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PLAN  
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your Life?

Timothy Tow

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## **Has God A Plan For Your Life?**

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## PREFACE

At the Life Church Bible Camp, Genting View Resort 1993, I delivered a series of three messages on *Recipes for Living a Happy Life*. These messages were printed into a pink booklet with the purpose of sharing with a wider readership. Praise the Lord, they have found an unexpectedly good reception.

In order to follow up with the *Happy Life* messages, to lead Lifers into a deeper understanding of God's will for their lives, I chose to speak at the 1994 Camp at Awana, Genting Highlands, *Has God a Plan for Your Life?* This consists also of three messages. In this series, Fate and Predestination are discussed at length.

Fate fixes you to a doomed future and a whimsical present fraught with ill luck. On the other hand, Predestination is God's decretive will for your life unto salvation but it requires of you the "human responsibility." Fate is static. Predestination is dynamic.

God has a good plan for your life, if you are a Christian. If you want to know more, turn to the first page and read **on**. To get full satisfaction, read also *Recipes for Living a Happy Life*. These two booklets, in fact, are complementary to each other.

May you find the secret of happiness which is revealed in God's Plan for your life in the pages of the two booklets. Amen.

- Timothy Tow

# Sweeter Than the Day Before

Robert C. Loveless

Wendell P. Loveless

Ev - 'ry day with Je - sus Is sweet-er than the day be - fore,

Ev - 'ry day with Je - sus, Sweet-er than be-

Ev - 'ry day with Je - sus, I love Him more and more;

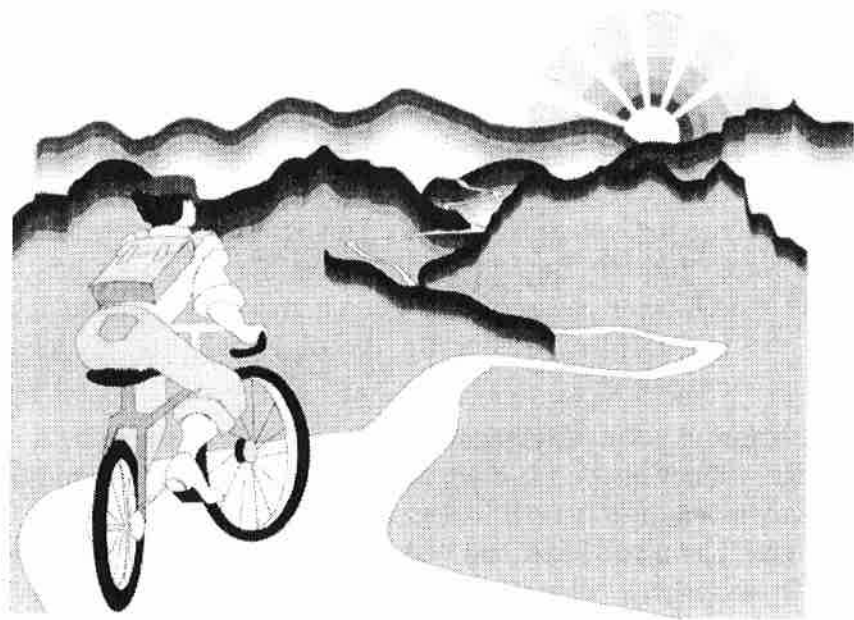
fore, Ev - 'ry day with Je - sus, Love Him more and

Je - sus saves and keeps me, And He's the One I'm wait-ing for;

more; Je - sus saves and keeps me, I am waiting;

Ev - 'ry day with Je - sus Is sweet-er than the day be - fore.

To the Christian everyday is a day  
of vibrant life in the Lord.



But the path of the just is as the shining  
light, that shineth more and more unto the  
perfect day. (Proverbs 4:18)

## **Chapter I**

### **HAS GOD A PLAN FOR YOUR LIFE?**

**Text: Ephesians 2:12,13**

This topic for Life Church Bible Camp, Awana, 1994 besides the message from Matthew 24 by Rev Paauwe has attracted 359 lively stones to Genting Highlands. This is as it should be, for are you not all Lifers? But, do you have the life of Jesus Christ in you? And I, being pastor of Life Church, must have something to say about God's plan for your life. If not, I might lose my job as Life Church pastor!

The text of my message is taken from Ephesians 2:12,13, "That at that time ye were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world: But now in Christ Jesus ye who sometimes were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ."

This passage of Scripture tells us that when we were outside Christ, we had "no hope, and were without God". How then could we have a plan for our life from God? A good plan, that is. So, the first point of our message is, we have not.

But after we have believed, and our sins are forgiven through the blood of Jesus Christ, we are joined to the happy family of God's children. All the promises of blessing for God's chosen

people are become ours. This, our second point, tells us that we have. Now let me ask you, are you inside or outside Christ?

*One door and only one, and yet its sides are two  
Inside and outside on which side are you?  
One door and only one and yet its sides are two  
I'm on the inside, on which side are you?*

This Gospel chorus is not asking whether you are attending Life Church, so you have entered the Church door. This chorus is not asking whether you are a member of Life Church, so you have entered Life Church by baptism. This chorus is asking if you have entered Jesus' door: "I am the Door, by me if any man enter in, he shall be saved . . ." (John 10:9).

Although I stayed with Grandpa in my schooling days in his parsonage, for he was pastor of the English Presbyterian Mission Church and I never absented myself from Church service, I was not saved. I entered the Church door, but had not entered Jesus' Door, until I was born again at the age of fifteen. You who have come to this Bible Camp, let me ask you each one. Are you inside or outside of the One Door we are singing about? This is a serious Question. If you cannot say you are inside this Door, then you are lost. There is no good Plan from God for your life. I pray that before this Camp is ended those of you who cannot say you are inside the Door of Jesus will have come in. How? By receiving Jesus as your personal Saviour. By turning away from your old life of sin and believing in Him. For confirmation, tell this to your friend!

## I

If you are outside Christ, if you are not converted, not born again, you cannot have God's Good Plan. For the Scripture says that you have "no hope and (are) without God in the world" (Ephesians 2:12). Whether you are a highly educated

professional, or a superstitious old woman from China, your status before God is the same. Without God you are blind, you are groping in the dark. What hope is there for a spiritually blind person?

Plato, the most enlightened of western philosophers, observes that mankind is lost in the darkness of a blind Fate. Kings who wear their pomp and glory in life are become terrified, cringing creatures at death. When faced with great issues, such as going to war, they seek good fortune from soothsayers in order to ward off death and defeat.

Not only the ancients, but also moderns. It was said of Franklin D. Roosevelt, four-term American president who led his country through WWII, that he would consult clairvoyant Jean Dixon. Though President Reagan of more recent time would consult Billy Graham, the report of Nancy his wife delving in astrology has given rise to ugly waves in journalistic reporting. Even of our own leaders of State it is often heard that visits are made to Kongmin Shan (Bright Hill) Temple.

In my last message, *Recipes for Living a Happy Life* at Life Church Camp, Genting View Resort, I mentioned the high discussion between two scientists over BBC on life's purpose. Both concluded that life is an accident. That is also the drivelling talk of evolutionists who tell us our ancestor is an ape-man. Then where is their God? "No hope, and without God in the world" is the divine verdict.

After WWII I heard a very eloquent speaker in Mr Malcolm MacDonald, British High Commissioner to Southeast Asia. His aspiration in life was to live to the ripe old age of 85. He never expressed any hope beyond the grave. A magazine cover that showed him hand in hand with two exposed Dyak beauties is a visual aid to understanding his life-philosophy.

Since there is no God and no hope beyond the grave, “Let us eat and drink (*and be merry*); for tomorrow we die” (I Corinthians 15:32). This quotation by Paul directed at Greek Epicureanism was nothing new. It is the age-old desperation of those without hope and without God. This eat and drink philosophy erupted from the doomed leaders of ancient Judah. Isaiah who lived 700 years before Christ recorded the cries of Jerusalem’s defeatist defenders. Fearing Jerusalem would fall any time to the Assyrians, they took a last chance to enjoy themselves. They slew sheep and oxen, “Let us eat and drink; for to morrow we shall die” (Isaiah 22:13).

Why do Singaporeans of our day also practise Epicureanism? Why do they go to parties and get involved in orgies of all kinds? Why do they visit prostitutes, even male ones, and take drugs, get drunk and indulge in promiscuous sex? God’s answer to them is AIDS. They misbehave in public like animals, and now vandalism and graffiti and what not? Because our misled young people are without hope and without God. Oh, the sadness of seeing the flower of our own youth being drawn away by the world. Instead of worship in God’s House on the Lord’s Day they are frequenters of the R(A)-rated cinema and other worldly amusements. In western countries they visit the X-rated houses and peep shows. Blue films in secret showings to high society groups. But the apostle says, “And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them. For it is a shame even to speak of those things which are done of them in secret” (Ephesians 5:11,13).

When I was in Melbourne this time I heard that Tasmania is still maintaining the time honoured law against homosexuals. But the Federal Government is pressurising to have it repealed by applying so-called claims of “human rights.” Australia, once a Christian country, as the number of old churches with gothic towers show, is now become a pagan nation. Why are so many

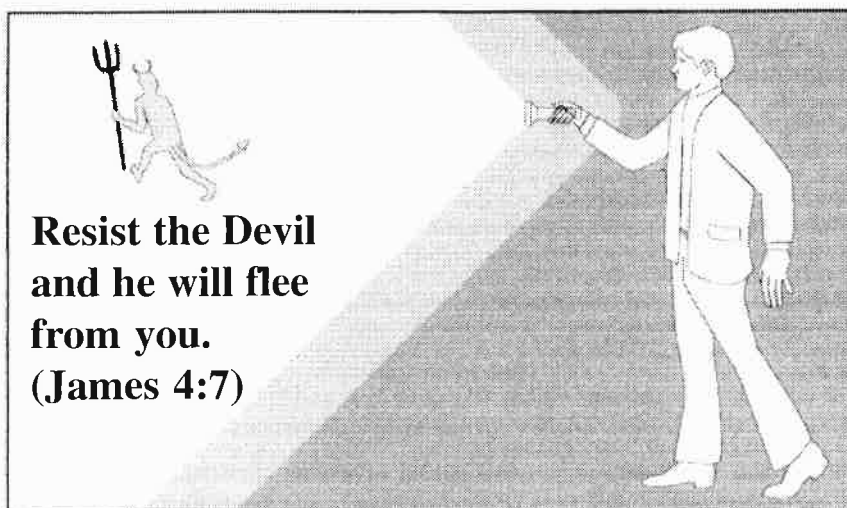
Houses of God sold to become theatres, restaurants, Pizza Huts, furniture stores, and even mosques? And this by the grandchildren of the old Faithfuls who lovingly built them for God in days gone by. Like the children of Israel, "that set not their heart aright, and whose spirit was not steadfast with God . . . they kept not the covenant of God and refused to walk in his law" (Psalm 78:8,10). Australia today has lost her bearings. Without hope and without God they are rather turned to the gods of their world. They are sun, surf, sport and sex. Are Singaporeans also on the road to perdition? The divorce rate in Australia is now one in two. Singapore is steadily catching up, perhaps one in eight.

Now, let us open a window into the dark chambers of Chinese superstitions. Without hope and without God, many an old woman when confronted by the Gospel would resign herself, "We are too old to do anything. Moreover, we don't speak English like our grandchildren (as if English is a qualification for heaven). When we die, we go and suffer in hell. Their children would burn paper houses, paper notes from the Bank of Hell, \$50,000,000 a piece. Paper TVs, cars, refrigerators and air-conditioners.

As they believe in some sort of astrology, they would ask under what animal a young man and a young woman were born. This, with the view to marriage. If one is born in the year of the tiger and the other the year of the pig, the marriage would not be contracted. For, tiger eats pig. If the horoscope approves of a marriage, the picking of the right day is equally important. The medium is once again consulted. The picking of a good day applies also to travel, to opening a business, to undertaking anything that is important. Then comes the absurd orientation of furniture in a business house in topsy turvy fashion. This is according to *fengshui*. Not geometry, but geomancy.

