**Seeking God’s Plan**

**When the Plan Seems Hopeless**

**3 principles to remember when the plan’s not going well:**

**I. Sometimes Your Plan Seems Hopeless Because it was Never God’s Plan to Begin With**

A. They were looking hopeless

Verse 17 - *...they stood still, looking sad.*

skuthropos – “dreary, downcast look of settled grief, pain, or displeasure”

B. They were hoping that Jesus would provide immediate political relief

Luke 24:21 - *But we were hoping that it was He who was going to redeem Israel. Indeed, besides all this, it is the third day since these things happened.*

C. Focusing on your plan alone may cause you to fail to make important connections

Luke 24:21 - *...Indeed, besides all this, it is the third day since these things happened.*

Matthew 16:21 - *From that time Jesus began to show His disciples that He must go to Jerusalem, and suffer many things from the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and be raised up on the third day.*

Matthew 17:23 - *and they will kill Him, and He will be raised on the third day. And they were deeply grieved.*

Matthew 27:62-64 - *Now on the next day, the day after the preparation, the chief priests and the Pharisees gathered together with Pilate, and said, “Sir, we remember that when He was still alive that deceiver said, ‘After three days I am to rise again.’ Therefore, give orders for the grave to be made secure until the third day, otherwise His disciples may come and steal Him away and say to the people, ‘He has risen from the dead,’ and the last deception will be worse than the first.”*

Jeremiah 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.”*

D. Questions every person has to ask about the plans

1. Do I exist to further God’s plan or does He exist to further mine?

2. Am I willing to try to conform my plan as closely to His as possible?

E. Focusing on your plan alone may cause you to discount important voices

Luke 24:22-24 - *But also some women among us amazed us. When they were at the tomb early in the morning, and did not find His body, they came, saying that they had also seen a vision of angels who said that He was alive. Some of those who were with us went to the tomb and found it just exactly as the women also had said; but Him they did not see.*

Luke 24:10-11 - *Now they were Mary Magdalene and Joanna and Mary the mother of James; also the other women with them were telling these things to the apostles. But these words appeared to them as nonsense, and they would not believe them.*

**II. Sometimes Your Plan Seems Hopeless because it Needs to be Clarified by God’s Word**

Luke 24:27 - *Then beginning with Moses and with all the prophets, He explained to them the things concerning Himself in all the Scriptures.*

explained – diermaineusen – hermeneutics – principles of Bible study

A. Why did Jesus restrain their eyes in the first place?

Luke 24:16 - *But their eyes were prevented from recognizing Him.*

B. Our hope is grounded in the revealed Word of God

Romans 15:4 - *For whatever was written in earlier times was written for our instruction, so that through perseverance and the encouragement of the Scriptures we might have hope.*

C. God’s Word clearly prophesied the Messiah’s death, burial, and resurrection

Psalm 22:1 - *My God, my God, why have You forsaken me? Far from my deliverance are the words of my groaning.*

Psalm 22:6-7 - *But I am a worm and not a man, a reproach of men and despised by the people. All who see me sneer at me...*

Psalm 22:16-18 - *For dogs have surrounded me; a band of evildoers has encompassed me; they pierced my hands and my feet. I can count all my bones. They look, they stare at me; they divide my garments among them, and for my clothing they cast lots.*

Isaiah 53:7-12 - *He was oppressed and He was afflicted, yet He did not open His mouth...He was cut off out of the land of the living for the transgression of my people, to whom the stroke was due? His grave was assigned with wicked men, yet He was with a rich man in His death, because He had done no violence, nor was there any deceit in His mouth. But the Lord was pleased to crush Him, putting Him to grief; if He would render Himself as a guilt offering, He will see His offspring, He will prolong His days, and the good pleasure of the Lord will prosper in His hand. As a result of the anguish of His soul, He will see it and be satisfied; by His knowledge the Righteous One, My Servant, will justify the many, as He will bear their iniquities.*

Psalm 16:10 - *For You will not abandon my soul to Sheol; nor will You allow Your Holy One to undergo decay.*

D. Jesus Himself clearly and repeatedly taught that He would die, be buried, and then rise again

E. The Bible is filled with testimony of eyewitnesses

1 Corinthians 15:3-8 - *For I delivered to you as of first importance what I also received, that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, and that He was buried, and that He was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures, and that He appeared to Cephas, then to the twelve. After that He appeared to more than five hundred brethren at one time, most of whom remain until now, but some have fallen asleep; then He appeared to James, then to all the apostles; and last of all, as to one untimely born, He appeared to me also.*

“Because of the evidence, I now believed Jesus to be the Son of God. But to become his child, it was necessary for me to receive the free gift of forgiveness that He purchased with His life on the cross. So...I talked with God in a heartfelt and unedited prayer, admitting and turning from all my wrongdoing, and receiving the free gift of forgiveness and eternal life through Jesus. I told Him that with His help I wanted to follow Him and His ways as best I could from that moment forward. Some people feel a rush of emotion at such a moment; for me, there was something equally exhilarating: the rush of reason.” (The Case for Easter, Lee Strobel, p. 89)

F. Jesus’ analysis of people who will not believe Scripture is not very complimentary – v. 25

1. foolish men

2. slow of heart

3. slow to believe in all the prophets have spoken

4. not understanding the necessity of the cross

G. Perhaps your plan needs to be clarified by God’s Word?

Ephesians 2:8-9 - *For by grace you have been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God; not as a result of works, so that no one may boast.*

**III. God Does Not Want You to Remain Without Hope**

Luke 24:51-52 - *While He was blessing them, He parted from them and was carried up into heaven. And they, after worshiping Him, returned to Jerusalem with great joy,*