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WHAT IS WRONG? GOD'S PLAN "A" VERSES MAN'S PLAN "B"

Did that title get your attention? If I had said, "What is right?" then it would not have had as much of an impact. One of the tragedies of the garden event was when Satan put his nature into us and allowed the negative to override the positive. As a human being, I will ask the question as to what is wrong in my life more than what is right. When I begin to view the negative, I feel defeated, restrained, unworthy, unloving, unsuccessful and rejected. That is what Satan wanted from the beginning. When I view the positive and good in my life, something of a different nature begins to happen. First, the above mentioned of the negative begins to diminish, my attitude changes toward me and others, and life becomes a living process rather than a dying process. We should apply the "what is right" process to all aspects of our lives. What is right in my relationship with my Father, the God of the universe? What is right with my church, with my family relationships, with my job, with people I meet on a daily basis and with the way I feel about myself? I personally feel that God sees more of the what is right and good about us than the what is wrong with us. Jesus, having the ability to see through the negative facade of man when He walked on this earth, saw the good and potential locked in man that only needed to be released. The perfect example is a group of ignorant and unlearned men who become pillar stones of the New Testament, who continue to shape our lives daily in the Word of God. Let's try to adopt the thought attitude, "WHAT IS RIGHT" in our daily lives.

Pastor George Ferrington

In Proverbs 3:5-6 we read: "Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and do not lean on your own understanding. In all your ways acknowledge Him, and He will make your paths straight." There are untold numbers of Christians that fail to realize that there is a battle going on in their minds. For the most part, these Christians are spiritually unaware of the nature of the conflict, and also fail to understand that they can be transformed by the renewing of their minds. This unawareness has caused many believers grief as they experienced defeat in their lives, when **in truth** they could have been experiencing freedom that is in Christ.

God has chosen **faith** as His way for the believer to live. Man has chosen **reason based on natural logic**. The believer that operates in reason is not missing the mark. I am not saying that we should ignore **thinking**, for it is our responsibility to think. The result of our thinking process is conclusive in God's sight because we are required by Him to act on our reasoning by choosing the course we **will** in this life. God is rational in His dealings with us, and He does work through our ability to reason. The problem that we have in thinking is that our reason is limited by many factors. First of all we don't know what tomorrow holds nor do we possess God's knowledge of the future. We also are limited by the sin nature, and our flesh which is weak. Another complication to our thinking and reasoning is that it is based for the most part on the five senses and not in **faith toward God**. The Lord puts it this way in Isaiah 55:9, "As the heavens are higher than the earth, so are My ways higher than your ways, and My thoughts than your thoughts." Our problem with natural reason is that we are incapable of determining God's thoughts through human reasoning. Therefore, we are dependent on divine revelation for guidance.

Plan "A" is living God's way, and includes the operation of reason through faith toward God. Plan "B" on the other hand is based on rationalization through our thinking. We rationalize when we fail to accept life's choices based on the Word of God. It is then that we come to the place that we stop believing God, and do it our own way (Plan B). It was Solomon who urged us always to live God's way. In Proverbs 3:5-6, we read what he said, "Do not lean on your own understanding (Plan B), but in all your ways acknowledge Him. (Plan A)"

It would be good for every believer to realize that the strength of God's plan A is determined by their conviction that God's way is always right, and that He will not let them down. This conviction brings them to the place of commitment in obeying His leadership. On the other hand, the strength of plan B is determined by the amount of time we spend thinking thoughts that are contrary to God's Word. A Christian in most cases really knows God's way is best. But the moment they begin to think thoughts which are contrary to God's Word, they have established plan B as an escape route in case God's plan A should fail. I close this article with this question. **Is it rational to choose our plan over God's plan?**

Gene R. Brown, Associate Pastor

SPECIAL ANNOUNCEMENT--The Christian Fellowship Praise Team will be leading the praise and worship at the Landmark Church revival services beginning at 7:00 P.M. on May 20th, 21st, & 22nd. Rev. Ray Jennings, Pastor of Landmark Church, will be the featured speaker. Everyone is invited to attend.

THINGS

The Bible tells us that all things work together for good, to them that love the Lord. Is that true? Does it really mean what it says? The answer to both is an emphatic yes. There are certain conditions regarding the love for the Lord. Does that mean that all things work together for good only some of the time? No, it means that instead of trying to pretend that we are perfect, what we need to be is forgiven.