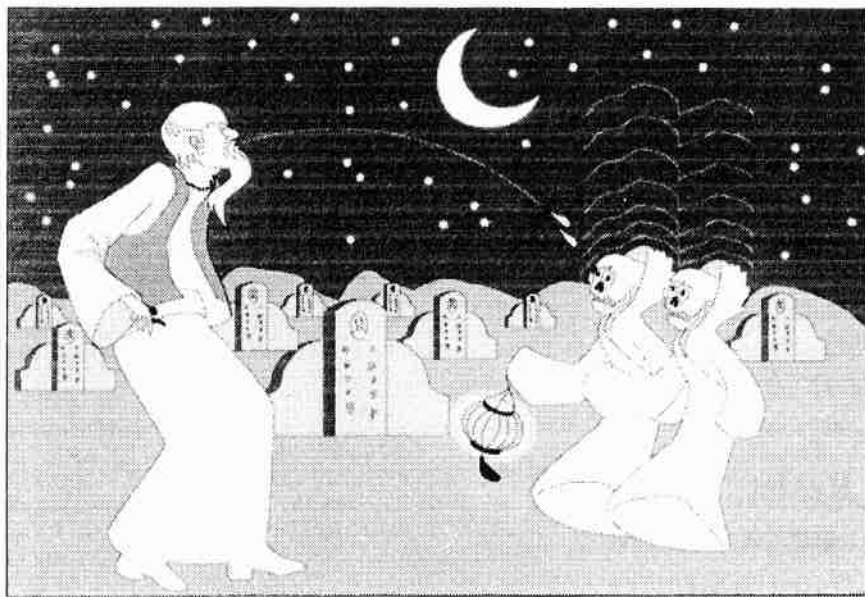
As Fate rules in every aspect of life, the mediums would use their prediction on the day of a man's death to extort more money. Mr See, a member of our Indonesian congregation, was relieved

of one hundred thousand dollars by a temple he attended in Pasir Panjang. When the medium foretold he would die in a year's time that was the last straw that broke his camel's back. He sought deliverance with the help of his son, an FEBC student. When I showed him Ecclesiastes 8:8, "There is no man that hath power over the spirit to retain the spirit; neither hath he power in the day of death . . ." he believed. He was immediately released! Another verse that helped: "My times are in thy hand: deliver me from the hands of mine enemies, and from them that persecute me" (Psalm 31:15).



A young Lifer came to me for counselling. Whenever he climbed the 7th storey of an HDB Block, he would hear a voice telling him, "Jump down. You are fated to die." I told this young man in Jesus' Name to ward off the Devil. For "he was a murderer from the beginning . . . when he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own: for he is a liar, and the father of it" (John 8:44). "Resist the devil and he will flee from you. Draw nigh to God and He will draw nigh to you" (James 4:7,8). With further counselling and praying for him at our Tuesday night prayer

meeting, he was delivered. I was glad to see this young man years after, alive and well. Is anyone here fearful of death? Believe in Jesus Christ and you shall be saved.



Spitting on the ghosts

Let me tell you a Chinese ghost story to illustrate my point: Once there was an old man walking through a graveyard when he saw two men with a lantern. As he needed to light his pipe he caught up with them. But no matter how hard he tried, the pipe could not be lit.

One of them asked him, "Have you passed the first seven days?" The old man felt the question very strange but casually replied "No."

"That's right," exclaimed the stranger, "Your life spirit has not completely vanished. Hence you cannot light this ghost fire."

Only then did the old man realise the pair were ghosts and deliberately asked: “Everyone on earth said people are afraid of ghosts, is this true?”

One of the ghosts replied: “It is not true. Ghosts are afraid of people.”

The old man then asked: “What’s there to be afraid of?”

“That they will spit on us,” came the reply.

The old man took a deep breath and spat at the ghosts, who retreated three steps, opened wide their eyes and said angrily: “Aren’t you a ghost too?”

The old man laughed and said: “In fact, I’m a human being who is quite near to becoming a ghost!”

He spat at the ghosts again, and the ghosts’s bodies were reduced by half. When he spat the third time, they vanished.

The Bible says, “Resist the devil, and he will flee from you” (James 4:7). And have you observed all the darkness in a room flees at one flash from your torchlight?

So many of the ailments this generation experiences — nervousness, insomnia, depression, obsession, fears, neurosis, nightmares, suicide mania — these have come upon both young and old because they have wandered far from God. Are you one of them? Come back to Jesus! The hallmark of a Christian is *Peace*, and *Shalom* in Hebrew, and *Ping-an* in Chinese. We were taught to say *Ping-an* by missionaries from the days of our grandparents. Jesus says, “Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid” (John 14:27). When you receive Christ, you automatically have God. You have hope. You are saved from the dark superstitions we’ve mentioned, and from many more we have no time to name.

As a child of God, no more are we under His wrath. We come under His good plan and pleasure. "Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ: By whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God . . . And hope maketh not ashamed; because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us" (Romans 5:1-5).

## II

This leads us to our second point: **God has a plan for your life!** Not only a plan, but a good one, according to the apostle Paul. In Romans 8:28, a much quoted verse when Christians run into troubles, the apostle says, "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." God has a foolproof plan for our lives, so that "in all things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us" (Romans 8:37). Paul climaxes on his assurance of God's good plan for each one of His children, "For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, Nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord" (Romans 8:39).

How different from the hopelessness of the Greek philosophers, even Plato, the most enlightened of them all. Nor can the thinking of Eastern sages deliver us, be it the meditations of Buddha, the mysticism of Laotse, the wisdom of Confucius. The teeming crowds of Chinese worshippers we see at the countless temples in Singapore, who grope in the syncretic haze of Buddhism, Taoism and Confucianism are a hopeless lot. Without God in the world — lost and wandering as in a spiritual

wilderness. Who has compassion to show them the light of Life, the hope of salvation in God through our Saviour Jesus Christ? How about the idols in your parents' house? Do you witness to them?

That God has a plan, and a good one for every born again Christian here, in the camp, is this qualification, "to them that love God, to them who are the called according to His purpose." Do you love God? The first great commandment requires of us to love God with all our heart, with all our soul and with all our mind (Matthew 22:37). If we do love Him, we are also the called (chosen ones) according to His purpose, "According as he hath chosen us in Him before the foundation of the world ... Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the pleasure of his will" (Ephesians 1:4). And as we are called to be his children, even before the world began, surely He has a good plan for each of us. What loving father does not have a good plan for his children?

But you will retort, "If God has a good plan for my life, how is it He did not help me pass my examinations? How is it that misfortune and death have overtaken my family?" These two questions in fact were mine. Let me tell you my story.

When I was in school, Anglo Chinese School in her heyday, I was always at the forefront of the class. In 1937 I passed my Senior Cambridge first in the whole standard. What sweetness, the fruit of success! But when I joined Raffles College, precursor of our NUS today, I failed flat at the first term examinations. I had enrolled as a Science student, taking Higher Mathematics, Chemistry and Physics. I got "two duck eggs" for Higher Mathematics and Chemistry, and scraped through Physics. Imagine my sorrow and despair not so much in the failure as in the loss of face.

I could have jumped down the 7th storey HDB Block like dejected young Lifer I mentioned earlier who was so obsessed. Fortunately there were no HDB Blocks of 7-storey height. There were only two and three storey SIT (Singapore Improvement Trust) flats in our time. I stayed in a two-storey block at Tiong Bahru. There was no higher place to jump. No, not that! I loved precious life, and as Life Church pastor I have loved life all the more. From that fateful failure in 1938 to this day, suicide has never entered my head. This is all due to the gentle mercies of God. Have you failed also? Never say "die"!

I got married very young. Then the War came. I realised I must improve myself to climb the social ladder. When the War was over I was enrolled with Middle Temple. I was about to set sail for England in the cargo boat Argus when on the eve of departure, Mother died! Another blow from the cruel hand of Misfortune!

Mother's death upset my plan only temporarily, for I was adamant like flint to go up, and on. On the eve of sailing by another boat, for the Argus had left, exactly five weeks after Mother's death, little Lilyn of seven months had to go to hospital for operation on her intestines, in "intussusception." What hope? She also died. It was by her deathbed with my wife becoming delirious, crying and pinching her cheeks as if to wake her, that I fainted into a chair. All my hopes of advancement in a glittering world were pierced as by the mere pinprick to a toy balloon.

I prayed to God for forgiveness in a state of trance. I remembered Mother's vow on me her Samuel to serve God as a pastor. I remembered my own vow to the Lord after I was saved in the great Singapore Revival of 1935. I gave my heart anew to the Lord. Instead of London, it was Nanking. Instead of Law, now Theology.

Now, when I yielded to God, His good plan for my life began to work. From Nanking He led me to the States. As I sailed into New York Harbour in the heavy winter of January 1948 the words of Mother, “If you will study to be a pastor, I will send you to America” rang like a bell in my ears. Returning in October 1950 I became your pastor from that date to this day. I’ve found my life-ministry. Without the failure at Raffles College, without the double deaths after WWII, I would have failed more miserably going my own way. But when God turned me around to walk in His Plan, a better plan than mine, I am today what I am entirely by His appointment. Indeed, man’s disappointment becomes God’s appointment. “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” (Romans 8:28).

There are many accounts in the Bible to illustrate Romans 8:28. All things, sweet, sour, bitter, pungent, happy, sad, etc. in our lives are used by God for our edification. Evil is turned into good.

There are many accounts in the Bible, as I’ve just said, to illustrate Romans 8:28. Suffice it that we learn at this juncture from the life of Joseph and Ruth.

Now, you know how Joseph was sold by his elder brothers for \$20 to the Ishmaelites who brought him to the House of Potiphar in Egypt. How sad and how homesick he must have become! As Joseph was God’s chosen, he was guided by the Holy Spirit in him. He was blessed in all that he did. He became overseer of Potiphar’s House.

Now, when a man is successful, let him beware! Satan comes along to tempt him to sin. The temptation comes through the mistress of the House, Potiphar’s wife. On a day when Potiphar was out, seduction came stronger than the pull of gravity. Joseph hung on tight to the Rock his God. Said he to the wife, “There is

none greater in this house than I; neither hath he kept back anything from me but thee, because thou art his wife: how then can I do this great wickedness, and sin against God.”

*Stolen waters are sweet,  
And bread eaten in secret is pleasant  
But he knoweth not that the dead are there  
And that her guests are in the depths of hell.  
(Proverbs 9:17,18)*

Praise the Lord, Joseph won. But for keeping God’s law he was unjustly implicated. He was thrown into prison. But “the Judge of all the Earth” (Genesis 18:25) cannot condemn a just man. Nay He works good out of evil. With God’s Spirit Joseph could interpret dreams. From the true answers he gave to both baker and butler, his prisonmates, his fame as a man of God spread beyond prison to palace. Joseph was brought before Pharaoh to tell him the fortunes of his kingdom. He saved Egypt from a seven-year famine which led to the saving of his whole family.

The wicked brothers who sold him into Egypt now trembled at his feet, exactly as he had dreamed in his youth. With the theological understanding he had of a sovereign God, of a God who has a higher plan for our life we can never fathom, he pardoned his brothers, “But as for you, ye thought evil against me; but God meant it unto good, to bring to pass, as it is this day, to save much people alive” (Genesis 50:20).

Perhaps we can see a parallel between Joseph and our Lord Jesus Christ. His own brothers and co-villagers could not accept him. “And rose up, and thrust him out of the city, and led him unto the brow of the hill whereon their city was built, that they might cast him down headlong. But he passing through the midst of them went his way” (Luke 4:29,30). Commenting on our Lord’s final rejection by the Jews which worked unto our salvation, Peter observes that by God’s higher plan and decreative

will good came out of bad, “Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain: Whom God hath raised up, having loosed the pains of death: because it was not possible that he should be holden of it . . . Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that God hath made that same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ” (Acts 2:23,24,36).

Are you persecuted for your faith? Are you ostracised by your family? How do you know this is not God’s higher plan to bring salvation to your family members later on. Romans 8:28!

