

How to Plan

06 - Overcoming Stress
Sunday, 27 OCT 2013 | Church on the Park

Texts: “The plans of the diligent lead to profit as surely as haste leads to poverty” (Prov. 21:5). “Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and lean not on your own understanding; In all your ways acknowledge Him, and He shall direct[a] your paths” (Prov. 3:5-6).

Theme: Planning is one of the ways God gives us to overcome stress and live a profitable life. But also, leaning on our own understanding can lead us to a dead end.

Intro: The last couple of months we have been doing a series on overcoming stress, the Biblical way. The world has many ways of coping with stress, but what does the Bible teach about this subject. Today, we will focus on planning. Planning is a God-given ability to help you overcome the chaos of uncertainty. However, it's possible to plan wrongly and in a way that will do more harm than good. How do you plan in a God-glorifying way?

This message began to grow in my heart from my new adventures with cooking.

1) God has a plan, but Satan tries to scheme against it. Make sure you are in on God's plan and don't get sidetracked by the devil's schemes.

- God has a plan for your life. **Knowing** that plan and **submitting** to it will steer you away from **needless** stress. (Jer. 23:29; Eph. 1)
 - The **context** of **Jeremiah 23**
 - What is the **hope** and **future** God wants to give us?
 - **John 10**, esp. 10:10
 - See IVP Bible Background Notes
 - Notice the **contrast** between the shepherd and the thief.
 - God wants to give us **life**. Each one of us has **biological** life, but he created us for something more—**spiritual** life. That is **real** inward life, **authentic** life, **eternal** life and **abundant** life. **God's life** in us. **God's presence** living, breathing and moving in us.
 - The Bible seems to contrast two kinds of life: *bios* and *zoe* (cf. John 3:16)
 - Jesus **defines** what authentic and eternal life really is: **John 17:3**
 - Real life is all about a **personal relationship** with God and Jesus. Jesus is Life.
 - (The answer is also found in Ephesians 1)
- **Your plans** need to **fit** into God's plan like a **Russian nesting doll**

2) There is a way (a plan) that seems right, but it can end up in death. Submit all your plans to God and learn to inquire about his will.

- Prov. 14:12 & Prov. 16:25
 - This is one of the only Proverbs I know that appears **twice** in the book of Proverbs
- When it comes to planning, **Father knows best**. He sees everything, you only have a very limited view.
 - The **satellite** view and the **ground** view (Person of Interest, Jim Caviezel, CA-VEEZ-ul) [John Reese and Harold Finch]
- **Examples** of plans that are not God's will:
 - Matt. 1:19 - **Joseph's plan** to divorce Mary

- There was a way that might have seemed right to David, but it would have ended in death. (1 Sam. 23)
 - David in **Keilah**
- An example of **good intentions** but missing God's will is David and his plans for the **temple** (2 Sam 7 & 1 Chron. 28:12)
 - What we **feel** in our **hearts** is not always **perfect**.
 - It may be in the **ballpark** of where God wants us, but we need to **inquire** of the Lord to be **directed** in the **exact way** we should go about it.
- **“Commit to the Lord whatever you do, and your plans will succeed”** (Prov. 16:3).
“The mind of man plans his way, but the Lord directs his steps” (Prov. 16:9).
“Many plans are in a man's heart, but the counsel of the Lord will stand.” (Prov. 19:21)

3) How to inquire of God; specific guidance for planning.

- Learn to **inquire** of the Lord. Ask the Lord for guidance, ask him to guide your plans and submit your plans before him as worship.
 - Don't pray **open** and **close door** prayers. At least only rarely.
- The closer you grow in your **relationship** with God, the easier it is for him to **guide** you.
 - Watch out for being led by **signs, fleeces and confirmations**. God doesn't want us being **superstitious**.
 - God's will is not for you to **roll dice** and offer **fleeces** to discover his will.
- In the past they had an **ephod**, today we have **three specific gifts** that God has given us:
 1. **God's Word**
 - Yet, watch out for using God's word for your own purposes, making it centre around discovering God's will for you.
 - **“Your Word is a lamp to my feet and a light for my path”** (Psa. 119:105)
 - Do God's **revealed** will and then he will illuminate his **unrevealed** will
 2. **God's Spirit**
 - **“For those who are led by the Spirit of God are the children of God”** (Rom. 8:14).
 - Ask the Holy Spirit to illuminate his Word and guide you.
 3. **God's people.**
 - **“Plans fail for lack of counsel, but with many advisers they succeed”** (Prov. 15:22). **“Prepare plans by consultation, and make war by wise guidance”** (Prov. 20:18).
 - Jesus is in his people and they can offer wisdom. Seeking advice means humility.
 - Yes, and even pastors can help guide you. (Eph 4)
 - You would save yourself much needed stress if you humbly asked a pastor for guidance and wisdom.

