

Let's Review The Plan (Part 6)

Sunday, January 26, 2025

Jeremiah 29:11 NIV

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

As we have been reviewing God's plan, we have seen that we...

Must be BORN AGAIN, through believing in Jesus and by confessing and repenting of our sins.

Have been CALLED to FOLLOW JESUS by CHOOSING Him over everything else, allowing Him to CHANGE us inside and out, and COMMITTING to pick up our cross daily and follow Him.

Should TRUST GOD'S PLAN & PROVISION, His TIMING, His POWER, and His COMPASSION

Have been given a command LOVE ONE ANOTHER

And that we are personally responsible for carrying Jesus' mandate to FULFILL THE GREAT COMMISSION

Today we will examine yet another part of God's plan to prosper us and give us a future and a hope

GROWTH

Ephesians 4:11-15

11 So Christ himself gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the pastors and teachers, 12 to equip his people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up 13 until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God and become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ.

14 Then we will no longer be infants, tossed back and forth by the waves, and blown here and there by every wind of teaching and by the cunning and craftiness of people in their deceitful scheming. 15 Instead, speaking the truth in love, we will grow to become in every respect the mature body of him who is the head, that is, Christ.

I want to explore God's Plan for growth in our lives by using 5 key thoughts

There is a scriptural EXPECTATION of growth

Mark 11:12-14, 20

12 The next day as they were leaving Bethany, Jesus was hungry. 13 Seeing in the distance a fig tree in leaf, he went to find out if it had any fruit. When he reached it, he found nothing but leaves, because it was not the season for figs. 14 Then he said to the tree, "May no one ever eat fruit from you again." And his disciples heard him say it.

20 In the morning, as they went along, they saw the fig tree withered from the roots.

Luke 13:6-9

6 Then he told this parable: "A man had a fig tree growing in his vineyard, and he went to look for fruit on it but did not find any. 7 So he said to the man who took care of the vineyard, 'For three years now I've been coming to look for fruit on this fig tree and haven't found any. Cut it down! Why should it use up the soil?'

8 "'Sir,' the man replied, 'leave it alone for one more year, and I'll dig around it and fertilize it. 9 If it bears fruit next year, fine! If not, then cut it down.'"

John the Baptist admonished those who came to the Jordan to confess their sins and be baptized as a sign of their repentance...

Matthew 3:8

8 Produce fruit in keeping with repentance.

Paul prayed that the believers in Colossae would...

Colossians 1:10

10 ..live a life worthy of the Lord and please him in every way: bearing fruit in every good work, growing in the knowledge of God,

Peter gives us this exhortation in 2 Peter Chapter 3...

2 Peter 3:14, 18

14 ..dear friends.. make every effort to be found spotless, blameless and at peace with him.

18 ..grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. To him be glory both now and forever! Amen.

INTENTIONALITY is needed in order to grow

2 Peter 1:5-11

5 For this very reason, make every effort to add to your faith goodness; and to goodness, knowledge; 6 and to knowledge, self-control; and to self-control, perseverance; and to perseverance, godliness; 7 and to godliness, mutual affection; and to mutual affection, love. 8 For if you possess these qualities in increasing measure, they will keep you from being ineffective and unproductive in your knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. 9 But whoever does not have them is nearsighted and blind, forgetting that they have been cleansed from their past sins.

10 Therefore, my brothers and sisters, make every effort to confirm your calling and election. For if you do these things, you will never stumble, 11 and you will receive a rich welcome into the eternal kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

Hebrews 5:11-14

11 We have much to say about this, but it is hard to make it clear to you because you no longer try to understand. 12 In fact, though by this time you ought to be teachers, you need someone to teach you the elementary truths of God's word all over again. You need milk, not solid food! 13 Anyone who lives on milk, being still an infant, is not acquainted with the teaching about righteousness. 14 But solid food is for the mature, who by constant use have trained themselves to distinguish good from evil.

PROVISION for growth has been given by God

2 Peter 1:3-4

3 His divine power has given us everything we need for a godly life through our knowledge of him who called us by his own glory and goodness. 4 Through these he has given us his very great and precious promises, so that through them you may participate in the divine nature, having escaped the corruption in the world caused by evil desires.

Water

Food

Environment

Nurture

Pruning

John 15:1-2

15 "I am the true vine, and my Father is the gardener. 2 He cuts off every branch in me that bears no fruit, while every branch that does bear fruit he prunes so that it will be even more fruitful.

Growth should have specific GOALS

Philippians 3:7-14

7 But whatever were gains to me I now consider loss for the sake of Christ. 8 What is more, I consider everything a loss because of the surpassing worth of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord, for whose sake I have lost all things. I consider them garbage, that I may gain Christ 9 and be found in him, not having a righteousness of my own that comes from the law, but that which is through faith in Christ—the righteousness that comes from God on the basis of faith. 10 I want to know Christ—yes, to know the power of his resurrection and participation in his sufferings, becoming like him in his death, 11 and so, somehow, attaining to the resurrection from the dead.

12 Not that I have already obtained all this, or have already arrived at my goal, but I press on to take hold of that for which Christ Jesus took hold of me. 13 Brothers and sisters, I do not consider myself yet to have taken hold of it. But one thing I do: Forgetting what is behind and straining toward what is ahead, 14 I press on toward the goal to win the prize for which God has called me heavenward in Christ Jesus.

I want to KNOW Christ

I want to BE FOUND IN HIM

I want to have a RIGHTEOUSNESS that is by FAITH

I want to KNOW THE POWER OF HIS RESURRECTION

I want to PARTICIPATE IN HIS SUFFERINGS

I want to BECOME LIKE HIM

Growth involves being FAITHFUL and FRUITFUL

I used to say I wanted my epitaph to say FAITHFUL...

Illustration: Rose in Winter

Now I want it to be FAITHFUL and FRUITFUL