There is the story of Sadhu Sundar Singh. A persecutor of Christianity while in high school he became soundly converted by a vision of Christ crucified at a most crucial juncture of his life. He was about to commit suicide by lying on the railway line outside his father’s estate. When he turned to the Lord, however, he was disowned by his family and poisoned before he left home, never to return. His being-cast away however worked good for the whole of India, and Tibet, yea, even to the uttermost part of the earth — before kings and governors.

Joseph’s example is a most noble one for every young man or woman to emulate. Though we are mistreated, ostracised, cut off by our dearest ones through Satan’s machinations, we will bring forth the sweetest results in the end if we trust and obey Him in all that we do. Amen.

The next account of a bitter-sweet story concerns a whole family. It is from the Book of Ruth. There was a happy family of four. They lived in Bethlehem. When a famine and depression struck the Land they were compelled to seek a better living in Moab, across the River Jordan. Out of the frying pan into the fire, Father died. Naomi struggled to bring up her two sons. The two sons married Moabite girls. One was called Orpah and the other

Ruth. Within ten years both of Naomi's sons also died, but Naomi (which means *Pleasant*) did not doubt God. (Chinese women, without God and outside Christ would blame it on Fate and curse. Usually you'll hear them complain "Why is my life so plagued by bad luck?")

When it was reported that things were getting better back home, Naomi decided to return. She urged the two daughters-in-law to remarry. Orpah acquiesced, but Ruth, having believed Naomi's God, would not marry any of her Maobite people for they were heathens. (Do you girls compromise to marry outside Christ?) She knew God's plan for her life. (Let it be drummed into your ears, you Lifer girls, marry Christian young men, better BPs, best Lifers!)

Ruth loved Naomi not because she was her mother-in-law (usually they became outlaws). Ruth loved Naomi because she loved her God. She made the sublimest statement on love that was ever made, in her commitment to Naomi:

*Intreat me not to leave thee  
Or to return from following after thee*

*For whither thou goest I will go  
And where thou lodgest I will lodge*

*Thy people shall be my people  
And thy God my God*

*Where thou diest will I die  
And there will I be buried*

*The Lord do so to me, and more also  
If ought but death part thee and me.*

To cut the story short, when she sought God's Kingdom and His righteousness the Lord blessed her beyond measure. God gave her a husband of His own choice, Boaz, though elderly, became her loving provider as well as for Naomi. Did Ruth know that she would become the ancestress of our Lord?

As I have stated in my pink booklet, *Recipes for Living a Happy Life*, marriage is a multi-mysterious mystery. If you rush into it out of desperation, you know the reason why, and put God behind your decision, you will taste bitterness unlimited. If God is your Matchmaker, you will enjoy eternal bliss. If it is an axiom that “a prudent wife is from the Lord” (Proverbs 19:14) it is also true “that a loving husband is not a woman’s power to choose but His.” Both Naomi and Ruth went through a decade of ups and downs but when they honoured God, God more than honoured them (I Samuel 2:40). Be not discouraged young ladies, nor be hasty, “Wait on the Lord: be of good courage, and He shall strengthen thine heart: wait, I say, on the Lord” (Psalm 27:14).

Living in a world that is under the curse of sin, Christians are not exempt from sorrow and tears, from disappointments and misfortunes. Joseph was sold by the wicked hands of his brothers to Egypt, Naomi’s husband died so suddenly, Ruth’s husband also died. But these heroes and heroines of faith are doubly blessed in the end. Romans 8:28. Let us not look at the ugly side of life but rather the beautiful. By patience we will conquer in the end, according to His Plan.

*My life is but a weaving  
between my God and me  
I do not choose the colours,  
He worketh steadily.  
Oftentimes He weaveth sorrow,  
and I in foolish pride,  
Forget He sees the upper,  
and I the underside.  
Not till the loom is silent  
and the shuttles cease to fly,  
Will God unroll the canvas  
and explain the reason why,*

*The dark threads are as needful  
in the skilful Weaver's hand,*

*As the thread of gold and silver  
in the pattern He has planned.*

In this message, "Has God a plan for your life?" that is, a good one, the answer is no and yes. No, if you are outside Christ, "no hope and without God in the world" (Ephesians 2:12). Yes, if you have become a child of God by believing and trusting in the Lord Jesus Christ the Son of God who died on the cross to pay the penalty of your sins. We have discussed this question from both negative and positive angles. You are under His Plan, and a good one, if you can say, "I love Jesus my Lord." Amen.

*I know not what of good or ill  
May be reserved for me  
Of weary ways or golden days  
Before His face I see*

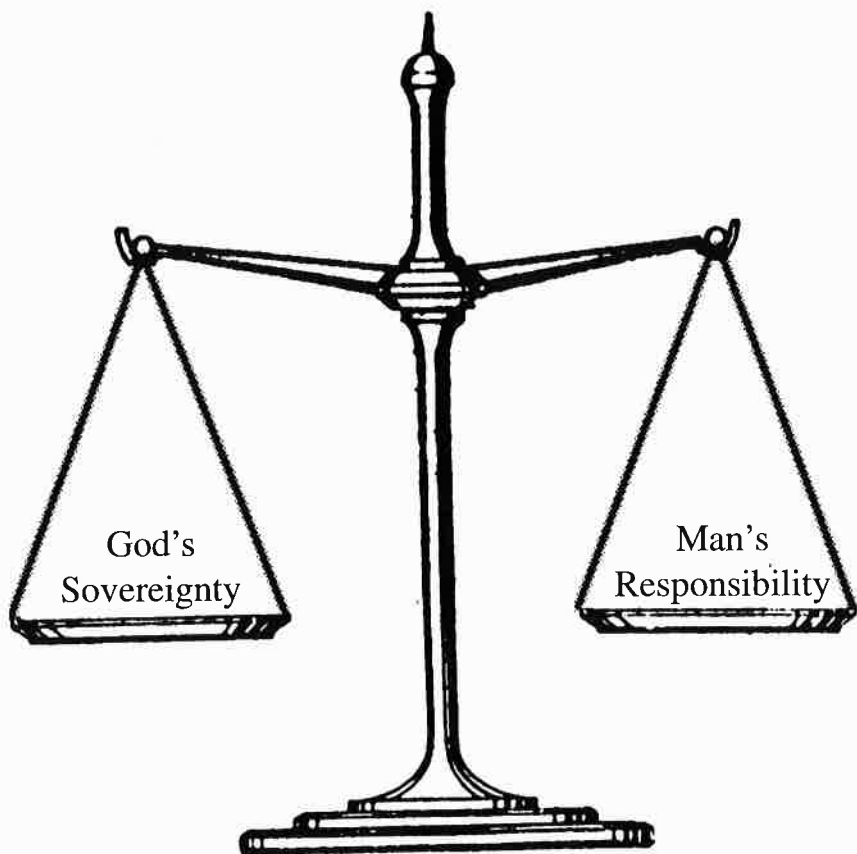
*But I know whom I have believed  
And am persuaded that He is able  
To keep that which I've committed  
Unto Him against that day.*

## Chapter II

### **GOD'S PLAN FOR OUR LIVES; NOT STATIC BUT DYNAMIC (God's Sovereignty, Man's Responsibility)**

We have noted that when we were outside Christ we were a people “having no hope and without God in the world.” We were an abandoned lot. We were left to the dictates of a blind Fate. As heathens, whether western or oriental, our lot was to find a way out of misfortune. To escape from bad luck. Being fated to this or that, we are in fact helplessly bound. This is the gospel of doom that Satan uses through mediums and fortune tellers to catch his prey. Under Satan's control whatever plan there is for our life is fixed. When anything goes wrong, we blame it on Fate.

God's plan for His children, however, is not static, but dynamic. God's plan for His children comes under such Biblical terms: Predestination, election, chosen, called. But though our salvation is “according as He hath *chosen* us in him before the foundation of the world” (Ephesians 1:4), “being *predestinated* according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will (Ephesians 1:11), we are to work out our own salvation with fear and trembling” (Philippians 2:12). So, while Paul is the one, above all others, who shows us the mystery of God's sovereign grace in predestination, he testifies of the efforts he is putting into his Christian “inheritance” (Ephesians

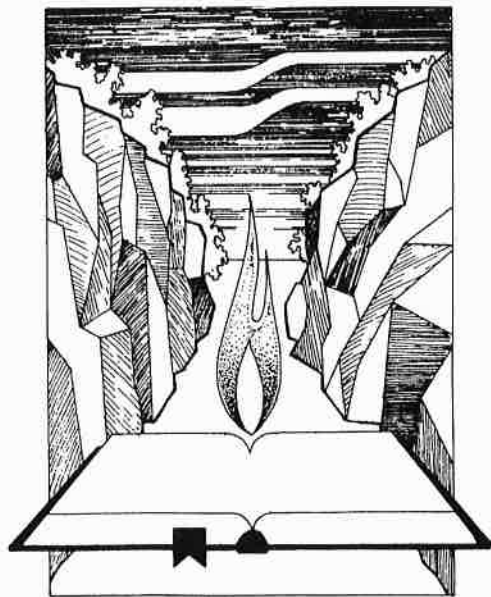


1:11) “not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect: but I follow after, if that I may apprehend that for which also I am apprehended of Christ Jesus” (Philippians 3:12). To emphasise his “human responsibility” under “God’s sovereignty” he stresses his responses to his high calling as he further instructs the Philippians, “Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended: but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus” (Philippians 3:13,14). Paul, while trusting in

the God Almighty, does not sit still, but runs the race of life with all his might. Self help with God's help is the best help!

The doctrine of God's Plan for our life, which comes under His predestination before the foundation of the world, also requires us to active obedience. It is a plan in equipoise between what we call in theological language "God's sovereignty and man's responsibility." Like a just balance, fifty-fifty.

Now that we have found life and light by leaving the darkness of the world, being delivered from a blind Fate through the blood of Jesus Christ, we are given God's Book to guide us through this dark world here below. It is the Bible! Do you have a Bible? Not only a pocket Bible that you carry on your person when travelling but a goodly-sized Bible, a Study Bible with commentary and helps. Do you read and study a portion of it everyday? "Thy word is a lamp unto my feet and a light unto my path" (Psalm 119:105). The more we read it, the more we are enlightened.



By reading the Bible regularly, we are like a seasoned tourist going through a country he is visiting with a road map (Psalm 119:35). By consulting this map he can arrive at any destination in his itinerary. We are no more groping around in futility, like what I had experienced once in Tokyo, lost and crying in a dark and stormy night. As Christians, enlightened by His Word, Paul reminds us

to “walk not as other Gentiles walk in the vanity of the mind, having the understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their heart” (Ephesians 4:17,18).

But as I have said above, we are enlightened by the Word of God, the Holy Bible, which is both like a road map and a torchlight (Psalm 119:105), showing us the way. The Holy Spirit who indwells us is a teacher we consult for confirmation (I John 2:27).

Another way of saying following God’s Plan for our life is to know His Will and do it. We have the supreme example set by our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. When He was on earth, He often testified He was come not to work out His own plan, but rather His Father’s. He said, “My meat is to do the will of Him that sent me, and to finish His work” (John 4:34). In the healing of the man born blind, He reiterated, “I must work the works of Him that sent me, while it is day: the night cometh when no man can work” (John 9:4). To the Jews steeped in their own righteousness, Jesus replied, “My doctrine is not mine, but his that sent me. If any man will do his will, he shall know of the doctrine . . .” (John 7:16,17).

To know His will and do it is simply obedience. This is living a life according to God’s plan. To know God’s will but never putting it to practice is like the bad son in Jesus’ parable of “The Two Sons.”

But what think ye? A certain man had two sons; and he came to the first, and said, Son, go work to day in my vineyard. He answered and said, I will not: but afterward he repented, and went.

And he came to the second, and said likewise. And he answered and said, I go, sir: and went not. Whether of them twain did the will of his father? They say unto him, The first. Jesus saith unto them, Verily I say unto you,

That the publicans and the harlots go into the kingdom of God before you... (Matthew 21:28-32).