Conclusion: Knowing God's plan and getting in on it keeps you from much needed stress. Through the Scripture, the Father has already revealed the path he wants us to go. As we trust in him and grow in relationship with him, we will be guided in the unknown areas of our lives.

END NOTES

10:1–18 (IVP Background Commentary)

Shepherd, Sheep and Robbers

The original text of the Bible had no chapter breaks; this passage continues Jesus' words to the Pharisees in 9:41. It is based on Old Testament images of God as the shepherd of Israel (Gen 48:15; 49:24; Ps 23:1; 28:9; 77:20; 99:6; Is 40:11; Ezek 34:11–31), of Israel as his flock (Ps 74:1; 78:52; 79:13; 100:3) and of abusive or unfaithful religious leaders as destroyers of his flock (Jer 23:1–2; Ezek 34). Faithful human shepherds (Jer 3:15) included Moses, David (2 Sam 5:2; Ps 78:71–72) and the Davidic Messiah (Mic 5:4).

10:1–2. During the cool winter months, sheep were kept inside a pen at night; the pen usually had a stone wall, which might have briars on top of it. (Winter was approaching at the time of this feast.) Jewish law distinguished thieves from robbers: the former broke in, whereas the latter often lived in the wilderness and assaulted passersby. Shepherds continually had to guard against losing sheep to either kind of enemy.

10:3–4. In the Old Testament, Israel “heard God’s voice” when they obeyed the law and his message through his prophets. Those who were truly his sheep—in covenant relationship with God—knew him (see comment on 10:14–15). (John’s readers hear him through the Spirit, a practice that most of Judaism did not believe was possible in their own day; cf. 16:13–15.) It is said that shepherds customarily knew each of their sheep by name. In the Old Testament, God called his special ones, his closest servants, “by name” (Ex 33:12, 17; cf. Is 43:1).

10:5. In this context the strangers are the thieves and robbers (v. 1)—the Pharisees—who have sought to mislead the sheep (9:40–41). The synagogue leaders who expelled John’s Jewish Christian readers claim to be true shepherds, but when John’s audience hears this passage they will think of them quite differently.

10:6–9. Sheep were led “in” and “out” (Num 27:17; 2 Sam 5:2) of the sheepfold to and from pasture. Several scholars have cited a modern example of shepherds sleeping across the gateway to serve both as shepherd and door, but Jesus probably alternates between images simply because he fulfills more than one role; like God in the Old Testament, he is Israel’s shepherd, but he is also the way to the Father.

10:10–11. The thief (in the context, unfaithful leaders; cf. v. 5) acts for his own good, not that of the flock (hungry thieves might steal sheep for food); a shepherd risks his life to protect his flock from animals and thieves. Pharisees considered shepherds members of an unclean profession, and aristocrats despised them as vulgar lower-class workers; thus Jesus’ opponents would not readily identify with the protagonist of the story. “Life” was short for “eternal life,” the life of the world to come, in Jewish parlance; Jesus provides this relationship with himself in the present. See comment on 3:16.

10:12–13. A hired helper was not responsible for attacks from wild animals (Ex 22:13) and worked for pay, not because the sheep were his own. Religious leaders who let God’s sheep be scattered are not his true agents or representatives, because they are not concerned with what concerns him (Jer 23:1; Ezek 34:6).

10:14–15. The Old Testament often described Israel’s covenant relationship with God as “knowing” him, which meant having an intimate and obedient relationship with him (e.g., Jer 31:34; Hos 6:6). See John 10:3–4 and 16:13–15.

10:16–18. The image of gathering the folds together into one flock in Old Testament language meant gathering the dispersed sheep of Israel, scattered among the nations (cf. Ezek 37:21–24; Mic 2:12). The regathering of Israel in the end was one of the basic hopes of ancient Judaism, reflected in writings and prayers. But Jesus may here refer to the Gentiles.

10:19–21. The Jewish community again experiences schism over Jesus’ identity (cf. also 7:43; 9:16), as it was also experiencing in John’s day. On charges of demonization see comment on 7:20.¹

hāšab) think, plan, make a judgment, imagine, count. (ASV and RSV mainly similar,) חָשַׁב (”.though RSV avoids the translations “imagine” and “count

Derivatives

767a חֲשֵׁב (hēšeb) ingenious work.

767b חֲשֹׁבוֹן (hēšbôn) reckoning, account.

767c חִישָׁבוֹן (hīššābôn) device, invention.

767d מַחְשָׁבָה (maḥšābâ) thought, device.

The basic idea of the word is the employment of the mind in thinking activity. Reference is not so much to “understanding” (cf. bîn), but to the creating of new ideas. The root appears mainly in the Qal stem, but also in both Niphal and Piel, and once in Hithpael. The verb alone appears 121 times.