Even Jesus said that sometimes believers fail. But to recognize our failures and ask forgiveness for them, is what makes the difference. Each day, if we will be honest

with ourselves, we can see the evidence of the help of Jesus even with everyday events. Some of them so small that we fail to give the credit for that help; we just assume that it is going to be our right. Yes, it is our right. Our right to be the recipient of God's mercy and grace, even though we do not deserve it. Other than the fact that we have accepted Jesus as our Savior, and surrendered our lives to Him, there is little about us that is deserving of anything.

Loving the Lord, carries with it the burden of obedience. Obeying the principles that God requires of us. Will we thus be perfect? Not at all. Again what we will be, is forgiven. God's Word does not promise to make us rich, but it does say that the things that we will need, we will have in abundance, and that is a form of richness. The things that are spoken of are the situations that engulf us on a daily basis. We are not here to make ourselves famous for our wealth or reputation on this earth. What we are here for is to become the witnesses that Jesus commands of us, so that we will have wealth and riches in the next life. What we do here will determine what we have there. However, we also have God's own promise that, "**My people will never beg for bread!**" Other than life itself, there should be little to entice us here.

Politicians, when faced with opposing views, immediately summon demonic force and fascade, and begin to lie. The more they hone or sharpen their lives, the more satanic-led people believe them. All things, of which the Bible speaks, refers to all situations in which a child of God may find his or her self. Attacks by a neighbor, or former friend, or some accusation which is untrue. Financial problems, which had not been foreseen. The sudden loss of an investment value, on which you may have planned your future. An individual who has targeted you to aggravate for no reason except to take away something of yours, for himself. The unexpected accident, injury, or death of a close friend or a family member. A sickness, the treatment of which requires long and twisted paths. The possibility of mistakes by many of the important people along the way. Those who love the Lord, will have their way made straight, despite human errors.

When we are mocked or whispered about, for our belief in Jesus, the Son of God, we seek confrontation and want some retaliatory action. Every part of our nature wants to retort, even retaliate! Jesus said, "**The meek shall inherit the earth.**" By subduing our tempers, even praying for that person, one day we will see a difference. That person will either be saved and thus become our brother or sister, or their lives will be snuffed out. God has a long memory. There will be consequences. No more revenge, no more frustration, or impotent rage, just a peace that says that our God will handle things. All "things" work

There is no settlement of a situation that compares with that performed by God. When we are troubled, and feel that we are sinking, we can call on God through His Son Jesus, and help will be on the way. He does not send a representative, or an emissary, to help us. He comes Himself to dwell with us and within us through His Holy Spirit. Our hour of need, is shared by Him. How often we seethe with anger, when our plans go awry. In that instant, we need forgiveness.

In our most complex problems that ensnarl and engulf us, we may see such twisted and distorted things so as to lead us to believe that the problem is hopeless. Even those of our own making, due to carelessness or lack of teachings, can be unensnarled and made right, with His intervention. We are masters at messing up—He is a master of straightening. It will follow then, that at any point that we make a decision, or determine a step, that does not first include Jesus, will probably run afoul. Yes, that means that we have absolutely no ability outside of Jesus.

Someday, all of our wrongs; indeed, all of the world's wrongs, will be set right. Not by our efforts, but by the power vested in Jesus, by God the Father. The very topography of this earth will be dramatically changed and altered by that power. Imagine the time when this earth was just a whirling ball of gaseous void. Then imagine that it was solidified and then made a frozen ball. Then imagine the upheaval and distortion of the surface of this earth, followed by seas in between. Mountains, valleys, plains, and seashores. All appeared at the behest of the Creator. When man was placed here, he found a pleasant, comfortable place in which living was easy, and resources were endless. No other planet in the universe has these attributes. Only earth, only by the Son speaking it into existence.

Why then would we doubt the ability of that same Son of God, to make all things work together for good, to those who love Him? Nothing can happen to us that has not already happened to others before us, and if the burden becomes too heavy, He has promised us a way to escape. But it all starts with our love for Jesus. Something we can not do until He shows us how. Let us show our love then, by abiding by His teachings, and doing in all "things" what we know that Jesus would do in that situation.

May God Bless Us All.

Bro. Vic Clayton

BEING ABOUT THE FATHER'S BUSINESS

Luke 2:49—**Why were you searching for me? Didn't you know I had to be about the Father's business.** Let's begin here—Being about the Father's business.