Here is the paradox. The chief priests and elders to whom the above parable is given, are the “experts” on God’s Word. Though they know what God’s will is they lift not a finger to practise it. The publicans and harlots who know not the Bible but repent from their sins when confronted by the Son of God do better. Repenting and believing they are born again. They now see the Truth, and they obey to do His will. In other words, to know God’s Plan for our life is useless if we do not follow to do accordingly. It is useless to be knowledgeable like the priests and elders of the Jewish Church but do nothing about it.

Yes, God has a plan for your life. But are you willing to submit to that plan though it runs counter to your plan? As I have told you part of my life-story, I knew God had called me to full-time service. But when worldly ambition rose above that sacred calling, I smothered the still small voice of the Holy Spirit speaking to my soul. To salve my conscience I said to the Lord, “Please give me thirty years to achieve my ambition. After that I will serve you as a pastor.” To turn me back on the right track, God took away my Mother and baby daughter within five weeks. I call this by a new word I’ve coined. This was His *chastitive* will (from the word *chastise*.) Now if you are in the frame of mind that I was in, I hope you will submit to His plan and not try to carry out your own. “For whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth” (Hebrews 12:6).

From my experience of a second double tragedy in my life, the taking away of Nancy my wife and Annie my younger daughter on our way to Life Church Camp, Cameron Highlands, 1965, I was drawn to a similar experience in the life of the prophet Ezekiel. Let us turn to Ezekiel 24:15-18:

Also the word of the Lord came unto me, saying, Son of man, behold, I take away from thee the desire of thine

eyes with a stroke: yet neither shalt thou mourn nor weep, neither shall thy tears run down. Forbear to cry, make no mourning for the dead, bind the tire (turban) of thine head upon thee, and put on thy shoes upon thy feet, and cover not thy lips, and eat not the bread of men. So I spake unto the people in the morning: and at even my wife died; and I did in the morning as I was commanded.

Now the death of Ezekiel's wife was a sign to captive Israel in Babylon, and an object lesson. If you want to know more read the whole chapter of Ezekiel 24. The lesson I'm drawing from Ezekiel and the sudden death of his wife is this. Although God took away Nancy and Annie, which was a painful stroke to me, I never dared complain against Him. Like Job under trial, I could only say, "The Lord gave and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord" (Job 1:21). The Lord was still teaching me the lesson of submission to His Higher Will, to His Higher Plan for my life. As the Chinese saying goes, the older you grow the more you learn, and keep learning.

What am I trying to say? Unless you are perfectly obedient to His Higher Plan for your life, you will have more hard knocks ahead of you! If you want His blessings you must obey Him in great and in small, in any aspect of His "sevenfold" will. Have you read *The Clock of the Sevenfold Will of God* which is my message to the Awana Camp, 1990 on following God's Plan for our life?

In this message, I will discuss the various aspects of God's will (or plan) for your life. The various aspects of God's will may be liken here to the gears of a car. The only way for the car to proceed on the road is to yield to the function of the gear, be it first, second, third, overdrive or "gostan" = reverse. But, if the brakes are jammed, so that they hinder the free movement of the car, we will be in trouble. When God wants us to do this or that, to go uphill or downdale, to turn right or left or to reverse, the

only response we must give is complete, 100% obedience. When we obey Him He prospers us. He blesses us by what I'd call His cooperative will.

Let us learn, first of all, what is called His directive will. The story of Abraham's eldest servant being sent to his master's old country Mesopotamia to look for a wife for Isaac is pertinent to our study. It is recorded in great detail in 67 verses of Genesis 24. As Abraham's servant obeyed to carry out his master's will, God gave him a smooth journey and a speedy achieving of his objective, viz., finding the young lady God had appointed for Isaac. Rebekah not only gave Abraham's servant water, and to his camels as well, which answered his prayer for a "sign", but also invited the travel-worn stranger to stay in her father's house. So, "the man bowed down his head, and worshipped the Lord. And he said, Blessed be the Lord God of my master Abraham, who hath not left destitute my master of his mercy and his truth: I being in the way, the Lord led me to the house of my master's brethren." When we obey God's directive will, He blesses us with His cooperative will. He sees us through in the mission or assignment with quick success.

Let me illustrate with a very pleasant experience we had in June 1993. When Dr Carl McIntire, President of the International Council of Christian Churches twice requested me to attend the ICCC Congress in Philadelphia, and I perceived it was God's directive will, we went. Never had we such a prosperous journey. We were "delivered" from airport right to the door of our place of lodging — from the same door, when leaving USA, to the same airport to return to Singapore. The Lord gave us the desires of our heart according to Psalm 37:4. Moreover, He helped me upgrade my lecture notes on the life and works of Calvin into a 64-page book and we were able to transport 450 copies to the Congress so as to give every conferee a copy. This sort of "cooperative will" blessing has prospered my ministry through 44

years of my pastoral ministry. It has seen me through 32 years as principal of Far Eastern Bible College. It has prospered us also through five Pilgrimages to the Holy Land. The way to the Lord's blessing is obedience. Will you bend to His directive will today? You know clearly what He wants you to do. Will you do it?

Secondly, let us study His preceptive will. All his precepts, commandments and injunctions essential to our learning are in the Bible. By reading the Bible, you know what is right and what is wrong. The more you are saturated with His Word, the more you know what you should or should not do. Moreover there are in the Bible examples for our learning, warning us against evil and teaching us good.

Now there is a very important lesson to be learned by every servant of God from the story of the young prophet from Judah to Bethel. He was sent to rebuke the northern king Jeroboam for building a gold calf altar. While the prophet from Judah had carried out his mission, he disobeyed on one point. He stayed behind to eat with an old prophet which was forbidden of him, but he fell into the old prophet's trap. For the old prophet lied that an angel told him God had changed His mind to let him eat. (How naive was the young prophet and how foolish we pastors can also be to think God is fickle like a man.) For disobeying God in His preceptive will the young prophet from Judah was killed by a lion.

This story which I have told to my students in the Old Testament History class has helped me from many an embarrassing situation. As a leader of the ICCC I have travelled to many countries during the last 40 years. In 1951 I was called to the Philippines. A woman of another Church, a mere acquaintance, brought a box of barbequed pork with a request that I deliver a diamond ring to Manila. Now there was a law prohibiting the importing of jewelry into the country. "Never

mind,” she brightened up, “Just wear this on your finger and it will get through easily.” Remembering the story of the young prophet from Judah being punished for not fully obeying the Lord I declined to wear that diamond ring. The Lord saved me. And the Lord saved me in countless missions that I was in, because I refused others who tried to use me. My policy is “This one thing I do.” I was sent by God to preach and not to trade. Does this story of the young prophet from Judah and from the pastor from Singapore help you? Especially you who are in the Lord’s ministry, or preparing now at FEBC? If you do His preceptive will, He will bless you with His cooperative will.

Thirdly let us study His permissive will and the blessing He bestows on those who submit to Him. The classic example is Job. God permitted Satan to take away his sons and daughters, his wealth and riches. Did Job complain? Sorry for Mrs Job, she blasphemed the Lord under testing. But Job submitted. “Naked came I out of my mother’s womb, and naked shall I return thither: the Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord. In all this Job sinned not, nor charged God foolishly” (Job 1:21,22).

Now God permitted Satan to harm Job not out of weakness, like an indulgent old father under pressure from a wayward son. God permitted rather out of the strength of His sovereign will. He purposely permitted it to vindicate Job’s sterling character and to teach us all a lesson. Because Job yielded to His permissive will, God doubled the span of his life and restored all the children he had lost by raising up another family. Surely not by the foolish woman of a first Mrs Job!

When God allows misfortune to come your way, and your family, will you leave off attending church? I have known of a family of another BP Church. For not receiving enough attention from the pastor in their hour of grief, they left to join another church. Without judging this family nor the pastor, we come to

church because we love the Lord. Will unhappy events in your life, by God's permissive will, make you rebellious?

Once a lady phoned me, "Pastor, I am not attending your church anymore! Because all my prayers are unanswered!" Now if God did not permit you to go your way, will you leave your church? I know of a member of another church. Being disappointed by the church he was attending, he yielded to his idol-worshipping wife. He went back to his old religion. How sad! Will you end up like that?

Fourthly, let us study God's punitive (from the French, punitif = punishment) will. Here is a case of no return. The classic example is Balaam. Balaam was a Gentile prophet. He was asked by the king of Moab, Balak, to curse Israel. He prayed to God that night and the reply was no!

When Balak (B = Bad) the king of Moab sent higher ranking officers to seek Balaam's help, promising him more rewards, Balaam (B = Bad) went. How foolish of him, like the prophet of Judah sent to Bethel! He asked God a second time, being lured by the unjust rewards. Does God change His mind like man? A good lesson all of us here in camp must learn is, when God speaks once, that is final. Besides when He speaks once, we have heard it twice, and two are a confirmation! "God hath spoken once, twice have I heard . . ." (Psalm 62:11). Thus, while He makes for us one tongue, He gives us two ears! One tongue, not double like the snake. Two ears, so we hear twice. Be attentive doubly, hear with both ears, when God speaks! What is your reaction to the Sunday sermon you hear week after week, when your pastor declares the Truth? Is it "ear in and ear out"? Do you say *Amen!* or *Oh yeah?*

Balaam was told to go but to go and die. For being drawn aside by his covetous heart, he fell under God's punitive will. He comes under His immediate judgment. He went to his doom for

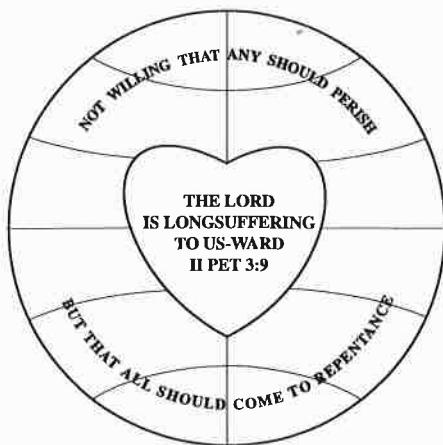
filthy lucre's sake, how sad! "Balaam also the son of Beor they slew with the sword" (Numbers 31:8). This is the epitaph over a disobedient servant of God. Punitive will! Don't play the fool with God.

Fifthly, let us wear clearer theological glasses to see what we have discovered to be the desiderative will of God. God's message of salvation must be declared to a lost mankind, "For God so loved the world, that He gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life" (John 3:16).

Those who are hyper-Calvinists argue John 3:16 is God's love extended only to the world of the elect. Not to the peoples of the whole world, elect or not elect. Similarly, when Peter declares, "The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that

any should perish, but that all should come to repentance," (II Peter 3:9) these same hyper-Calvinists insist God's "longsuffering to usward" refers to the elect, and not to all mankind. Those who say, elect, elect makes it "eleh" (Tamil for nothing).

### **"Sufficient For All, Efficient For The Elect"**



The heart represents God's Decretive will in electing us, and the sphere His Desiderative Will towards all mankind.

When we adopt such an interpretation, we develop a blind spot on God's desiderative will. "Desiderative" comes from the Latin

meaning “desire”. It is of God’s nature that He desires His saving grace be extended to the widest possible extent — the whole world. No wonder hyper-Calvinists who are unmoved to see there is an aspect of God’s will called desiderative are become constipated —— there is little evangelistic zeal to save the lost.

When William Carey (1761-1834) informed a group of Baptist ministers his desire to go to India with the Gospel, one of the elderly ones patted him on the back, “Sit down, young man, and respect the opinions of your elders. If the Lord wants to convert the heathen, He can do it without your help” (*The Story of the Church* by A.M. Renwick and A.M. Harman).

