



Introduction

Many men and women wander aimlessly through life without a destination in mind. Their life is without plan or direction. God is different. He has a very specific plan for individuals, nations and mankind.

This study will explore God's Plan for mankind in general and for you in particular. It will also explore the facet of God's make-up that allows him to accomplish His Plan, namely His Sovereignty.

God is Sovereign

When we talk about someone being sovereign, we mean that he is invested with authority, knowledge and power to carry out his intentions. The sovereignty of men extends to kingdoms and countries. The sovereignty of God extends over His entire creation.

"The decision is announced by messengers, the holy ones declare the verdict, so that the living may know that the Most High is sovereign over the kingdoms of men and gives them to anyone he wishes and sets over them the lowliest of men."

Daniel 4:17

- Circle the political units over whom God has authority
- Underline the ones to whom God gives the kingdoms of men.

Do you think there is any government that God has not allowed? Almighty God has granted even the cruelest, most sadistic ruler his tenure.

All the peoples of the earth are regarded as nothing. He does as he pleases with the powers of heaven and the peoples of the earth. No one can hold back his hand or say to him: "What have you done?"

Daniel 4:35

- Circle the two groups of created beings who are subject to God's Sovereignty.
- Underline those who can keep Him from doing what he wants.

The ability to do whatever one wants is the essential criteria for sovereignty.

¹¹*Yours, O LORD, is the greatness and the power and the glory and the majesty and the splendor, for everything in heaven and earth is yours. Yours, O LORD, is the kingdom; you are exalted as head over all.*
¹²*Wealth and honor come from you; you are the ruler of all things. In your hands are strength and power to exalt and give strength to all.*

1 Chronicles 29:11-12

- Circle the list of things that belong to God.
- Underline the things over which God rules.

God needs nothing in order to rule effectively. Everything is His and nothing is outside His control.

God has a Plan



- > Isaiah 14:24
- > Isaiah 14:27
- > Isaiah 46:9-11

Consider Joseph's understanding of hurtful events in his life:



Gen 50:20 You intended to harm me, but God intended it for good to accomplish what is now being done, the saving of many lives.

How does Joseph's answer to his brothers illustrate His understanding of the Sovereignty of God?

The fact that God is Sovereign is the guarantee that He can accomplish the things that He has planned. God has a plan to redeem a creation that is in rebellion. Consider His Plan.

God's Plan for Mankind

The ultimate goal that God seeks after is that mankind would glorify Him and enjoy Him. Consider the following:

⁹Therefore God exalted him [Jesus] to the highest place and gave him the name that is above every name, ¹⁰that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, ¹¹and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

Philippians 2:9-11

- Underline the number of beings who will acknowledge Jesus as Lord
- Circle the word describing how God the Father will benefit from those who recognize Jesus' Lordship
- **Why do you think the acknowledgement of His Son as Lord would result in God getting glory?**

Consider Psalms 46:10

"Be still, and know that I am God; I will be exalted among the nations, I will be exalted in the earth."

Psalms 46:10

- Circle the word describing the kind of honor God will receive.
- Underline the geographical extent of the honor God will receive.
- *There can be no doubt that God will do what he has said. His words indicating that which is yet to happen reflect the very heart of His plan.*

Rather than forcing man to give Him glory, God attempts to entice men to His side. Consider his method.

Or do you show contempt for the riches of his kindness, tolerance and patience, not realizing that God's kindness leads you toward repentance?

Romans 2:4

- Circle the intended outcome of the kindness of God.
- **Do you think an approach of kindness is more or less effective in bringing about repentance in man than an approach of force? Why?**



God is jealous when it comes to His Glory. Consider the following verses:

- > **Isaiah 42:8**
- > **Isaiah 48:11**

Help Wanted !

God uses all manner of messengers to accomplish the task of good news distribution. People must ask Him for guidance on the part He wants them to play.

How might God be using you for the task of exalting him in your nation?

Repentance

Repentance involves turning from a sin or transgression, not simply agreeing that it is wrong. God is seeking more than confession of sin. He desires repentance.

Is there some area of your life requiring repentance?

God's Plan for You

Even though God's general plan is related to the primacy of His Son, the Lord Jesus Christ, He has a specific plan for each individual. The Bible assures us over and over that His purpose and plan for each life has been lovingly designed.

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.

Romans 8:28

- God works for the good of people who exhibit two characteristics. Draw a circle around those two characteristics.
- Underline the word describing the one whose purpose is being accomplished.
- Draw a box around the word defining the extent of situations in which God works good.
- *God will always bring good out of every situation for those who satisfy His conditions.*

After some Israelites had been taken captive and deported to Babylon, the prophet Jeremiah sent them a letter with specific guidelines from God. In that message God made this remarkable promise to the captives:

For I know the plans I have for you," declares the LORD, "plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future.

Jeremiah 29:11

- Circle the four things God planned for the captives.
- **Prosper** relates to having an abundance. He does not describe the nature of their prosperity, but rather leaves the promise of a very general nature
- **Not harm** relates to security. This could be physical, emotional or spiritual in nature
- **Hope** relates to anticipated benefit. It is the thing to which people cling when everything around them is bleak and foreboding.
- **Future** implies a pleasant tomorrow.

Corrie ten Boom experienced that hope and expectation of a future when imprisoned in Germany during World War II. An Israeli in Babylon could easily have spoken her words.

We must tell people that no pit is so deep that He is not deeper still

Corrie ten Boom, The Hiding Place

As you experience the unfolding of God's plan in your life some good things will happen and some hard things as well. Always remember that God allows both. If there was any more loving way to accomplish His purpose for you he would do it.



