

Plans – Looking Back and Forward

S.R. Jer. 29:10 - 13

12 – 27 – 2020

Introduction

- A. The future looked bleak for the children of God in 600 bc. Looking to what lie ahead immediately: famine – sword and pestilence were promised judgments as a result of self – centered rebellion against God.
- B. Jer. 29:11 'For I know the plans that I have for you,' declares the LORD, 'plans for welfare and not for calamity to give you a **future** and a hope.'
- C. God promised a future hope – not just a return from captivity – but more gracious and long lasting was God's plan to bring Christ.
- D. Jesus was always God's plan for us. God desires for us to seek Him with all our heart. (Jer. 29:13)

I. God's ultimate plan was Christ

- A. Jeremiah – Jesus, son of David, a righteous branch.(Jer. 23:5; 33:15)
- B. Jesus, Son of God – The Word became Flesh (John 1:1 -5, 14)
- C. The fact that God became a man in the person of Jesus becomes more overwhelming the more it is considered. The Word who is God and was with God became flesh and dwelt among us (John 1:1, 14). In becoming man the "fountain of living water" (Jeremiah 2:13; 17:13) says "I thirst" (John 19:28). The "bread of life" (John 6:35; 48) became hungry (Mark 11:12-13). The resurrection and the life (John 11:25-26) died for our sins (I Corinthians 15:3-4). The fact that in Jesus God became man is truly an overwhelming thought. T. Peeler
- D. Jesus became poor that we might become rich (2 Cor. 8:9).
 - 1. Jesus left the splendors of heaven to live as a transient teacher with no where to lay his head. (cf. Matthew 8:20)
 - 2. All he owned at the time of his death were the clothes on his back.
- E. Jesus died a grizzly, excruciating death that we might have life.
- F. It is one thing to die in pain. It is quite another to die in the face of a scornful mob that is taunting you.

II. We are to be conduits of the grace of God.

- A. "Grace and mercy understood is holiness desired."
- B. The holiness without which no one will see the Lord (Heb.12:10-14).
- C. Dietrich Bonhoeffer - *The Cost of Discipleship*. He decried the "cheap grace" he heard from German churches in the 1930's.

1. His modern classic: *The Cost of Discipleship* "Cheap grace is the grace we bestow on ourselves. Cheap grace is the preaching of forgiveness without requiring repentance, baptism without church discipline, Communion without confession.... Cheap grace is grace without discipleship, grace without the cross, grace without Jesus Christ, living and incarnate."
— Dietrich Bonhoeffer (*The Cost of Discipleship*)
- D. Background and Context (2 Samuel 24) Foolish Census
 1. 2 Samuel 24:24 "However, the king said to Araunah, "No, but I will surely buy *it* from you for a price, for I will not offer burnt offerings to the LORD my God **which cost me nothing.**" So David bought the threshing floor and the oxen for fifty shekels of silver."
- E. The *grace* of God as displayed among the Macedonians. (2 Cor.8:1-9)
- F. Sharing our blessings is a demonstration of faith (1 Kings 17: 2 K. 4)

III. Giving answer for our stewardship

- A. Luke 12:41 – 48 Jesus is describing to his disciples the qualities of a "sensible steward." How would he describe you?
 1. 48 "From everyone who has been given much, much will be required; and to whom they entrusted much, of him they will ask all the more."
- B. When God dispenses His gracious gifts upon you for your stewardship how are they dispersed?
 1. Are you one who is rich toward God?
- C. Acts 10:38 "He went about doing good and healing all who were oppressed by the devil, for God was with Him."
- D. Acts 20:35 Paul imitated Christ: "In everything I showed you that by working hard in this manner you must help the weak and remember the words of the Lord Jesus, that He Himself said, '**It is more blessed to give than to receive.**'"
- E. Zech. 7:9 – 10 "Thus has the LORD of hosts said, 'Dispense true justice and practice kindness and compassion each to his brother; 10 and do not oppress the widow or the orphan, the stranger or the poor; and do not devise evil in your hearts against one another.'"
- F. Are you rich toward God or do you ask for provision -"That you may spend it on your pleasures." James 4:3

IV. Conclusion: Gal. 2:20