But God’s desiderative will turned the tables. William Carey’s perseverance to go led to the founding of the first Baptist missionary society in 1792, whereby he has earned the title of “Father of Modern Missions.” The day of the founding of the mission society that sent him to India saw 13 pounds 2s. 6d. fervently offered to the Lord of Missions, a large sum in those days. Carey set out the next year to India. He translated the Bible into 40 Indian languages. Within half a century of his death in 1834, Protestant converts in India numbered half a million. When Carey obeyed to go despite high-nosed ridicule, God blessed his submission to His will with mighty results. If there is any hyper-Calvinist here in this camp, I pray that you will see there is an aspect of God’s will called “desiderative.” When you see it, you will redouble your effort for missions. Why has God opened a door that no man can shut so that the BPC movement has spread 140 units around the world? Because we do not see any elect claiming first attention in John 3:16. It is a message to elect and non-elect alike to the uttermost part of the earth. How important it is to understand there is the desiderative aspect of His sevenfold will. May I liken it to the overdrive gear of your car?

Last but not least of God’s Will in His Plan for us is His decreative will. The decreative will of God is clearly taught in

Romans and Ephesians insofar as this message is concerned. The Westminster Shorter Catechism No. 7 says, “The decrees of God are His eternal purpose, according to the counsel of His own will, whereby for His glory He hath foreordained whatsoever comes to pass.”

From a study of Romans and Ephesians we discover that our salvation is entirely of the Lord. For, except He had chosen us from before the foundation of the world, we would not be what we are today. Nor can any believe in our Lord Jesus Christ if God had not predestined, prechosen us to believe. Jesus says in the Discourse after feeding the Five Thousand, “No man can come to me except the father which has sent me draw him” (John 6:44). Calvin’s motto is, “Salvation is of the Lord” (Jonah 2:9). Thus, Christians are not only called saints, but also the elect (I Peter 1:1,2).

Are you grateful that God had not left you out when He made the Plan of Salvation and had chosen to count you in? Calvin says He could have made you a donkey! If we humbly bow to the sovereignty of God and to the decretive will of His plan for your life, happy are you from start to finish!

In God’s Plan for our life, let us be humbled to know He chose to save us not according to His foreknowledge of our merit or demerit. He decreed to save us merely out of his “*suka*,” to use a Malay word, His “good pleasure”. For example, of the twins Esau and Jacob, God chose Jacob above Esau when they had done neither good nor bad in their mother’s womb (Romans 9:11). So, if you have believed you believe by His decretive will. There is no merit in you. Even your faith has no merit, because it is given you from Above! “For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast” (Ephesians 2:8,9). Further read verse 10, “For we are His **workmanship** created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them.” A

Christian therefore cannot boast he is a believer against an unbeliever. He cannot put on a 'holier than thou' attitude against a wretched sinner, like the Pharisee despising the publican in the Temple. When Moody saw a colony of "drunken cats," to use a Cantonese idiom, drowned by alcohol in a subway, he said, "There go I if not for the grace of God." A Christian cannot be puffed up with pride of race, nor pride of place, pride of face and least of all pride of grace. Thus the apostle Paul, though He has done so much for the Lord can only boast of His wretchedness, "This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am chief" (I Timothy 1:15). O Lord, save me from spiritual pride and that Pharisaical spirit.

What about the lost, the reprobate like Judas Iscariot? Did he come under God's decreative will in His plan for his life? Of course he did! Solomon says, "The Lord hath made all things for Himself: yea, even the wicked for the day of evil (Proverbs 16:4). Thus if God decreed him to be traitor to his Master, what else could he do? This argument is raised in Romans 9:19, "Thou wilt say then unto me, Why doth he yet find fault? For who hath resisted his will?"

What is God's answer? Jesus' verdict is final. "The Son of man indeed goeth, as it is written of him: but woe to that man by whom the Son of man is betrayed! Good were it for that man if he had never been born" (Mark 14:21). No doubt the decreative will of God had it that Judas would betray Him, but Judas in betraying His Master must bear his human responsibility. Why? When he betrayed his Master it came out of his own wicked heart. He began to hate Jesus after the Feeding of the Five Thousand. He disagreed with His Master's Higher Plan of a Spiritual Kingdom and not to his ambition for a political and material kingdom (John 6:15). This provoked our Lord to reply, "Have I not chosen you twelve and one of you is a devil? He spoke of Judas Iscariot the

son of Simon: for he it was that should betray him, being one of the twelve” (John 6:70,71). Thus, the Lord says in another place, “It is impossible but that offences will come: but woe unto him, through whom they come! It were better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and he cast into the sea, than that he should offend one of these little ones” (Luke 17:1,2). Judas Iscariot cannot escape from God’s judgment by blaming His decretive will. For, under God’s decretive will “no violence was offered to the creatures, nor is the liberty or contingency of second causes taken away, but rather established” (Westminster Confession Chapter III). When Judas betrayed Jesus he did so from the brooding of his wicked heart, and not from anywhere else, except he gave way to Satan to direct him in his treacherous plot. Notwithstanding the mystery of God’s decretive will, Judas had plenty of God’s saving grace poured upon him. He was one of the privileged Twelve who lived with the Master and saw all the miracles that He did.

To illustrate very simply why Judas is responsible for betraying Jesus, let me tell you once again my banana skin story. I invited you to my party. In response you came. On the way to my party you tripped on a banana skin and broke your knee-cap. Can you sue me at law? Can or cannot? You have no way to sue me at law because the law considers not the remote cause, but the immediate cause. My inviting you is like God’s Sovereign will before the world began. Man’s responsibility is like your carelessness. Remember God’s Plan is not static but dynamic.

Buswell says of one like Judas that “the chargeable cause of the loss of the lost is in the lost”.

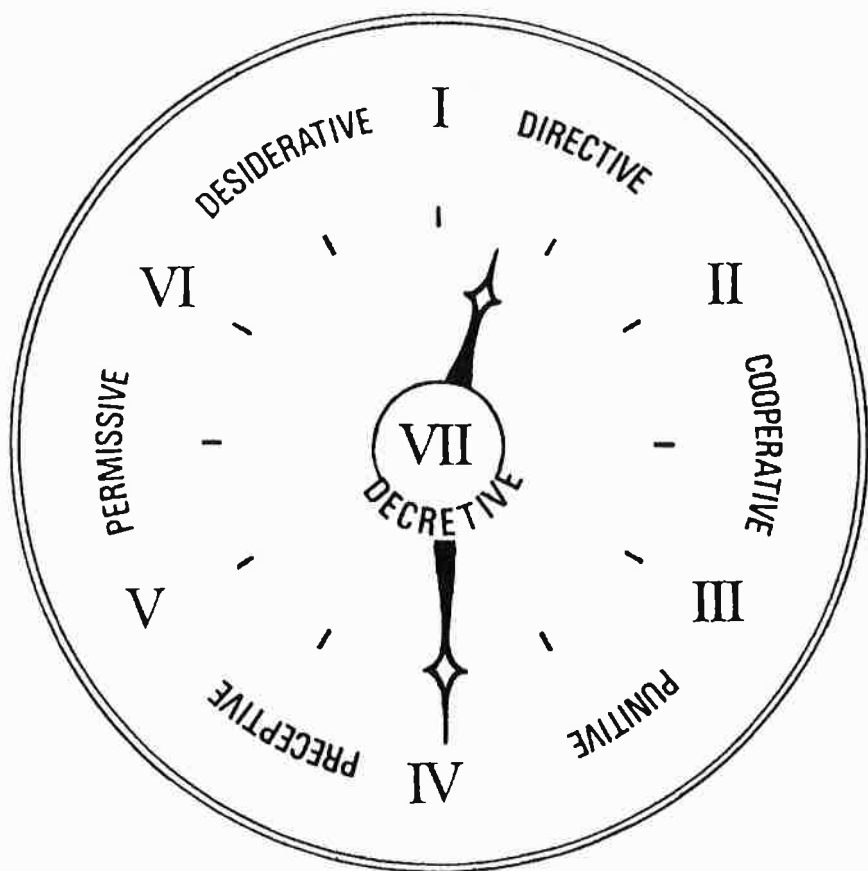
The clearest indication to my mind that the lost are the chargeable cause of their own lost condition is found in the fact that the Scripture repeatedly and explicitly declares that God is angry with them on this very point, namely, that they reject His grace. “He that believeth on him is not

condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God. And this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil" (John 3:18,19). He who believes in the Son has eternal life. He who does not believe in the Son will not see life, but the wrath of God abides on him" (John 3:36). Because they did not receive the love of the truth so that they would be saved, even on this account God sends to them a deceitful energy, so that they believe falsehood, and they are all condemned who do not believe the truth, but take pleasure in iniquity (II Thessalonians 2:10-12). From these Scriptures it is clear that God is angry with the lost and holds them responsible for their lost condition, on the ground they have rejected His grace.

In view of the fact that among the twelve disciples of Jesus, there arose a traitor in Judas Iscariot, he had committed what is known as an unpardonable sin. "Of how much sorer punishment, suppose ye, shall he be thought worthy, who hath trodden under foot the Son of God, and hath counted the blood of the covenant, wherewith he was sanctified, an unholy thing, and hath done despite unto the Spirit of grace?" (Hebrews 10:29). O the double scarlet sin of contempt, O the heinous sin of treachery.

There may be some among such a big gathering as this who might be harbouring some rebellious thought against the Lord. In the Last Supper, "as they did eat, he said, Verily I say unto you, that one of you shall betray me" (Matthew 26:21). It is possible one of you will eventually drop out of the Church and go the way of Judas, never to return. O how sad! Like the disciples of old, let us be exceeding sorrowful that such a thing should happen. Can you open your heart to the Lord, and say, "Is it I?" There is no sin greater than the sin of the mind and of the spirit that goes against the Lord. Like Peter humbling himself let us say, "Wash me Lord, not only my feet but also my hands and head."

# The Clock of the Sevenfold Will of God



All other aspects of God's Will are "energised" by His Decretive Will

Has God a plan for your life? He has, and a good one, if you have received Him as your Saviour. We have come to the end of our careful study of this plan under the various aspects of His sevenfold will, like the various gradations of the gear of your car. We have seen that to work out His plan, like the various gear-shifts, we must obey at every step. Then His cooperative will

meshing with our obedience will bless us at every stretch of the journey. Under His directive will, let us obey him. Under His permissive will that we be tested let us submit to Him. We have His preceptive will to guide us like a road map and a torch. Then we have also the mysteries of the Punitive, Desiderative and finally the Decretive will for revision and further study. Of the decretive will of God, this is a subject that we cannot rush in with impunity. Says the Westminster Confession, "The doctrine of this high mystery of predestination is to be handled with special prudence and care..." Being a subject that reaches deep into the mind of God, using the figure of the gears of a car, it is like knowing the ways of the mechanism within, so we can handle it. While we may never bring the two parallel lines of God's sovereignty and man's responsibility together, we have this consolation that as long as the gears function and the brakes are not jammed, the car will run smoothly.

To understand this deep subject of study in theology, may I refer you to my book *The Clock of the Sevenfold Will of God* which was an enlargement of a similar message I had preached here four years ago. Why I have come back to this sevenfold will of God, now likened to the gear shifts of a motor car is it is the mechanism that sets the knowledge of God's plan for our life in motion. In other words, the Plan of God for our life is such a profound subject that we need to study anew, and what better opportunity than this gathering like the one of old on a mountain in Galilee. Rabbi, Master, be thou our Teacher today! Amen.

## **Chapter III**

### **OUR LIFE IS A JOURNEY FROM CRADLE TO GRAVE**

Our life is a journey from cradle to grave. And the Bible which is like a road map (Psalm 119:35) and a torchlight (Psalm 119:105) has much to show us the way.

“To everything there is a season, and a time to every purpose under the heaven: A time to be born, and a time to die” (Ecclesiastes 3:1,2). Our birthday and our deathday are predetermined by God. For our good, God has mercifully drawn an impenetrable curtain over them. Birth and death are life’s mystery of mysteries.

Between birth and death, there is another great and mysterious event, viz. Marriage, “A time to embrace” (Ecclesiastes 3:5). This is also predestined, when and to whom you will be married. Immediately following is the corollary “a time to refrain from embracing.” This may refer to singlehood, or state of separation or divorce, “under the sun.” But when you divorce, don’t blame God, blame yourself! “Human Responsibility”!

