
Discovering God's Plan, Part I

God's Plan

Pastor Wil Nichols

January 1, 2021

Victorious Praise Fellowship Church of God in Christ

2116 Page Rd. Durham NC 27703

WEBSITE: www.VictoriousPraise.org

EMAIL: PastorWil@VictoriousPraise.org, Info@VictoriousPraise.org

PHONE: (919) 957-7500

Sermon: God's Plan: Discovering God's Plan, Part I

Lesson Text

Jeremiah 29:8–11 (AV)⁸ For thus saith the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel; Let not your prophets and your diviners, that *be* in the midst of you, deceive you, neither hearken to your dreams which ye cause to be dreamed. ⁹ For they prophesy falsely unto you in my name: I have not sent them, saith the LORD. ¹⁰ For thus saith the LORD, That after seventy years be accomplished at Babylon I will visit you, and perform my good word toward you, in causing you to return to this place. ¹¹ For I know the thoughts that I think toward you, saith the LORD, thoughts of peace, and not of evil, to give you an expected end.

Introduction

As we enter into this new year of 2021, all of us vividly remember 2020. The year of the pandemic crisis, economic crisis, social unrest crisis, political crisis, shut down crisis, hospitalization crisis, toilet paper crisis, shutdown crisis, can't go to church crisis!

But where there is a Crisis, there is always a Christ, and I believe that 2020 was a year of testing and preparation. For what? To get us off of our plan and into the will of God's plan.

No matter what happened to you this year, most of us will say that we did not see 2020 coming; and we certainly didn't have a plan for it! Nobody planned for the whole world to shut down!

COVID-19 was not part of our 2020 Plans; the murder of George Floyd and the resulting Racial and Social unrest was not part of our 2020 Plans; Economic disaster and loss of jobs were not part of our 2020 plans; President Donald Trump and the Political Morass our country is in was not part of our 2020 Plans; Marriage, family, ministry or business discord and separation was not part of our 2020 Plans!

But one thing we do know, it was a part of God's Plan! Look at other translations of our lesson:

- Jeremiah 29:11 (NLT)¹¹ For I know the plans I have for you," says the Lord. "They are plans for good and not for disaster, to give you a future and a hope.
- Jeremiah 29:11 (The Message) I know what I'm doing. I have it all planned out—plans to take care of you, not abandon you, plans to give you the future you hope for.
- Jeremiah 29:11 (BSB – Berean Study Bible) For I know the plans I have for you, declares the LORD, plans to prosper you and not to harm you, to give you a future and a hope.

The reason why most people struggle with life is because they don't know God's plan; and so, they struggle with the consequences, challenges, and vicissitudes of this life. The biggest struggle being the fact that God's plan is not lining up with theirs!

Isaiah 55:8–9 (KJV)⁸ For my thoughts *are* not your thoughts, neither *are* your ways my ways, saith the LORD. ⁹ For *as* the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts.

Now when we translate thoughts to plans, and ways to steps:

*Isaiah 55:8–9 (KJV)⁸ For my **PLANS** are not your **PLANS**, neither are your **STEPS** my **STEPS**, saith the LORD. ⁹ For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my **STEPS** higher than your **STEPS**, and my **PLANS** than your **PLANS**.*

Now although God is not obligated to tell us his plan verbatim, we can ascertain through scripture and revelation that he has one; and that through discovery we can learn enough about it to follow the steps that lead to our divine destiny.

So, as we begin a new year there are several things we must know and do:

- Realize that God has a Plan
- Get a Revelation of his Plan
- Learn how to Discover his Plan

Series and Sermon: God's Plan: Discovering God's Plan, Part I

“Realizing, Revealing, and Discovering God's Plan”

I. Realizing God's Plan

Jeremiah 29:11(AV) ¹¹ For I know the thoughts that I think toward you, saith the LORD, thoughts of peace, and not of evil, to give you an expected end.

The first key to discovering God's plan is coming into the realization that He has one, even if we don't know it!

For some people the problem is that they have no plan

- They wander through life aimlessly, like a ship without a sail. He that fails to plan, plans to fail.
- Proverbs 29:18 (AV) ¹⁸ Where *there is* no vision, the people perish: but he that keepeth the law, happy *is* he.

For other people the problem is that they have the wrong plan

- They are expecting a homemade butter pound cake, but they are using a Betty Crocker box cake with water and margarine. So they are frustrated with God because their plans aren't working.
- Proverbs 16:25 (AV) ²⁵ There is a way that seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof *are* the ways of death.

The point of these options is to convince us that there is no Godly or Divine Plan for our lives. We either go through life slowly perishing because of no plan, or we go through it with the wrong plan leading ultimately to death and destruction.

Even if we don't know God, God always has a plan. Even when we are failing, God always has a plan. Even when we are depressed, God always has a plan. Even when we are going through hell, God always has a plan.

Jeremiah 29:11 (BSB) For I know the plans I have for you, declares the LORD, plans to prosper you and not to harm you, to give you a future and a hope.

Romans 8:28 (KJV)²⁸ And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to *his* purpose.

II. Revealing God's Plan

Jeremiah 29:10 (AV)¹⁰ For thus saith the LORD, That after seventy years be accomplished at Babylon I will visit you, and perform my good word toward you, in causing you to return to this place.

