

For you
 Title: God's Plan and Purpose

Text: Ephesians 1:8b-14 (8-11)

Ephesians chapter 1, please. *begin at vs 8* I would like to read from Verse 3 through

verse 14, even though we have had two messages down through Vs 8. I would like to read this whole section in order to keep the content in mind. This is dealing with God's plan. His plan that he laid out before the foundation of the world. A plan to save us. And the means by which we are saved. *This is God's*

Full Spiritual Blessings
 (Read 1:8-14)

Prayer

Father, you know our hearts. You know what we need before we ask. And I thank you for your wonderful plan. The plan of redemption. To bring us to yourself. Something you planned before the foundation of the world. Lord, you know the hearts of all who have come today. Some come with sin in their life and are seeking forgiveness. Other come with a measure of righteousness feeling that they are good, therefore deserving heaven. But we know that there is none that doeth good, no not one. That all of our righteousness is like filthy rags in your sight. The only righteousness that will do is the one Jesus provide by dieing and paying for our sins. Thank you, Lord, for saving us. Speak to our hearts we pray by your Holy Spirit. In Jesus name.. Amen.

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By way of a quick review. In our last message on what we have in Christ namely redemption, we looked at the person of our redemption. Vs 7 says, "In Him" the beloved one. The object of the love of God is in the sphere of love that God's plan is made possible for us.

We looked at the price of our redemption. It is His blood that was shed for our sins.

and We looked at the pardon involved. It involves the forgiveness, the sending away, of all of our sins.

We looked also at the provision of God which made it all possible. Namely his grace. Vs 8 says "he lavished his grace upon us." The Bible says in Romans 5:20 "where sin abounds, grace abounds all the more."

That is a fantastic statement. God's grace made it possible. By grace are you saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God, not as a result of works, that no one should boast."

(5) So, let's pick it up where we left off. *Now, let's look at the* And that is point 5, the plan behind our redemption. God had a plan *for our salvation*

In Vs 4, we learned that we were chosen in him before the foundation of the world. ^{Vs 5} We were predestined. Now, how is God going to do this? His plan is that he is going to do this through Jesus Christ. That is God's plan.

And it is based upon several things.

(1) *First, God's plan* For example, it is based on God's Will. *his* The last part of Vs 8 says, "In all wisdom and insight he made known to us the mystery of His will."

This redemption was a mystery in the O.T. It was hidden. They didn't understand it. Looking forward to Christ, YES... But the Bible says that He made known to us. *not* It is in the aorist tense. Meaning at a moment of time. WHEN DID GOD MAKE KNOWN TO US THE MYSTERY OF HIS WILL that He was going to ~~redeem~~ redeem people through Christ? *When?*

The answer: *The 1st* the moment Christ died on the cross.. It was at the cross that that mystery was revealed. Redemption was there.

And he says "all wisdom and insight." Wisdom is the application of truth. But, insight is a word meaning "mind and before". God in his infinite wisdom with a mind that prepared all things ahead of time, in one moment of history revealed what was already in his plan.

You see, the Book of Revelation says that ["]Jesus was a lamb slain before the foundation of the world. God knew what he was going to do before he created anyone. And it was in his wisdom and in his insight that God made known in a moment of time what his will was. The tremendous event of all history ~~is~~ is Jesus who died on a cross and paid for our sins. At last the good news came. ^{SALVATION} It is through Christ, it is through THE LAMB OF GOD, that the sin of the whole world would be taken away.

What glorious news this is. And it is based upon the will of God. (2) ^{Secondly} It was also based on the pleasure of God. God was pleased with what was happening. Vs 9 says, "according to his kind intention." The word "intention" simply means "good pleasure."

God was pleased when He plan to have Christ die on the cross and redeem us from our sins.

Isa 53, the great chapter on the death of the Messiah in the O.T., verse 10 says that "the Lord was pleased to crush him."

You say, "How in the world could God the Father be pleased when he saw the son go through the horror of the cross?" ~~What~~ Isa 53 tells you that it was because He saw his seeds. He saw the ones who were going to come to know Christ through the death of His son. The Father was delighted and pleased at the death of Jesus. AND it pleased to burst and crush him because he knew that you and I would be saved through Him. We would be adopted as sons into God's family. We would be redeemed by the precious blood of his son J.C.

Q3) It was also based upon God's timing. Vs 10 says "with a view to an administration"...

Now, if you are following along in K.J. it says "dispensation." "With a view to a dispensation or administration suitable to the fulness of the times" (Plural)...

Now, God's timing is involved here in terms of his plan. ^{I was in the time Paul was} The question is:

What does it mean "dispensation"? And what does it mean "the fulness of the times"?.....There are some who call themselves "dispensationalist"...And by this they mean that they see God's plan operating in different stages or periods of time. Some people follow a 7 fold dispensation. That is, they see 7 ~~periods~~ periods of time.