Now, let us discuss the day of death “our last enemy” (I Corinthians 15:26). In my first message I told you of a Mr See who was extorted by his temple medium. He was pronounced to

die within a year. I have yet another “grandfather” story to tell, viz. Mr Chew Fook Wah. He was a member of Calvary Jaya BP Church, K.L. In his case the medium predicted he would die before Chinese New Year. This made him tremble for his fate until Chinese New Year came and went, but nothing happened. Mr Chew lived on for another thirteen (unlucky?) years before the Lord took him. (He was my student at FEBC, and I attended his funeral.)

Victorious in his confrontation with the medium, he had his houseful of idols smashed and burnt. He became not only a Christian, but a mighty evangelist to the Cantonese speaking and delivered scores of them. He became a famous destroyer of Chinese idols. It was he who gave me Ecclesiastes 8:8 which I in turn gave Mr See — “There is no man that hath power over the spirit to retain the spirit; neither hath he power in the day of death...”

Why did Mr See and Mr Chew get hooked to the Chinese temples? Because they fell into Satan’s trap of inquisitiveness. They tried to delve into the mysteries of life forbidden to us. “Curiosity kills the cat.” So it is with a good number of Lifers before they were saved.

In time of trouble, such as sickness or approaching death, they would desperately search for an answer. They consult mediums and fortune tellers, *bomohs* and *dukuns*, but do not know how to pray. Instead of getting help, they are scalped. Sometimes the mediums could give the right answer, like the damsel in Philippi possessed with a spirit of divination, which evil spirit Paul had cast out (Acts 16:16-18). It is by this partial knowledge of the beyond that Satan catches his prey. As my American teacher Dr Allan A MacRae has said, “A little truth is a great deception.”

Do you know that both Deuteronomy 13 and 18, are given by the hand of Moses to Israel, and to us, not to have anything to do

with false prophets and mediums? “When thou art come into the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee, thou shalt not learn to do after the abominations of those nations. There shall not be found among you any one that maketh his son or his daughter to pass through the fire, or that useth divination, or an observer of times, or an enchanter, or a witch, Or a charmer, or a consulter with familiar spirits, or a wizard, or a necromancer. For all that do these things are an abomination unto the Lord: and because of these abominations the Lord thy God doth drive them out from before thee. Thou shalt be perfect with the Lord thy God. For these nations, which thou shalt possess, hearkened unto observers of times, and unto diviners: but as for thee, the Lord thy God hath not suffered thee so to do” (Deuteronomy 18:9-14).

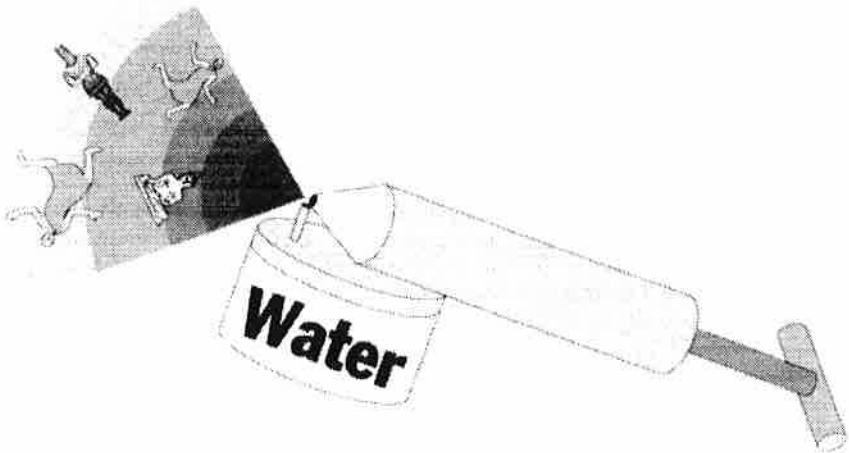
Now, a Chinese medium is also a necromancer. He can consult the dead to give an answer to the living. That is what a necromancer is, from the Greek *necros* (death) and *manteia* (prophecy). However, there are those who purport to teach God’s Word and yet do the opposite. These are charlatans. There is an ex-BP minister who taught a course on Deuteronomy at FEBC. Did he not teach the 13th and 18th chapters which forbid communication with false prophets, including necromancers (Chapter 18:11)? Yet, when a young member of his church committed suicide, he wrote a letter in the Straits Times to this deceased person, commending him. This is blatant necromancy.

Under the Deuteronomic prohibition of false prophets, mediums and necromancers we must include every kind of fortune telling, astrology, horoscopes, palmistry, and the many pagan oriental and western cults and Chinese religions. Do you practise any of the abovementioned? Do you wear charms like the lion’s tooth I saw in Africa, medals of the Virgin or the Buddha, or even crucifixes for your bodily protection? Do you also put on the dash board of your car or hang on the reflecting

mirror statuettes that will keep you from accident? These are all forbidden under the II Commandment.

On the contrary, since you have believed in Jesus as your Saviour, you should be baptised at the earliest opportunity. Are you baptised, and if not why not? While the water of baptism itself does not save, the sacrament does set a seal on your Christian faith, so that the heathens will keep a respectful distance from touching you.

A mother had four children, who became Christians and were baptised. Since they were baptised she dared not asked them to eat food she had offered to her gods. She had to reserve a major portion of chicken or pork for their consumption without being offered. This division in the home at meal time, especially on the first and fifteenth of the moon, drove her to her knees. To have unity in the home she yielded to the Lord. She also got baptised. There was now joy in the family, under Christ.



**Baptism is Repellent against mediums and idols  
(Mark 16:16)**

Another sacrament Christ has instituted for our spiritual welfare is the Lord's Supper. It is another means of grace, or channel of blessing, to our Christian life. The Shorter Catechism No. 96 says, "The Lord's Supper is a sacrament, wherein, by giving and receiving of bread and wine, according to Christ's appointment, his death is showed forth, and the worthy receivers are, not after a corporeal and carnal manner, but by faith, made partakers of his body and blood, with all his benefits, to their spiritual nourishment and growth in grace."

Life is a journey from cradle to grave. Yea, it is a pilgrimage, and a pilgrimage is beset with many a trouble along the way. Read Bunyan's Pilgrim's Progress.

To shelter us along the way God has prepared stations of rest and refreshment. This is the Church and the Lord's Day services to the nurture of our souls. And it is the Church that administers the two sacraments, baptism and the Lord's Supper. Attending Church every Lord's Day, regularly, is the Lord's injunction to His people. "Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching" (Hebrews 10:25). Do you come to church every Lord's Day? Do you look to the Lord's Supper with joy and expectation or take it lightly?

Many a young Christian loses out when he drops out. Their spiritual life not being watered by the Word, by worship, by prayer and fellowship, begins to dry up. Calvin says it is a great danger to leave the church which is our alma mater (kind mother). We become like orphans. I have counselled case after case of members developing mental and spiritual problems, and their causes are traced to leaving the church. Try not to attend Church for one Sunday. Your soul will become restless, for the blessing of worship with God's people on the Lord's Day is peace (John 20:21). "Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled,

neither let it be afraid" (John 14:27). Those of you who go to "Pontian Besar," that is, play truant on the Lord's Day, repent! How I miss you to shake your hand!

Apart from the Lord's Day, Christians must cultivate the habit of meeting God individually each day. In the home the father should lead in the saying of grace at the dinner table. The children are to be taught the Lord's Prayer, to pray at meals, when going to bed and rising in the morning. A fifteen-minute family worship, as we had been brought up under Grandpa in the parsonage, was most salutary to our young souls. When we grew up, especially when we were now born again, we automatically would have our private devotions, reading a portion of the Bible everyday. If we read three chapters a day we can cover the whole Bible almost in one year. To help our members to regular Bible reading we have the RPG (Read, Pray, Grow) monthly Bible reading notes.

Do you want your children to grow up in filial piety, honouring you? Then you must set the example, by honouring God first. Your most earnest desire should not be in their education, but in their salvation. "Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old, he will not depart from it" (Proverbs 22:6). When your child knows God then he becomes serious about life, "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge" (Proverbs 1:7).

While the cane, which is emphasised four times in Proverbs (Prov 13:24; 22:15; 23:13,14; 29:15) is Christian discipline which Michael Fay hates, a higher power of disciplining your children is the holy walk you set before them. When a father who is a smoker tells his growing son not to smoke, it is sure to fall on deaf ears. Neither can you prevent your son from drinking when you are addicted to alcohol yourself. When a mother goes gambling, or joins some mahjong party to kill time, but has no time for God, she loses the respect of her Church going children.

Even Confucian ethics teaches: “**以身作则**” = BE A LIVING EXAMPLE. Paul says to Timothy, “Let no man despise thy youth; but be thou an example of believers, in word, in conversation, in charity, in spirit, in faith, in purity” (I Timothy 4:12). Are you an example to both the young and old?

Today we have parents, both so busy, that they have no time for their young children. They are left to domestic helps, many of whom are not Christians. They are left to watch T.V. without control. Their young minds get polluted with sex and violence at a very early age. They are let loose in the Church compound when service is going on. Without training when young, no wonder they run wild. When I realised how distracting to the young the T.V. was I did not allow a T.V. in my house until my children grew to adulthood. I believe they now appreciate the good I had imposed on them. I’m glad to hear of a mother who has a high profession giving up her practice in order to devote full-time to the bringing up of her children. This is a wise move that will pay manifold dividends. I can testify that what I am today is due to my devout mother. “The son of a praying mother cannot be lost.”

Insofar as the family is concerned, there are young couples who both hold jobs but decide not to have children. These are called DINKS = double income, no kids. Is this the way of human life under God? (There are those not fertile, but God knows.) What does God say of children? The ideal family according to Psalm 127:3 is “Lo, children are the heritage of the Lord: and the fruit of the womb is his reward.” And in Psalm 128:3, “Thy wife shall be as a fruitful vine by the sides of thine house: thy children like olive plants round about thy table.” Without children, couples under this rat race we are in are more prone to separation.

Along life’s journey you young people soon come to the stage of forming life-partnership. As Christians, we cannot be blessed

marrying one of another kind. God forbids it, "Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers..." (II Corinthians 6:14). For a Protestant to marry a Roman Catholic is fraught with tears to be sure. The best is for a BP to marry a BP. "Better than the best" is that a Lifer marry a Lifer!

There was a time when marriages were arranged between parents, or by some middle person called a match-maker. Now, I agree it is better for two persons to talk it over. Nor can two be united without that inexplicable element called love, yea, even love at first sight. Yet it should not be a blind love. Unless both would-be husband and wife are on the same wavelength, and certain gives and takes must be accepted on either side, the ensuing marriage will not sail smoothly. And how sad to see it on the rocks.

Thus, it is not beauty or talent that makes a good wife. It is the virtuous woman that will bring you happiness. "Houses and riches are the inheritance of fathers: and a prudent wife is from the Lord" (Proverbs 19:14). So, judge not the outward appearance, but the inward. "Favour is deceitful, and beauty is vain: but a woman that feareth the Lord, she shall be praised" (Proverbs 31:30). A word on make up. I advise young ladies: Please read I Peter 3:2-4. What about lipsticks? Especially pastors' wives. And their dresses too. (Romans 12:1,2). Exposure is to your shame, covering up is to your glory.

In Christian dating it is to your undoing to follow the tide in pre-marital sex. You break that sanctity that blesses your whole life, but now it is no more there. You cannot eat your cake and have it. Easy come, easy go. (In Australia, the recognition of de facto cohabitation of man and woman sees more broken families than ever. This is confirmed by a recent article I read in Reader's Digest). That we should preserve our virginity to each other is reflected in Paul's injunction to the Corinthians, "For I am jealous over you with godly jealousy: for I have espoused you to one

husband, that I may present you as a chaste virgin to Christ' (II Corinthians 11:2). If human marriage reflects that holy communion between us and our Saviour, how careful must we be in our boy-girl relationship. The example Joseph sets for us, in chastity, which mightily pleases God, and leads him to the pinnacle of success should inspire us to fulfil all righteousness. That Mr Lee Kuan Yew is so highly respected is due not only to his political wisdom, but more so to his moral integrity, and fidelity. Those ministers with marital troubles, even in Great Britain, become fallen idols overnight.

