omniscient!**

You may think that when things occur in your life that it **somehow slipped past God**, but it **did not**.

I wrestled with this myself when I saw my wife take her last breath! “Wait a minute God, how did this get past you?”

God was not asleep, it was just a part of a larger plan! Job said it like this: (**Job 23:9**) “He knows the way that I take...”

He knows every situation that we will encounter before it ever transpires. He knows the **number of our days** before we are born!

If this **foreknowledge** tells us anything, it is this: **move with urgency!**

God **sees time** in a way that we cannot fathom!

When He gives you a **plan**, a **vision** for your life, an opportunity, when He opens a door, it was meant to be opened...**walk through it!**

3. God's plan is unthwartable (Verse 23b,24)

No matter what happened, no matter who resisted, no matter how difficult it looked, **the plan was for Jesus to go to Calvary!**

God **knew that there would be obstacles!** He knew that the religious **leaders** would be **upset** that Jesus was claiming to be the Messiah! He knew that **Judas** would betray Jesus! He knew that **Peter** would deny Jesus! But it is not possible to overthrow God's plan!

God was going to give abundant life, no matter what stood in the way!

Sometimes, we think **obstacles** are there to derail the plan. In Actuality, they are **catalysts** to **move us further** along, faster than we normally would!

The obstacles are also a part of the plan! They are really **stepping stones to a breakthrough!** The **religious leaders** presented an **obstacle** to Jesus but **without them,** **how** would he reach the moment of glory?

Obstacles **test** our faith!

For **Peter,** it was seeing the winds and the waves!

What was it for **you?**

Was it an ornery professor? Was it some mistake made along the way?

Can I testify?

For me, it was **experiments that did not work. It was certain **professors** who did not believe that I was as capable as my white counterparts. It was **students** who thought that I was only at Chapel Hill because of affirmative action and not because of my hard work!**

They did not know that, in spite of the obstacles it was **God's plan that placed me in the hallowed halls of UNC with faith the size of a mustard seed!**

God **has an unstoppable plan for your life. No matter how high the waves get, we have to remember that He is able to say "Peace, Be Still"!**

CLOSE:

It was not just God's plan for Jesus to come and die...His death was a part of the plan to save us from the penalty and power of sin...but there is another part to that plan! Not only did Jesus have to go down...but He also had to get up!

VERSE 24

The plan was FOR Satan the word that his head would be bruised by the seed's heel

The plan was FOR Abraham's seed to bless the whole world

The plan was FOR David to have an heir on the throne forever

The Plan was for Isaiah to prophesy that the virgin would be with child

The Plan was for Micah to prophesy that Bethlehem would be the birthplace of the savior

He told Malachi that the Savior would be like a fuller's soap and a refiner's fire

The plan was FOR John the Baptist to leap in his mother's belly

The plan was FOR Mary to call Him Jesus for He will save His people from their sins

This is not just history but HIS-STORY

God's plan unfolded in Bethlehem but was given in eternity

God's plan was to send the Son of Man to do what no man could do

God's plan was to lift him UP so that He would draw all men unto Himself

God's plan was for him to go into the heart of the earth for three days...but not to stay there!

It was impossible for death to hold Him!

God's plan was to take away the sting of death and the the victory from the grave!

His plan was not to let the holy one see decay, not to let his bones rot...BUT TO LIFT HIM UP!

