

Created for Good Works



How To Find God's Plan For Your Life (Part 1) by Derek Prince

It's good to be with you again at the beginning of a new week. This week I'll be sharing with you on a very important and practical theme, "How to Find God's Plan for Your Life." Perhaps you've never understood that God has a plan for your life, a plan which comprehends every area of your life, one which makes full provision for all your needs and offers you the fullest possible realization for your total potential as a person—but He has.

On the other hand, you may have an inner awareness that God has a claim on your life and a task for you to fulfill but you don't know how to discover what that task is. As a consequence, you feel, in a way, that you cannot clearly define and are frustrated and unfulfilled. I believe that my talks this week will help you. I believe that I can show you the practical steps that you need to take to discover God's plan for your life and that in finding and walking in God's plan you will experience the satisfaction and a fulfillment you have never hitherto known.

For a starting point I'm going to turn to Ephesians 2:10, which speaks about what God has done for us through our union with Him in Christ. Paul says this:

> "For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them." (NAS)

That's a marvelous opening statement: "we are His workmanship." God's workmanship. The Greek word there, poiema is the one from which we get the English word "poem." It suggests a creative masterpiece, the work of a great artist or poet or playwright or sculptor—something outstanding. That's what we are through what God has done for us in Christ. This is the first thing that you need to realize, that if you put your faith in God, through Jesus Christ, God wants to make a creative masterpiece out of you. And then He wants to use you to accomplish a unique and special task.

It's always blessed me to think that the great Creator of the universe who created the stars and the seas and the mountains, all the glorious and beautiful things that surround us on earth, that when He wanted to make His masterpiece,

He went to the scrap heap for His material. And that's where he found people such as me.

I have no doubt where I was when the Lord found me. I was there on the scrap heap. And in His wonderful grace and mercy He reached down and took that unpromising piece of material that was me, in my lost and unregenerate state, and said, "I'm going to make a masterpiece out of you." And that's true, not merely for me. In fact, I'm nothing special and yet, in a sense, I am something special because everybody who comes to God through Jesus Christ is something special. All God's children are special in His sight.

But the important word that we have to lay hold of in that verse is the word "created." "Created" in Christ Jesus. If we're ever going to become what God wants us to be, it has to begin with a creative act of God. We have to let God recreate us out of what we were into what He wants us to be. Psalm 51 records the prayer of David when he was brought face-to-face with his own terrible sin. In verses 9 and 10, he says this:

> "Hide Thy face from my sins, And blot out all my iniquities. Create in me a clean heart, O God, And renew a steadfast spirit within me." (NAS)

Notice that cry of David's heart: "Create in me a clean heart, O God." It takes a creative act of God to deal with the effects of sin in the human heart and life. When the sinner comes to God, God does not improve him, reform him, adjust him, tamper with him. God, by His mighty power, creates him anew.

Listen to what Paul says in 2 Corinthians 5:17–20:

> "Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come! All this is from God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ and gave us the ministry of reconciliation: that God was reconciling the world to himself in Christ, not counting men's sins against them. And he has committed to us the message of reconciliation. We are therefore Christ's ambassadors..." (NIV)

What a glorious statement! "If anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come." How many times you and I have said, "If only I could start all over again. I've made a mess of the past, I regret so many things I've said and done." The good news of the gospel is that you can start all over again. If you will come to God and put your faith in Him through Jesus Christ, He will make you a new creation. You will be able to say, "The old has gone and the new has come." And if you've already come to God through Jesus Christ then you need to know and understand what you are. You are a new creation. God intends to make you into a masterpiece.

Let's look a little more closely at the process of the new creation as Paul describes it in 2 Corinthians 5 and the verses that we just looked at. As I see it, there are three successive phases: First of all, sin must be dealt with. Sin is the great barrier between God and man. As long as sin remains undealt with in our lives we have no access to God. And furthermore, God has no access to us in the way that He needs access to change us from within by that creative act that we're speaking about. So, first of all, we have to let God deal with sin. We have to turn from our own rebellion and self-will and stubbornness and we have to come to God through Jesus Christ, believing that Christ, on the cross bore the penalty for our sins, that God judged our sin in Christ, and that as we turn to God for mercy and forgiveness through Christ, we are reconciled to God. And in this way sin is taken away. We have access to God, God has access to us.