In contemplating marriage, one should first seek God's blessing and second our parents'. "Honour thy father and thy mother as thy God hath commanded thee; that thy days may be prolonged and that it may go well with thee, in the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee" (Deuteronomy 5:16). Take note that the V Commandment as given in Exodus 20 at Mt Sinai is enlarged with a sacred commentary in Deuteronomy 5, forty years after. "As thy God hath commanded thee," a reassertion of Divine authority, shows a delinquency in Hebrew filial piety after forty years.

Do you get your parents' blessing for the girl you are going to marry and vice versa? Do you seek the blessing of the Lord through the Church (which is your spiritual mother)? Do you feel blessed by your pastor who devoutly marries you? Or do you think he is your servant since he is paid by the Church and that is his job? Whether the pastor is esteemed or not, it is reflected in the Bridegroom's speech at the dinner function. Now it is our Chinese custom to express appreciation to those who do us a favour with a *hongbao*. I do receive one when marrying a couple. Once I did it for another B-P Church and the *hongbao* they gave me were eight single dollars. To make them more acceptable they were given in crispy new notes. With the blue dollar notes now out of circulation, it will be 8 copper coins. Truth is stranger than

fiction! I share this testimony frankly, not that a bigger *hongbao* is demanded, but rather that you may learn courtesy from it. *Li* (礼), i.e. courtesy, is first of four ethical principles in Chinese society. Courtesy is your passport to success in any situation in life. Without courtesy, as the Chinese saying goes, *You bash your head against a wall*.

That honouring your parents in marriage should also be properly expressed in your Invitation Card. Not you invite with your parents appended below, but rather your parents invite and your names under. Honouring your parents is a natural law with a promise, long life to filial sons and daughters. How do you bring your idol-worshipping mother to Christ? First by honouring her with your Christian love and prayers, not by argument.

How does a wife bring a husband to Church? “...be in subjection to your own husbands; that if any obey not the word, they also may without the word be won by the conversation of the wives” (I Peter 3:1).

Before I leave this discussion on marriage, let me have a word on singlehood. According to Ecclesiastes 3:5, “A time to refrain from embracing.” If in the course of courtship you find your partner incompatible, eg. He or she is Christ-rejecting, it is better to break now than to divorce later on. I have the support of Wang Ming Tao. Nor get panicky when age is catching up. I’m speaking about a young lady. If a prudent and virtuous wife is from the Lord (Proverbs 19:14) so is a loving husband. Remember the story of Ruth. But not all are predestined to marry. If that is your lot, then accept it from the Lord. Or He has determined you to marry, but at a later date. As I have said in my pink booklet, *Recipes for Living a Happy Life*, marriage is a multi-mysterious mystery.

Now let us talk about your career. The reason why we put your career after marriage is that the majority of young people fall in love before they are established...

That you should study with a constant application and pleasure is Confucius' injunction. St Paul goes deeper than this, "Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the truth" (II Timothy 2:15). Though this word to Timothy refers to the study of God's Word (which requires much effort) it is applicable to our days in school in the first instance, and to our final years in college or university. The last minute sweating for exams so that many stay away from Church on Sunday is not attended with the Lord's blessing. Ask God for strength to regulate yourself, so that priority is given to Him, is the true way to success. Martin Luther prayed three hours a day and more work was done. We work three hours overtime but achieve lesser results.

In choosing a career, the first of the Shorter Catechism should be your compass. "Man's chief end is to glorify God and to enjoy Him forever." Now we know that different people have different talents. If you are not good in mathematics it is vain to try to be a scientist. You choose your vocation according to the talents God has given you. But let it not be undertaken for your self-gratification. Let it be unto God's glorification.

Even a pastor can be rejected by God. There are some who preach, as St Paul says, not to God's glory but for self exaltation (II Corinthians 4:5) and there are others for their own belly, who by good words and fair speeches deceive the hearts of the simple (Romans 16:18). These who are not called will be stalled. A word of advice to FEBC students and to new applicants!

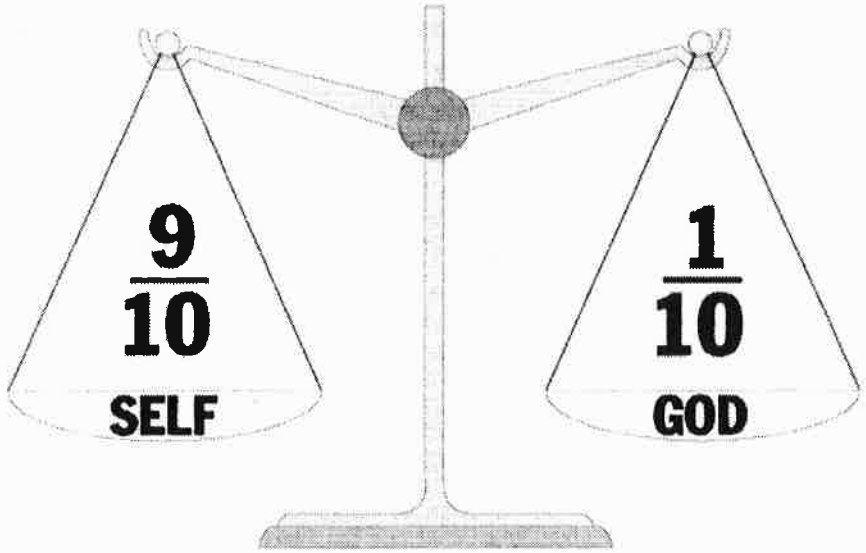
When we now become established in our career, let us not think we are our own bosses. Let us remember Moses' words to the children of Israel after conquering the Promised Land,

Beware that thou forget not the Lord thy God, in not keeping his commandments, and his judgments, and his statutes, which I command thee this day: Lest when thou hast eaten and art full, and hast built goodly houses, and dwelt therein; And when thy herds and thy flocks multiply, and thy silver and thy gold is multiplied, and all that thou hast is multiplied; Then thine heart be lifted up, and thou forget the Lord thy God, which brought thee forth out of the land of Egypt, from the house of bondage... And thou say in thine heart, My power and the might of mine hand hath gotten me this wealth. But thou shalt remember the Lord thy God: for it is he that giveth thee power to get wealth, that he may establish his covenant which he sware unto thy fathers, as it is this day (Deuteronomy 8:11-18).

One laudable phenomenon in the Life Weekly *From the Offering Bag* column are the innumerable spontaneous testimonies by mostly young adults of their indebtedness to God: For helping them to pass examinations, for finding jobs quickly, for promotions, for help in time of need. These are not only “the fruit of their lips, the sacrifice of praise to God continually” (Hebrews 13:15) but also from their hearts and hands. Every envelope is filled with the firstfruits of their earnings. They realise it is God who gives them power to get wealth. The silent majority who give substantially and consistently, the Lord knows and blesses no less.

The basic test of a Lifer’s devotion to his God is the tithe, the sacred tenth. Dispensational theologians declare the tithe to be a legal requirement of the Old Testament which is done away in the New Testament. This is an erroneous notion in the light of Christ’s teaching in Luke 11:41,42 against the Pharisees’ legalism and parsimony. While our Lord charged that they should give alms liberally more than niggardly weighing their garden produce for an account with God, He was by no means doing away with the tithe. The Lord sets us the example of paying dues for the

## DIVINE MATHEMATICS



$$\text{Minus Becomes Plus} = \frac{11}{10}$$

Church in the coin found in the fish's mouth which He told Peter to catch. This He paid for Himself and for Peter (Matthew 17:27).

The offering of the tithe is primarily for the support of God's House and its work (Malachi 3:10). If all Lifers will tithe, we have good abundance not only to maintain the Church but to advance missions to the whole world! More Lifers are tithing, who have been materially blessed by the Lord. But the last shall be first and the first last. There are also the backsliders. When they were earning less they gave more. When they are earning more they give less! Not 10% as before, but perhaps 5% or at most 2%. Let the backsliders realise that it is God who gives them power to get wealth. If they neglect their bounden duty let

them listen to Haggai: they might earn wages to put it into a bag with holes (Haggai 1:6).

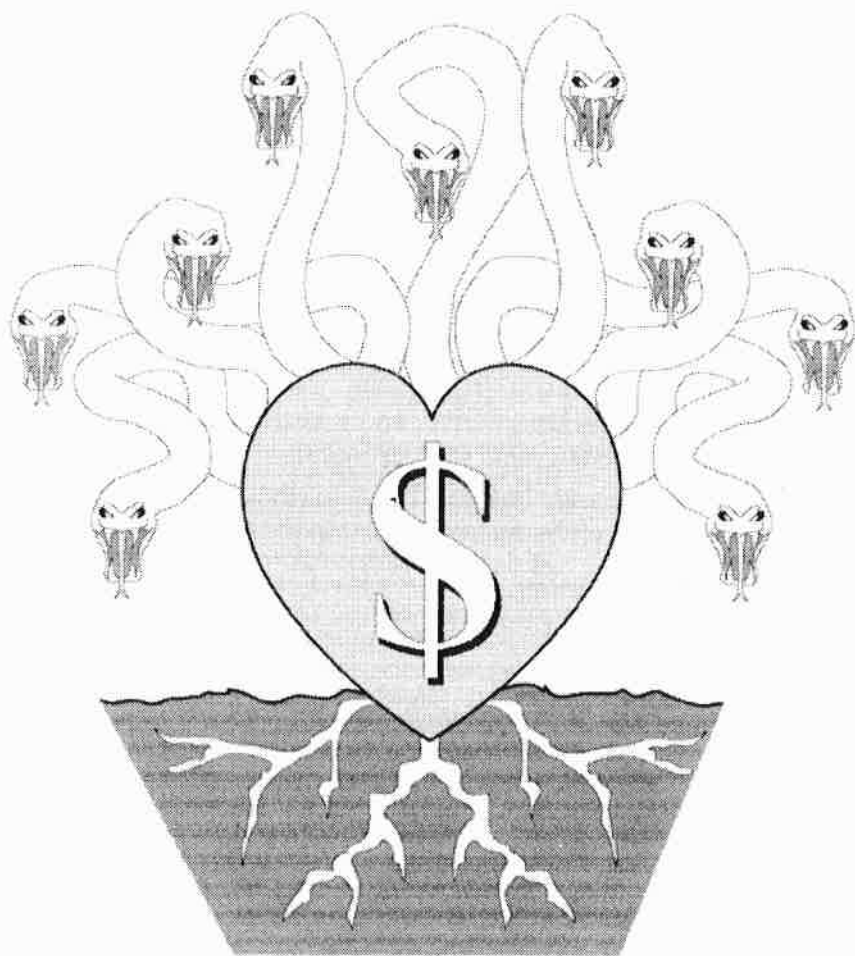
To preachers on tithing, who do not tithe themselves, this would be tantamount to speaking a lie. God would not only add no blessing to the preachers' effort, He might subtract from the same. Every pastor should not only tithe but be ready to do good even beyond his means. "Do something good for Jesus everyday." Never turn away from one who genuinely expects your help. "Withhold not good from them to whom it is due, when it is in the power of thine hand to do it" (Proverbs 3:27). Here's a tip to Tour Leaders to a foreign country. Tip handsomely and they will serve you like kings. Tip niggardly, and your name stinks.

The sacred tenth when not offered cheerfully to God becomes an accumulated debt to the Lord. Neither should we owe any man anything. "Owe no man anything, but to love one another" (Romans 13:8). One noble habit we must inculcate is not to borrow except under extreme circumstances. Wang Ming Tao says the same and he stresses you must return what you have borrowed at the earliest opportunity.

Alas, this high ethical Biblical teaching on money is counted obsolete in today's business dealings. It is the other way round. The key to riches seems to be in owing others as long as possible. God's Word changes not. By making prompt payments in business will one gain confidence of both patrons and clients. Solomon says, "The rich ruleth over the poor, and the borrower is servant to the lender" (Proverbs 22:7).