To begin with, it is said in scripture that the young boy Jesus was in the temple listening and asking questions. Not that I think He was asking questions to attain knowledge, but giving us a guideline to go by. Romans 10:17—**Faith cometh by hearing and hearing by the Word of God.** Galatians 6:6—**Anyone who receives instruction in the Word must share all good things with his teacher.** VS 7—**Do not be deceived, God is not mocked, a man reaps what he sows.** Mark 4:24—**Consider carefully what you hear, with the measure you use, it will be measured to you-and even more.** So then, by this we know that the most feasible means of hearing God's Word will come by the mouth of a pastor. It is then very important not only that we attend church, but that we take heed or listen with the intentions of adhering to what the Word is saying to us.

We are all at a place in our Christian lives to where we reserve the right to do as we please. We are not condemned people. No one is forcing us to listen and learn. We listen and we learn by choice.

I believe the Father is reaching out to us and desiring for us to take the responsibility that is ours. Whatever our place is, God expects us to fulfill our duties to Him. Whether it be in ministry, helps, or whatever area the Lord leads us in.

Here is the seriousness of hearing and taking heed to what we hear. James 1:22-23—**Do not merely listen to the Word, and so deceive yourselves. Do what it says. Anyone who listens to the Word but does not do what it says is like a man who looks at his face in a mirror and, after looking at himself, goes away and immediately forgets what he looks like.** Remember what Mark 4:24 says about considering carefully what you hear, and about the measure you use. To listen is the abundance that God advances back to us in the form of knowledge—when a man continues in hearing God's Word, then faith will come! I also believe that the Lord will grant us the wisdom to use the knowledge He has given us.

Remember that God is not mocked, whatsoever a man sows, that is what he is going to reap. Galatians 6:6, the Word says, **A man who is taught should share all good things with his teacher.** I believe that when we study the Word we should take it as seriously as if we were going to be tested on what we read! We should not only commit the Word to memory, but put it into practice.

If you were to buy your child a new bicycle and put it out on the front lawn for him or her to ride, and say to the child, "There it is, go ride it." Chances are unless you teach them and explain to them the mechanics of riding a bicycle they will be extremely slow in learning. The knowledge we have applied to our lives is what we hear and believe to be true. The Holy Spirit teaches us from the inside. When we read and study the Word, we are getting hands on as well as first hand information. What we decide to do with that information is up to us. No scripture is of any private interpretation. What one man digs for and finds can be found by all. It just depends on how willing you are to dig.

With all of my heart I believe that Father is waiting to bless us. I don't serve the Lord anymore for what He can do for me. I serve the Lord for what I can do for Him!

I pray the Lord will bless us all with the knowledge of His Son Jesus.

Be Blessed, Bro. Neal Emfinger, Jr.

THE LONELY EMBER

A member of a certain church, who previously had been attending services regularly, stopped going. After a few weeks, the pastor decided to visit him. It was a chilly evening. The pastor found the man at home alone, sitting before a blazing fire. Guessing the reason for his pastor's visit, the man welcomed him, led him to a big chair near the fireplace and waited. The pastor made himself comfortable, but said nothing. In the grave silence, he contemplated the play of the flames around the burning logs. After some minutes, the pastor took the fire tongs, and carefully picked up a brightly burning ember and placed it to one side of the hearth all alone. Then he sat back in his chair, still silent. The host watched all this in quiet fascination. As the one lone ember's flame diminished, there was a momentary glow and then it's fire was no more. Soon it was cold and "dead as a doornail." Not a word was spoken since the initial greeting by either man. Just before the pastor was ready to leave, he picked up the cold, dead ember and placed it back in the middle of the fire. Almost immediately it began to glow once more with the light and warmth of the burning coals around it. As the pastor reached the door to leave, his host said, "Thank you so much for your visit and especially for the fiery sermon. I shall be back in church next Sunday." Author Unknown

40 SOMETHING

Othniel, Deborah and Barak, and Gideon are each said to have judged Israel 40 years and Ehud for twice forty (80). Later Eli judged 40 years; and Saul, David and Solomon each reigned 40 years. 40 years seems to have been a round number denoting a generation. Note how often 40 is used throughout the Bible: at the flood it rained 40 days; Moses fled at 40, was in Midian 40 years; was in the mount 40 days. Israel wandered the wilderness for 40 years. The spies were 40 days in Canaan. Elijah fasted 40 days. 40 days respite was given to Ninevah. Jesus fasted 40 days and sojourned 40 days after resurrection. This is just some notable "40" incidents of the Bible.

From Halley's Bible Handbook



