



## GUIDANCE AND GOD'S PLAN FOR YOUR LIFE

"1 In the past God spoke to our forefathers through the prophets at many times and in various ways, 2 but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son, whom he appointed heir of all things, and through whom he made the universe. 3 The Son is the radiance of God's glory and the exact representation of his being, sustaining all things by his powerful word. After he had provided purification for sins, he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty in heaven" (Heb 1:1-3) "16 Then the eleven disciples went to Galilee, to the mountain where Jesus had told them to go. 17 When they saw him, they worshipped him; but some doubted. 18 Then Jesus came to them and said, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. 19 Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptising them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, 20 and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age."(Mt 28:16-20)

From the cataclysmic fall at the dawn of history when man rebelled against his maker GOD HAS BEEN WORKING TO HIS SOVEREIGN PLAN. (Hebrews 1:1-3) The question is this-what is yours and my part in this amazing eternal plan? A question every believer in Christ needs to ask. 'GOD HAS A PLAN FOR YOUR LIFE' what is it? Many Christians struggle with questions like 'Who shall I marry?' 'Should I marry at all?' Is this girl who has caught my eye the right one? What career should I follow? Is it right to do this or that?

### 1st: THE FOUNDATION

What is it? Repentance and Faith! When Paul went to Thessalonica and preached Christ something happened to people there. This is how he afterward described it. "9 ...you turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God, 10 and to wait for his Son from heaven, whom he raised from the dead—Jesus, who rescues us from the coming wrath." (1Th 1:9-10)

Repentance means changing your mind about how you live and heading out in a new direction. These folk lived for idols and themselves but when the claims of Christ were presented to them they turned around and headed in a very different direction. They served a new master. A Christian is someone who is a slave who has changed masters and only God's power can bring this about. He is a person who is now beginning in the will of God under his guidance and control-under new management. "Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come!" (2Co 5:17) He is now in the will of God-he is about to play his part in God's master plan for the ages and take his place in his web of time.

### 2nd: THE OBJECTIVE

One well known group had a song with these lines 'This is your life are you who you want to be?' But you have come to Christ so now we need to radically change those lines 'Your life is Christ's are you what HE wants you to be?' The call to you and me is radically changed. "Therefore, I urge you, brothers, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God—this is your spiritual act of worship. 2 Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is—his good, pleasing and perfect will." (Ro 12:1-2) Listen to Jesus in the great commission. '19 Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, (Mt 28:16-20) He did not say 'Get them saved' Full stop. He said 'Make disciples' That is something which includes being saved but much more besides.

God's great objective in bringing you into his kingdom is to make you more and more like Jesus. Was Jesus Holy? Yes! Was Jesus obedient to His Father? Yes! Was Jesus concerned for what God's Word said? Yes! Was Jesus kind? Yes! Was Jesus concerned to bring others to his kingdom? Yes! Was Jesus pure where the opposite sex was concerned? Yes! Did Jesus go to the cross and suffer for others? Yes! Did Jesus stand up for right when faced with things which dishonour God? Yes

We must grasp three things:-

- (1) God loves you just as you are. He loves you unconditionally
- (2) God refuses to leave you just as you are. He has got you on board with the sole Objective of changing you into the likeness of His Son.
- (3) God therefore gears everything in your life to attain his great end.

The great object of knowing Christ and moving on through life with him is that we become more like him-transformed into his likeness how do we get there? Paul wrote to the Romans like this "And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose." (Ro 8:28) This means '...sharing in his sufferings' as Paul told the Philippians. There is no suggestion that our cross bearing and suffering has any atoning merit. We can add nothing to that wonderful work which Christ did on the cross but it is through the path of suffering and self sacrifice that he makes us like himself. These are the tools that the divine sculptor uses to fashion us into his glorious image

The only way we can become like Jesus is through the pressures and sufferings of our earthly pilgrimage and the only way we can face those and learn from them is through his power! And here it is in the great commission? 'And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age'

### **3rd: THE DETAILS**

I guess some of you are now saying 'I thought you were going to tell us how God guides us to the right girl or fellow, how we find the right career, where to live and so on. Have no fear we are getting there but we must grasp the most important things first.

#### **(1) THE WORD OF GOD**

The Bible is our great chart and compass. God has spoken here all that we shall ever need on the path to his glory. Ps 119:105 'Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light for my path'. You cannot expect God to lead you if you do not read his word, think it through and above all obey it. There are directions here that you do not even need to think or pray about because God has already spoken about them.

#### **(2) WISDOM**

"For the foolishness of God is wiser than man's wisdom, and the weakness of God is stronger than man's strength." (1Co 1:25) "It is because of him that you are in Christ Jesus, who has become for us wisdom from God—that is, our righteousness, holiness and redemption." (1Co 1:30) When you came to Christ you did not lose your head!

#### **(3) SOVEREIGNTY**

What does the Bible say about Christ? He is Lord of all. When you came to him he put a work in hand to bring to His glory and he will not give up on you until you arrive safe in heaven and his eternal kingdom.

### **4th THE FINAL WORD**

On three things:-

#### **(1) CHURCH**

Which church should you attend where God can use its ministry to make you like Jesus?

A church which preaches His word-where the Bible and what it says is central. So that when you are deciding where to live etc this will be your main consideration. Are these people God's people? Do they honour him and his Son? Will they help me grow in my faith and will I be able to make a useful contribution with them to the kingdom of God?

## **(2) CAREER**

We live in a very materialistic society where career and the level of income it brings is all important. Beware God may well want you to become a heart specialist earning a good income but the reason for going into medicine is not that. If you are a Christian you go into whatever you do for the glory of Christ and the good of his kingdom.

## **(3) MARRIAGE**

How are you going to find a life partner? What are the things you will have in mind as a Christian?

Here is the wisdom of a great man of God Dr. Lloyd-Jones.

- **He or She must be a Christian.**

You are forbidden to marry someone who is not. "14 Do not be yoked together with unbelievers. For what do righteousness and wickedness have in common? Or what fellowship can light have with darkness? 15 What harmony is there between Christ and Belial? What does a believer have in common with an unbeliever?" (2Co 6:14-15)

- **Share the same interests**

Compatibility is important. If he or she likes walking and climbing mountains and you don't think carefully.

I do not mean that you must have no separate interests but you must have companionship after all you are going to live together for a very long time! Separation and divorce are not on your agenda.

And here is the most important thing

- **Sexual Attraction**

Not everyone has to marry there are some people who seem to live quite happily without getting into bed with a husband or a wife. But Paul makes it quite clear that it is better to marry than to burn with sexual desire unfulfilled so if this man or this woman you are getting to know does not attract you and turn you on-forget it she or he is not the one for you! 1Co 7:9 'But if they cannot control themselves, they should marry, for it is better to marry than to burn with passion'