Look Further

The wonderful promise of Romans 8:28 is followed by other great truths. Read the rest of Romans 8 and note the following truth:

- > **God's goal is to make us like His Son**
- > **If God is for us why worry?**
- > **God will give us everything we need**
- > **We can't be separated from Him**



God does not force us to conform to His plan. He simply offers us the opportunity to either join or resist His plan. Yet there are consequences for the choices that each person makes. God will bring each person to a personal accounting for the decisions they have made.

Judgment

The fact that there will be judgment is clear.

Just as man is destined to die once, and after that to face judgment,
Hebrews 9:27

- Underline how often a person dies.
- Circle the event that follows death.
- *Certain judgment awaits every created person!*

Scripture describes two judgments – one for Christians and one for those who did not place their faith in Jesus.

The Great White Throne Judgment

The judgment for all who have not put their faith in Jesus is described as the Great White Throne judgment.

¹¹Then I saw a great white throne and him who was seated on it. Earth and sky fled from his presence, and there was no place for them. ¹²And I saw the dead, great and small, standing before the throne, and books were opened. Another book was opened, which is the book of life. The dead were judged according to what they had done as recorded in the books. ¹³The sea gave up the dead that were in it, and death and Hades gave up the dead that were in them, and each person was judged according to what he had done. ¹⁴Then death and Hades were thrown into the lake of fire. The lake of fire is the second death. ¹⁵If anyone's name was not found written in the book of life, he was thrown into the lake of fire.

Revelation 20:11-15

- In verse 12, underline the basis of evidence upon which judgment is based.
- In verse 13, underline the basis upon which judgment is made.
- In verse 15, circle the phrase describing why individuals would be cast into the lake of fire.
- *The obvious question for one and all is this "How do I get my name written in the 'Book of Life'?"*

It is in every person's power to escape the lake of fire. Jesus is the keeper of the book of life and He records in it the names of those who place their faith and trust in Him.

For those who place their faith in Jesus, there is another judgment over which the Lord Jesus presides. This judgment is called **The Judgment Seat of Christ**



Judgment is certain

One reason that Christians witness to those who do not place their faith in God is because of the certainty of Judgment. How can we let people perish when we have the information that will help them survive?

The Broad Way

Jesus described the path that most people follow as the broad way that leads to destruction.



Matthew 7:13 "Enter through the narrow gate. For wide is the gate and broad is the road that leads to destruction, and many enter through it.

Jesus claimed to have power to prevent people from perishing:



John 10:27-28 My sheep listen to my voice; I know them, and they follow me. ²⁸I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; no one can snatch them out of my hand.

The Judgment Seat of Christ

For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that each one may receive what is due him for the things done while in the body, whether good or bad.

2 Corinthians 5:10

- Underline who must appear before Christ's Judgment seat.
- Circle the thing to be received by each one being judged.
- *Because this letter was written to Christians in Corinth, it is reasonable to conclude that the "we" refers to Christians.*

Paul expected to be rewarded for the life he lived.

⁷*I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith. ⁸Now there is in store for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will award to me on that day-- and not only to me, but also to all who have longed for his appearing.*

2 Timothy 4:7-8

- Circle the reward that is in store for Paul
- Underline the one who will award the reward to Paul
- Circle who else will also receive rewards.

Moses understood the importance of the decision facing each individual. He said it like this:

¹⁹*This day I call heaven and earth as witnesses against you that I have set before you life and death, blessings and curses. Now choose life, so that you and your children may live ²⁰and that you may love the LORD your God, listen to his voice, and hold fast to him. For the LORD is your life, and he will give you many years in the land he swore to give to your fathers, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.*

Deuteronomy 30:19-20

Each person holds their own destiny in their hands. The choices they make will be judged in the end. So each person is free to do as they please, but they are not free from the judgment that is sure to come.

Summary

Knowing that God has a plan and fitting into His plan are two different things. And knowing what God is doing generally is quite different from knowing what it is that he wants you to do.

The following true or false questions are intended to draw out truths which you have studied in this session.



Sure Reward



The fact that a follower of Jesus will be rewarded is consistently taught in the New Testament

- > **1 Corinthians 9:24-25**
- > **Ephesians 6:8**
- > **Colossians 3:24**
- > **Revelations 22:12**

Place a checkmark (✓) in the appropriate column.

True	False	Statement
		God lets governments of men run themselves
		Evil governments of men are under God's control
		God's rule extends to all angelic beings including Satan
		God has all the resources He needs to accomplish His plan.
		Every living creature ever created will acknowledge Jesus.
		There are some nations that will never yield to God's control
		God will use force if necessary to accomplish His plan.
		Bad things happening in my life represent a lapse on God's part
		God causes all things to work out for good for every man woman and child
		Bad things happening in my life represent God's kindness and love toward me.
		Reincarnation (having multiple lives to reach perfection) is inconsistent with the Bible's explanation of judgment.
		The key to escaping the lake of fire is to live a good life
		The key to escaping the lake of fire is to have your name in the Lamb's Book of Life.
		Every Christian will appear before Jesus to be judged.
		Rewards await those who love Jesus

Use the truth in 2 Timothy 3:16 as a means of applying God's Word:

- > **Is there some new teaching for me to obey?**
- > **Is there some practice to be stopped as a result of reproof?**
- > **Is there something being done wrong which I need to correct?**
- > **Is there some habit I need to adopt to receive training in righteousness?**