The next phase is the creative act of God. God recreates us from within. Solomon, the wisest of all men, said, "Keep thy heart with all diligence for out of it are the issues of life." In other words, everything that's going to happen in your life originates from your heart. And that's where God starts with the new creation—in the heart. He creates you anew. The light of Christ shines into your heart. All the dark shadows from the past are dispelled. Guilt and fear and loneliness and unforgiveness are dispelled by that glorious light. And then God works outward from your heart into every area of your life. And you begin to realize that you are changing in so many ways, other people begin to realize that you're changing. It's a creative work of God but it starts from within. And then, as this creative work of God proceeds, the third phase is that God commits to us, in turn, the ministry of reconciliation. I express it this way: We are reconciled reconcilers.

Paul says that we are Christ's ambassadors. That's an exciting statement. Have you ever thought what an ambassador is? He's the official representative of a government in the territory of another government. He's not just a private individual. He's a very important person because of his position. As long as he operates in accordance with the directions that he receives from his government, he has tremendous authority. In fact, an insult to an ambassador is treated as an insult to the government that he represents. And when he speaks, he does not speak merely as a private individual, but he speaks with the authority of his government behind him. And that's what God

intends us to be in this world. We are Christ's ambassadors. We are the official representatives of the government of heaven on earth and as long we operate in full accordance with the directions that we receive from our heavenly government, then all the authority of heaven is behind us. And, any insult or mistreatment we receive is treated by heaven as an insult or mistreatment of that whole heavenly government.

You remember what Jesus said to Saul of Tarsus in that encounter on the Damascus road. He said, "Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting Me?" Saul didn't realize that when he attacked those Christians he was attacking Jesus Himself. What Saul did against the Christians was reckoned as being against Jesus because the Christians were God's ambassadors. And you and I today are God's ambassadors in this present corrupt and evil world. We represent the government of heaven.

Just one more Scripture: Matthew 4:19. As Jesus called the first disciples, He said to them:

> "Follow Me, and I will make you fishers of men." (NAS)

That's what comes after the new creation. First, we commit our lives to God through Christ. We yield ourselves to Him. Then Jesus said, "Now follow Me. I've a new plan for you. I've got something for you that you would never have thought of yourself." He said to those first humble fishermen at the Sea of Galilee, "I'll make you something different. Not just ordinary fishers but fishers of men." That's another way of speaking about the ministry of reconciliation. Bringing men to God through Jesus Christ.

What I want to say is this: It's not what we are that matters, it's what Jesus will make of us.

Our time is up for today but I'll be back with you again tomorrow at this time. Tomorrow I'll be explaining the next step in finding God's plan for your life.

Radio Program

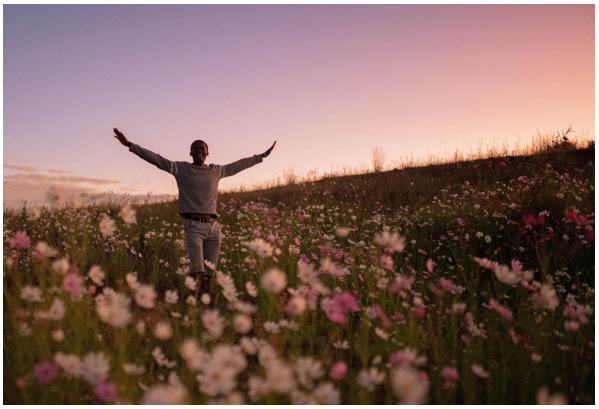
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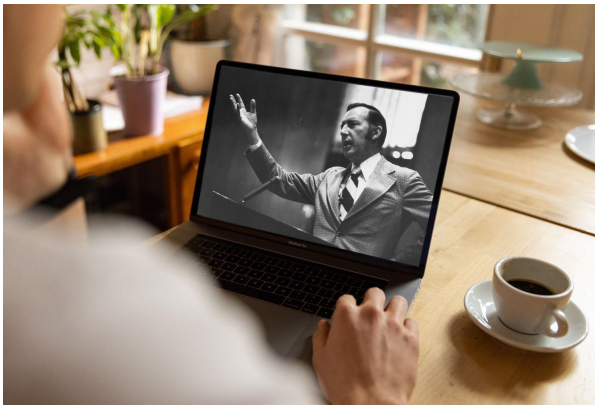
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