The second key to discovering God's plan is to understand that he does reveal it, even if not directly.

We see through dark glasses (can't see it); God speaks in mysteries (can't understand it)!

I remember when I was climbing the corporate ladder at IBM, how frustrated I would get because I did not know when I would get promoted, or when I would become a manager, ...

But the truth is, there were little breadcrumbs for me if I would have paid attention, that would have kept me from getting frustrated when I didn't get a particular promotion or assignment.

First of all, they hired me. Second, they invested in me (training, education). Thirdly, they used me (never let the devil convince you that there is something wrong with being used, it means that you are useful; the problem is when you are not being used, then they get rid of you).

One of the ways God reveals his plan for your life is the fact that he called you.

- If God didn't want to use you, he wouldn't have ever called you!
- Matthew 22:14 (AV)¹⁴ For many are called, but few *are* chosen.

The other way God reveals his plan for your life is the fact that he gifted you.

- Jeremiah 1:5 (AV)⁵ Before I formed thee in the belly I knew thee; and before thou camest forth out of the womb I sanctified thee, *and* I ordained thee a prophet unto the nations.
- God is not going to waste his time and money, his anointing and gifting unless he plans on using you.

One final way God reveals his plan for your life is through your Shephard

- Jeremiah 3:15 (AV)¹⁵ And I will give you pastors according to mine heart, which shall feed you with knowledge and understanding.
- Amos 3:7 (AV)⁷ Surely the Lord GOD will do nothing, but he revealeth his secret unto his servants the prophets.
- The Pastor may not know verbatim any more than you, but God still uses him for revelation though knowledge, understating, shepherding, and leading.

Romans 11:29 (AV)²⁹ For the gifts and calling of God *are* without repentance.

Simply put, God is not going to change his mind after he calls you, only you can disqualify the call. And God is not going to take His gifts away from you, only you can refuse to stir them up.

Philippians 1:6 (AV)⁶ Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you will perform *it* until the day of Jesus Christ:

III. Discovering God's Plan

Jeremiah 29:8 (AV)⁸ For thus saith the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel; Let not your prophets and your diviners, that *be* in the midst of you, deceive you, neither hearken to your dreams which ye cause to be dreamed. ⁹ For they prophesy falsely unto you in my name: I have not sent them, saith the LORD.

If 2020 was the year of God's testing and preparation, then 2021 has to be the year of God's Plan. And this year we must make up in our minds that we're going to discover it!

- It starts with the blessed assurance that God has plans even if I don't know it
- It continues with getting a revelation of God's plan through our calling, our gifting, and our leader
- Finally, we must discover our plan.

We'll continue the discovery on Sunday, but tonight we must first learn what is not God's plan.

One of the ways you learn what is the correct answer to a multiple-choice question when you are not quite sure, is to first eliminate what isn't the correct answer.

“Who wants to be a millionaire? Phone a Friend, Audience Choose.” – Psalms 1:1-2

The first elimination from the multiple-choice question is False Prophets:

- Jeremiah 29:8-9 (AV)⁸ ... Let not your prophets and your diviners, that *be* in the midst of you, deceive you, ... ⁹ For they prophesy falsely unto you in my name: I have not sent them, saith the LORD.
- 1 John 4:1 (AV)¹ Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world.
- Matthew 24:11–13 (AV)¹¹ **And many false prophets shall rise, and shall deceive many. ¹² And because iniquity shall abound, the love of many shall wax cold. ¹³ But he that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved.**
- The ones that are saved are the ones that abide in God's Word and in God's Love

The second elimination from the multiple-choice question is Your Self, or Your Flesh

- Jeremiah 29:8 (AV)⁸ ... neither hearken to your dreams which ye cause to be dreamed.
- Jeremiah 17:9 (AV)⁹ The heart *is* deceitful above all *things*, and desperately wicked: who can know it?
- Romans 7:18 (AV)¹⁸ For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing: for to will is present with me; but *how* to perform that which is good I find not.
- You can't trust your heart, you can't trust your emotions, you can't trust your feelings!

Midweek Study Lesson Plan (Sermon: Discovering God's Plan)

Lesson Text

- Jeremiah 29:8–11

Sermon Outline (Notes)

I. *Realizing God's Plan*

II. *Revealing God's Plan*

III. *Discovering God's Plan*

Questions (What was your main takeaway from Sunday's Sermon?)

I. Getting to Know "Me"

1. When you have a major goal in life, how do you go about making a plan to achieve it?
2. Do you prefer to follow a plan or to act spontaneously?

II. Into the Bible

1. What is a prophet? According to 2 Pet 2:1-3, what motivates a false prophet? What do believers need in order to avoid falling victim to a false prophet?
2. Paul faced many hardships as a Christian; yet he was unshakeable in his faith as he stated in Rom 8:31-39. What made him so confident in his faith and should comfort us regardless of any hardships which we may face?

III. Life Application

1. Realizing that God has a plan for each of us is reassuring and in 2021 we must be intentional. What's your plan to develop and deepen your relationship with God?
2. Name three ways in which you can stir up your gifts in 2021.