I would like to suggest that on the bases of Vs 10 there are at least 3 periods of time. At least three. WHY?

Because when he says "the fulness" or the "completion of the times" or "the seasons that he has been managing things", there is certainly the one that is coming. The one where he will gather all things under the headship of Christ. There is certainly the one in which Paul was living and writing. And there is certainly the one that preceded the time of Paul. That is why the plural "times" or "seasons." So, there are at least three that Paul has in his mind. How many more, I am not sure.

Some folks see 7...some see 3 ..4...5 or whatever....

Let me put it to you another way. From the Greek word which is translated "dispensation" or administration" we get our English word "economy. The Greek means "house" and "law". "Law of the house". And it is referring to an owner who goes on a trip and gives to his slave the right to manage all of his affairs. Normally, the time is set very carefully from day such and such to day such and such, you are in charge. That slave could make every decision on behalf of that owner.

Now, that is called stewardship or management or administration or dispensation. It is how God has been managing things. And I believe there are at least three times...If you look at this from the standpoint of the world, there is really three phrases of God's dispensation or management of things.

For example, before the flood there was a world that perished. A world that was.. 2 Peter 3:6 speaks of the world that was destroyed.

Now, God obviously was managing things at that time that he is no longer doing. Why? Because the whole thing perished.

Now, some folks who are dispensationalist will divide that period of time up into different categories. Whether that is taught in the Bible or not is a matter of debate. But at least there was a world before the flood that no longer exist. Therefore, the management of things certainly changed.

Now, following that we have several periods of time which basically represent the world that now is. At least it hasn't been destroyed yet. It was destroyed at the flood. But it hasn't been destroyed yet. It was destroyed once by the flood. The next destruction will come by fire.

Now, in the world that now is there are several interesting things that have happened. For example we had the age of the Patriarch: Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. God was working in a special way through them speaking directly to them. There was no law, no temple, no tabernacle.

There was also the Jewish age of the nation of Israel. They had a temple. They had a law. They had all kinds of requirements and regulations. There was a Jewish age. And you might say that that is a separate dispensation because it was wiped out in 70 A.D. when the Temple was destroyed by the Romans.

And of course there is the age in which we live in. Some like to call it the Gospel age or the age of grace. Meaning that the gospel is going out to all the Gentiles.

Some would even add another phases. The tribulation period. They would see it as another phrase in which God is managing things.

I believe the basic thing that I am trying to share with you is that there was a world which was destroyed by the flood. There is a world that has existed from that time until now that has never been destroyed. But it will soon be destroyed when the Lord comes again. And there is the world that is yet to come. Mark 10:30 says there is a world to come. I Timothy 6:17 speaks of a present world.

So, there is a world that was destroyed...There is a present world....And it will be destroyed.....And there is a world that is coming, in the future.

And in that world that is coming you have a millinum age where Christ is going to reign over the entire world for a thousand years. And then you have an eternal state following that. All of which is a world that is coming. And Mark calls this everlasting life.

Now, let's come back to Vs 10. ^{But} This great plan of God by which he is going to redeem people and bring them to himself. He choose us before we were born. He predestinated this plan that we be adoped as sons. This great plan was based upon his will, his pleasure and his timing. Because he is going to take everything that he has brought to himself and he is going to bring it under the authority of J.C. Christ ~~is~~ going to rule over the entire world. There is going to be a management of things in the fulness of all the seasons in which God has worked. ^{There} is going to be a time coming when Jesus will be managing everything.

(4) ^{Now} ~~And~~ this is important because God's plan is based also upon his objective. And his objective doesn't stop with your sãlvation and mine. A lot of us think that the main objective of God is to save us. That is not true. That is a means to an end. The objective, according to Vs 10, is "the summing up of all things in Christ, things in the heavens," All the angelic creatures. "And things on the earth." All human history.

Everything under the headship of Christ.

Now, let me show you something interesting as it relates to the church,

According to the Bible, Jesus is now the head of the church. ^{But} That is a spiritual relationship. ~~It~~ is a position He has. We recognize it through prayer ~~seeking his advise, reading the Bible, seeking his will.~~ ^{Through obedience to His commands, through} But, it is spiritual in nature. The church with Christ as the head of our lives is a type of what will be in the millinum when Jesus, literally, will reign over the entire world. Jesus will be manageing directly. He will be making all the decisions. There will be no need for prayer. No need for Bible study. Did you know that? Jesus is going to make all the decisions. Boy! that is going to be a great day. He is going to manage in justic and peace over the entire world. And you and I are going to reign with him.