Six clear variations of the basic thought of this root can be distinguished in the ot. The most frequently used is that of “planning,” “devising.” This variation is employed in reference to both man and God, and it appears in both Qal and Piel. Israelites, for instance, are warned not to “devise” evil against a brother (Zech 7:10). In one verse, Gen 50:20, there is reference to both man and God, as Joseph uses the word twice; first in saying that his brothers “meant” (planned) evil in their earlier treatment of him, but that God “meant” (planned) it for good.

The next most frequent use is in the sense of “making a judgment.” This too is employed in reference to both man and God, and it appears in Qal and Niphal. The well-known text, Isa 53:4, uses it: “We did esteem (judge) him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted.” God is the subject as Job exclaims, “He counts (judges) me for his enemy” (33:10). The uses in Niphal are simply the passive of Qal.

A third use, rather infrequent, is that of merely running thoughts through the mind, meditating (Qal and Piel). Malachi speaks commendably about those who feared the Lord and “thought” about his name (3:16). The Piel is employed (without any clear distinction in meaning) as David shows surprise, in respect to the identity of man, that God should take “account” (have thoughts) of him (Ps 144:3).

¹ Keener, C. S. (1993). *The IVP Bible background commentary: New Testament* (Jn 10:1–21). Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press.

A fourth variation means “to impute,” actually a specialized sense of “to make a judgment.” This variation occurs three times in Qal and three in Niphal, the latter simply being the passive. It refers to both God and man. Shimei, after having blatantly cursed David, beseeches David not to “impute” sin unto him (II Sam 19:20). More significantly, God is spoken of as imputing. Abraham believed God and God “counted” (imputed) it to him for righteousness (Gen 15:6; Rom 4:3). David states that the man is blessed to whom the Lord “imputes” not iniquity (Ps 32:2; Rom 4:8).

A fifth variation means “to invent,” a use found only in the Qal. It is employed of Bezaleel, chosen by God to be head builder of the tabernacle, describing a part of his work as “devising” (inventing) artistic productions, using gold, silver, and brass (Ex 31:4; 35:32, 35). Uzziah, king of Judah, placed in Jerusalem, war machines “invented” by clever men (II Chr 26:15).

The last variation means “accounting,” “bookkeeping,” used only in the Piel. In the time of the aged high priest, Jehoiada, when repairs were being made on the temple, the word is used to say that the priests “reckoned” (accounted) not with the workmen in connection with money for the project, because the workers were honest. In the Mosaic legislation, the word is used several times in respect to the “accounting” necessary for figuring the fluctuating value of properties and produce, in the light of an approaching year of Jubilee (Lev 25:27, 50, 52; 27:18, 23). The one use of the Hithpael is simply a reflexive of the second variation noted, “to make a judgment” (Num 23:9).

maḥšābâ). Thought, device. This noun derivative appears in three basic) מַחְשָׁבָה meanings: “thought,” “plan,” and “invention,” all three corresponding to basic variations noted for the verb. It is used to mean “thought” in Gen 6:5, “Every imagination of the ‘thoughts’ of his heart was ‘evil.’ ” The second, “plan,” occurs when the Israelites are made to say, in contrast to God’s will for them, that they would follow their own “devices (plans) and do as they wanted” (Jer 18:12). The third is used in reference to a skilled worker, whom Hiram of Tyre sent to Solomon to work on the temple. He was described as being .(able to work out any “invention” necessary for the task (II Chr 2:14

L.J.W.

God’s plan is that everyone receive eternal life through Jesus Christ

There’s two major plans fighting for you: God’s and the devil’s. The Lord wants to give you abundant life, but Satan desires to destroy you. Paul said, “we are not ignorant of his [Satan’s] schemes” (2 Cor. 2:11).

My adventures in cooking. Cooking involves planning. If you don’t planned, you’ll get stressed out.

There’s a way that seems right, but in the end it leads to death. (Prov. 14:12 & Prov. 16:25)
This is one of the only Proverbs I know that appears twice in Proverbs

Be patient - it's can take quite a while for God's plan to unfold. (Abraham and Isaac)
"Trust in the Lord with all your heart, lean not on your own understanding, in all your ways
acknowledge him, and he will direct your paths."

The plans of the righteous are just,
but the advice of the wicked is deceitful. Prov. 12:5

Plans fail for lack of counsel,
but with many advisers they succeed. Prov. 15:22

To man belong the plans of the heart,
but from the Lord comes the reply of the tongue. Prov. 16:1

Commit to the Lord whatever you do,
and your plans will succeed. Prov. 16:3

The mind of man plans his way,
But the Lord directs his steps. Prov. 16:9

Many plans are in a man's heart,
But the counsel of the Lord will stand. Prov. 19:21

Prepare plans by consultation,
And make war by wise guidance. Prov. 20:18

The plans of the diligent lead surely to advantage,
But everyone who is hasty comes surely to poverty. Prov. 21:5

Plan humbly
Plan collectively (better word needed)