Nor should a Christian go out of his way to get rich. This is the love of money that Paul says to Timothy, is the root of all evil; which while some coveted after they have erred from the faith, and pierced them through with many sorrows (I Timothy 6:10). Paul's philosophy on money is "But godliness with contentment is

great gain. For we brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out. And having food and raiment let us be therewith content" (I Timothy 6:6-8). How much richer are you by your Telecom shares?



“For the love of money is the root of all evil...”  
(1 Timothy 6:10)

Nor can we be sloppy in business. If we are trading it will be a shame to let it run loose to become a losing business. The Lord requires of us an enterprising spirit, to gain as much as we legitimately can. This is taught in the parable of the pounds and of the talents (Luke 19; Matthew 25). This is the first law of riches for a Christian.

The next law to profit is we must not waste. "Economy is the mother of prosperity." After the feeding of the Five Thousand, the Lord commanded the disciples, "Gather up the fragments that remain that nothing be lost" (John 6:12). From our surplus the Lord instructs us to give alms. This also by the many gracious examples He has shown us.

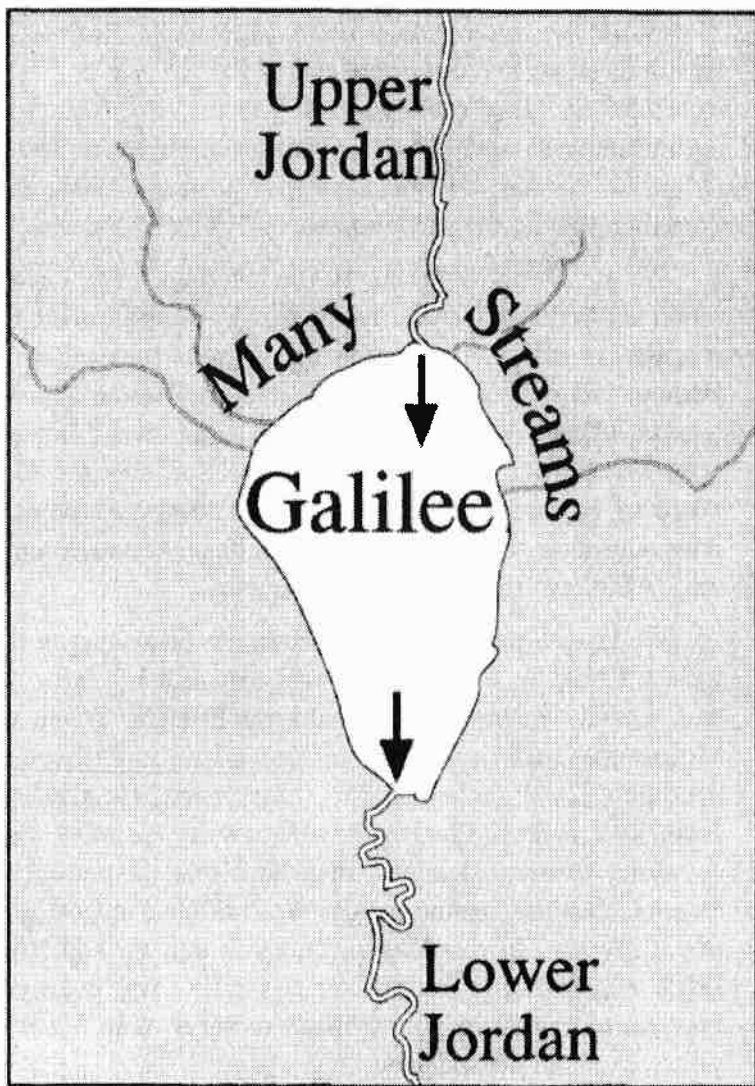
This discourse on riches may be stated in summary in the words of Margaret Thatcher, quoting John Wesley, "Gain all you can, save all you can, give all you can." And "give all you can," is the third law. Jesus says, "Give, and it shall be given you; good measure, pressed down, and shaken together, and running over, shall men give into your bosom. For with the same measure that ye mete, withal it shall be measured to you again" (Luke 6:38).

Our life is a journey, from cradle to grave. It is a short journey of seventy or at most eighty years (Psalm 90:10). How old are you now?

*O the days they are fleeting away Lord  
O the days they are fleeting away  
May I burn out each day for Jesus  
O the days they are fleeting away!*

We have noted at the beginning of this series of three messages that since our life on earth is short, the worldling's philosophy is "to eat and drink for tomorrow we die" (I Corinthians 15:32). Christians, who have life everlasting take the opposite view. Paul says, "If ye be risen with Christ, seek those things that are above . . . not on things on the earth (Colossians

## GOD LOVETH A CHEERFUL GIVER



“And God is able to make all grace abound toward you; that ye, always having all sufficiency in all things, may abound to every good work.” (2 Corinthians 9:8)

3:1,2). They have a short term policy. We have a long term policy.

While we have our private aspirations and yearnings not fulfilled, let us leave them to the Lord, "for He careth for you" (I Peter 5:7). "But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you" (Matthew 6:33). "Delight thyself also in the Lord, and He shall give thee the desires of thine heart" (Psalm 37:4).

We are living in the last of the last days. The Lord may come much sooner than we think. As year by year slips by, will you not reappraise what you are doing if it is in the will of the Lord. Perhaps, like the Rich Young Ruler you desire the best of both worlds. To be saved and yet to do your own thing without due consideration. Now here comes the Saviour and He puts in a Word of Higher Wisdom. "Sell that thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come and follow me" (Matthew 19:21). No loss, no gain!

We have a most wonderful example of giving up the world to follow Christ in Bro. Errol Stone. He left his farm in Australia and comes to Singapore to study at FEBC. When we went to Melbourne this time we interviewed another farmer who has become a lay preacher the last three years. He also is selling his farm and is considering enrolment at FEBC. The Lord is speaking to earnest hearts in a land that desperately needs the Gospel. But the famine for the Word of God is worldwide. If He is calling you in this Camp, and you can do something for the Lord, why will you not answer His call? Yes, even you who are now retired! When you "refire" to serve Him He will increase your years and prosper you.

*Must Jesus bear the cross alone,  
And all the world go free?  
No there's a cross for everyone  
And there's a cross for me.*

“And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come” (Matthew 24:14). The urgency of dedicated young men and young women to preach the Word in regions beyond is mounting with the passing of each day.

To meet this need Life Church has adopted an AMP = Accelerated Missions Programme. We praise God for members who are touched by this AMP and they have shown their love for God’s Kingdom by their regular tithes. But we must go one step further — not only our money, but our sons and daughters.

When William Burns decided to become a missionary, he realised this was the highest undertaking he had made for His Lord and Saviour and for himself. Thereby he brought the seed of salvation to us all today who are his spiritual grandchildren, through our ancestors in China.

*Only one life ‘twill soon be past  
Only what’s done for Jesus will last*

What will you do with Jesus, as you find yourself face to face with Him on this hallowed mountain pathway, in the journey of life? Have you received Jesus as your Saviour? Talk to some leader of this Camp about your decision. How will you fit into His plan, a good plan for your life?

**JOHN SUNG**  
**my**  
**TEACHER**

TIMOTHY TOW

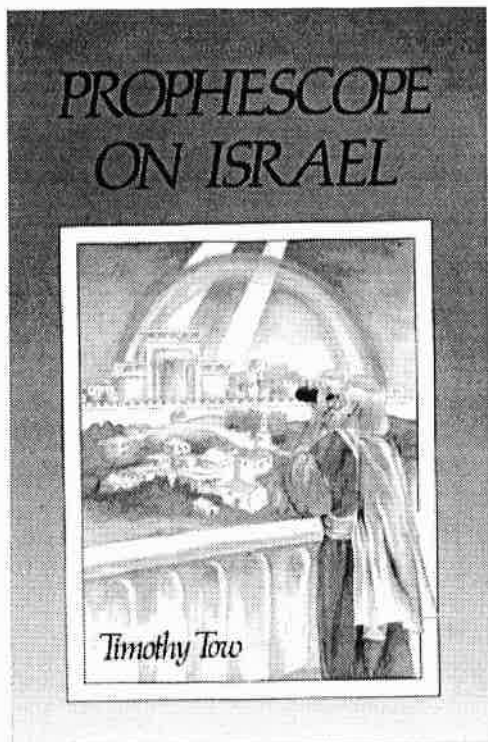


This is a best seller!

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## Studies on Coming World Events



*"I count it a privilege to recommend **Prophescope on Israel**, written by my friend, Rev (Dr) Timothy Tow. This study of Israel in history and prophecy should stir the hearts of God's people all over the world. It is rich in Biblical references; and it also provides very helpful perspectives on Israel's tragic, yet divinely-guided history from the call of Abraham to the crises of the present hour."*

*Dr John Whitcomb*

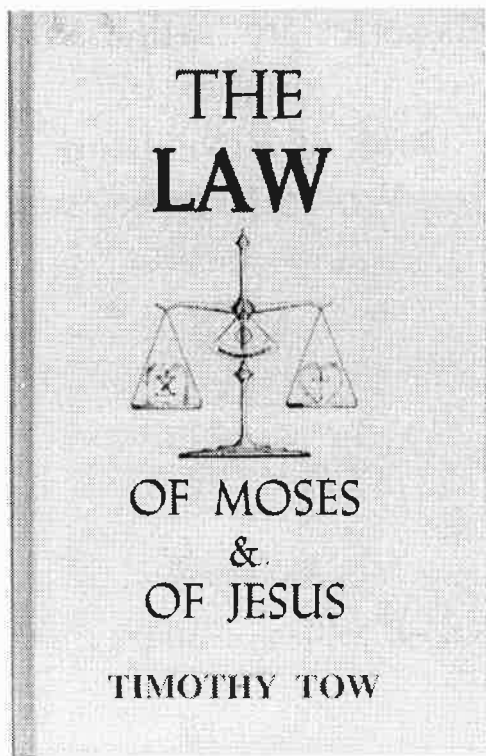
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*I count it a privilege to contribute a Foreword to this work, which I commend to preachers and all serious Christian readers with great enthusiasm...*

*This book was originally compiled as a scholarly critique of the attitude of many "popular" dispensationalists to the Law of Moses and also to the Psalms. Its value will be obvious from a glance at the Table of Contents, which literally bristles with topics of vital interest to Bible students... Dr Tow examines the grounds on which many dispensationalists reject the Moral Law of Moses, and with clear and powerful arguments he shows that the Reformed position is scripturally correct.*

*In these pages the ideas of teachers such as C. I. Scofield are repeatedly contested. One high point in the study occurs where Dr Tow brilliantly contrasts Scofield's attitude to the Law of Moses with the attitude of the Lord Jesus.*

*This book undoubtedly fulfills a great need. While it takes the form of a serious study, yet because the author is by nature and calling a preacher, and because of his stature as a communicator, the pace and flow of the book draws the reader into each argument, to provide a very stimulating "read".*

*Dr Peter Masters*

**A**t the Life Church Bible Camp, Genting View Resort 1993, I delivered a series of three messages on *Recipes for Living a Happy Life*. These messages were printed into a pink booklet with the purpose of sharing with a wider readership. Praise the Lord, they have found an unexpectedly good reception.

In order to follow up with the Happy Life messages, to lead Lifers into a deeper understanding of God's will for their lives, I chose to speak at the 1994 Camp at Awana, Genting Highlands, *Has God a Plan for Your Life?* This consists also of three messages. In this series, Fate and Predestination are discussed at length.

Fate fixes you to a doomed future and a whimsical present fraught with ill luck. On the other hand, Predestination is God's decretive will for your life unto salvation but it requires of you the "*human responsibility*." *Fate is static. Predestination is dynamic.*

*God has a good plan for your life, if you are a Christian. If you want to know more, turn to the first page and read on. To get full satisfaction, read also Recipes for Living a Happy Life. These two booklets, in fact, are complementary to each other.*

May you find the secret of happiness which is revealed in God's Plan for your life in the pages of the two booklets. Amen.

*Timothy Tow*