Are you ready?.....(Amen, praise the Lord)....That is one who is saved. And it is all based upon the objective of God. It is coming.

(5) ^{the plan} It is also based upon God's person.

Notice, please, the last part of Vs 10. "IN Him also we have obtained an inheritance, having been predestined according to His purpose."

God has a purpose behind his plan. It is no accident. ^{ok} WHAT IS HIS PURPOSE? He is going to honor his son. That is part of his purpose. But his purpose is also to gloify himself. God has a great purpose. This plan is not an accident. All human history is being controlled by an eternal, infinite, all wise, all knowing God. He knows what he is doing...Praise the Lord....

~~As/you/ot/people/dont/know/what/he//~~

(6) ^{the plan} It is also based upon God's sovereignty. How is God going to make this

plan happen? Look at the end of Vs 11. "Who works" or literally it says, "who continues to work all things after the counsel of His will.."

The word "counsel" is referring to "plan". And the word "will" is the word of "desire." A like this. God has a plan, ^{But} it is based upon his desire.

Let me show you why I like ~~it~~ so much. Maybe you will also.

~~on~~ the job, have you ever been ask to do something that you didn't want to do? You do the job because the boss said so, ~~but~~..But you didn't really want to do it.

Now, compare that with the time when you laid out plans for something that you were really excited about. And you had the desire to do it. Can you sort of remember the difference that you felt? You had something to do that you wanted to do. You desire to do it. And you compare that with the job that you were forced to do..

And here is the wonderful ~~thought~~ ^{thing}. God wasn't forced to save me. He wanted to. I don't understand that. But God in his plan wants to save me. He is working everything ~~a~~fter the counsel of his will or desire. God wants ^{To} ~~me~~. And I have never gotten over that. And he wants you...WOW!!!!!!

You talk about worth and value. Don't get your worth from people or thing. Get your worth from God. If you are a believer, God wanted to save you.

You say, WHY! WHY! WHY?

Well, the ultimate answer to that question is in the mind of God,.The Bible simplely tells us that he loved us, that he has a plan, and he is going to give glory to himself. And I thank him for it. I ~~praise~~ him for it. It is His grace. It is his love.

I never did a thing to deserve salvation. I can't earn it. I cann't pay for it. But God desires that I should be saved. And that blesses my soul..

AMEN?.....I tell you it is exciting to know God's plan and what he wants to do in your life...

(Prayer)

(6) Let's look at the purpose of our redemption. What is the purpose in all of this as to why he redeemed us in Christ? Vs 12 says "to the end that we who were the first to hope in Christ should be to the praise of his glory."

Notice that phrase is repeated three times. ~~At the end of~~ ^{In} verse 6.. "In the praise of the glory of his grace."

At the end of Vs 12.. "to the praise of His glory."

At the end of Vs 14.. "to the praise of His glory."

~~Again~~, it is like a doxology: Praise to the Father...Vs 4-6...Praise to the son, vs 7-12....And praise to the Holy Spirit...Vs 13-14.

It is beautiful the way Paul wrote that, under the inspiration of the Spirit.

Now, Vs 12 says "to the end that we who were the first to hope in"... literally..."the christ."

The word hope there is important. It is talking about people who are looking forward to his coming. It is really referring to the Jews. And Paul includes himself. The Jews were really the ~~first~~ ^{First} to hope in the coming of the Messiah.

Then in Vs 13 Paul includes the Gentiles. "In Him, you also, after listening to the message of truth, the gospel of your salvation."

You also....Praise the Lord...^{Now} God's wonderful purpose is that I will give Him glory. Praise him for who he is and what he has done.

~~Also~~ after studying these verses of scripture, if you don't praise the Lord Friends, there is something wrong with you. Your heart must be really closed.. There is something wrong. If you can't read this and say, "God, I thank you. I praise you for what you have done!" There is sin in your life.

God is saying that you needed his help to get saved. He is working it in your life. And you would never have been saved, if ~~he~~ ^{He} hadn't planned it. Man, left to himself would go to hell. It takes the power of Almighty God who in His wisdom planned redemption to work all things after the counsel of his will to bring us to himself to believe in christ. All of that is a part of God's plan in our life. And his purpose is so that we will praise him.

We willn't go around saying, "Man, God, you got a great gift when you got me." Oh, No.....

Or, you say, "Man! I tell you that I really made a fantastic decision. Not many people could have done what I did."

That is bragging. That is poor theology. If you have responded to Jesus Christ it is because God has planned in his redemption to save you. That is the miralcel of salvation.

And right now, if you feel something pulling at the strings of your heart, it is God. He loves you. He desires that non should perish. And he ^{desire} wants you to be saved.

I pray that you will responded to God's plan of slavation for you. Right now, ask Jesus to come into your life.....

Let us close in prayer