

What is Truth?

1. **What is truth?** Is it some abstract concept where you say this is what ‘truth’ means and then God fits into that idea?
2. God defines what truth is and therefore, His Word, the Bible, is what defines absolute truth.
3. Biblical truth (God’s truth) is dependable, stable, and certain. Man’s truth is ever changing.
4. Revelation begins with God and comes down to man, not the other way around. (*John 18:37-39; John 17:17; John 4:23*)
5. Every society and culture has truths that they hold to, and in each, those truths can be different because of their different backgrounds. Who then is right?
6. Truth is always related to the character of God and never comes from an external source. Truth flows from God to man, not man to God.
7. Truth is what God says it is and not what we think it is.
8. “What is truth for you may not be truth for me” is the popular cultural definition for truth. This leads to confusion because truth can only be absolute in order for it to be truth.

Three Things to Remember About Life

1. The Passing of Life

James 4:14—Whereas, you do not know what will happen tomorrow. For what is your life? It is even a vapor that appears for a little time and then vanishes away.

a. The Brevity of Life

- i. **Psalm 102:11**—My days are like a shadow that lengthens, And I wither away like grass.
- ii. **Job 7:7**—Oh, remember that my life is a breath! My eye will never again see good.

b. The Uncertainty of Life

- i. **Proverbs 27:1**—Do not boast about tomorrow, For you do not know what a day may bring forth.

2. The Purpose of Life

James 4:15—Instead, you ought to say, “If the Lord wills, we shall live and do this or that.”

Misery is not found in the will of God but out of it. Lot moved into the wicked city of Sodom and brought trouble on his family. David committed adultery and brought trouble on his family and his nation. Jonah ran from God and became fish bait.

3. Personal Responsibility for How You Live Your Life

James 4:17—Therefore, to him who knows to do good and does not do it, to him it is sin.

Obedience will be rewarded, disobedience will be disciplined!

God's Plan, Purpose and Will

1. Plan

- a. A method of acting, doing, proceeding, making, etc., developed in advance (as pertaining to a battle).
- b. A design or arrangement (i.e. blueprint).
- c. A specific project or definite purpose: plans for the future.
- d. A formulated method of doing something. The plan refers to any method of thinking out acts and purposes beforehand.
- e. Divine decrees established by God in *Eternity Past* (God does not wait until something happens and then come up with a plan).

2. Purpose

- a. The reason for which something exists or is done, made, or used.
- b. An intended or desired result, end, aim, or goal.
- c. To set as an aim, intention, or goal for oneself.
- d. How you accomplish something.

3. Will

- a. At one's discretion or pleasure; as one desires
- b. At one's disposal or command
- c. To carry out God's plan and purpose
 - i. Accomplishing what God wants you to do in the Christian Way of Life.

God's plans for your life far exceed the circumstance of your day!

God's Plan

God's Plan in General

First, learn the Word of God in an effort to find out who you are, what your position is in the Royal Family, and what your ultimate goal should be.

God's Plan is Vast

It involves every single created being, situation, thought, experience, and decision that will happen in time.

God's Plan is CURRENT and Underway

It is happening as we speak.

God's Plan is Detailed

The Bible gives us a vast amount of detail that backs up God's plan and the reasoning for His plan. We must have basic understanding of the framework of God's plan if we are to have any hope of aligning ourselves to it.

God's Plan is Complex

Each being lives in time. Each will have a place in eternity either in heaven with God or in hell with Satan and the fallen angels.

God's Plan is Precise

While in time, each being lives within a specific timeframe. During each timeframe, God has preconfigured precise details that correspond to His plans for that time span.

God's Plan is Consistent

God's plan never changes. Across thousands of generations, God's plan is persistent and unrelenting in His perfection.

Divine Institutions

1. Definition: A principle of divine operation directed toward the human race for its orderly direction and preservation.
2. God set up the four Divine Institutions (Volition,, Marriage, Family, Nationalism).
 - A. **Volition**: The right to be dependent upon God, or to act independently of Him. The individual has the right, the authority to make certain decisions and to be responsible for those decisions. Genesis 2 & 3 (Animals named, choice in Garden)
 - B. **Marriage**: Basic organization in a national entity. Genesis 2:18-25. The husband is the authority, is to be head of his home. Marriage is for believers and unbelievers. If the Biblical doctrine of marriage is violated -- on a widespread scale, a nation can be destroyed.
 - C. **Family**: The institution is set up to raise and train children as far as respect for authority, for the rights of others, for the privacy of others, to respect common law, to respect the property of others, plus many other principles. Genesis 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10. The parents have the authority in this institution.
 - D. **Nationalism**: Genesis 10-11 Nationalism is the means of protecting, and preserving the human race, so that no segment of individuals gets enough power to destroy the rest of the human race, and eventually themselves.
 - ✚ Nationalism is a human barrier against the supremacy of evil in the world controlled by Satan and protects from the power lust of the old sin nature.
 - ✚ The purpose of nationalism is to provide protection so that the Individual VOLITION can operate under MAXIMUM FREEDOM and liberty.
 - ✚ Internationalism is anti-Biblical. Like communism, any religious or political group that is international in scope.
 - ✚ Authority is vested in the governmental leaders. Romans 13:1-7, 1 Timothy 2.

3. God set up the four divine institutions:

- A. For the entire human race (not for believers only)
- B. For the preservation of the human race.
- C. So that the angelic conflict can run its course.
- D. So that the human race is free to accept Jesus or reject Him.

4. A Divine Institution is different from a Christian institution (local church, believers only).

Plans of Man

Acts 5:38 - "So in the present case, I say to you, stay away from these men and let them alone, for if this plan or action is of men, it will be overthrown;"

There are two questions that must be asked with regard to the truthfulness of this statement.

1. Do the plans of men always fail?
2. Do the plans of men ultimately fail?

The answer to the former question is 'no' and the answer to latter question is 'yes.' Do the plans of men always seem to fail? Not when Satan is behind them and making them work in his cosmic system and his rule of the world.

1. Islam is the plan of man, and it is certainly not failing in Satan's kingdom. IT is very much a part of his plan, his system, and his kingdom.
2. Mormonism is the plan of man, and it is certainly not failing in Satan's system.
3. The plans of men which Satan instigates, motivates, and invigorates will all ultimately fail with the second advent of Christ.
4. Gamaliel's statement (*Acts 5:38 above*) is not necessary for the immediate future but is ultimately true with regard to the resolution of the angelic conflict.

5. Religion is ultimately the undertaking of Satan using men, and it will ultimately fail. In the meantime, religion as the undertaking of man with the backing of Satan, is succeeding as nothing else in Satan's kingdom. The greatest manifestation of this will occur during the Great Tribulation with the worship of the Antichrist.
6. The ultimate proof that what the apostles were doing was not from man but from God, is and has been the success of Christianity for the past two thousand years, a far greater success than Judaism has or will ever have.
7. There was one person who was decidedly against the advice of Gamaliel, his student, Saul of Tarsus.

Adjusting to God's Plan

Are you accomplishing what He wants you to do?

Four Presuppositions about God

1. God exists—What should concern you is maintaining logical and clear thought:
 - a. Rationalism—defines reality through reason
 - b. Empiricism—defines reality through sight, touch, taste, sound, and smell
 - c. Faith—defines reality through confidence in the authority of someone - by faith, I believe that God exists.
2. God reveals Himself—He makes Himself known in a way that man can understand Him.
3. God makes sense—As you study the Bible, you will learn that God makes sense.
4. God has a plan—God does not react to what happens, He knows what will happen.

You owe God a hearing. Be open minded to what God has to say even when it disagrees with your way of thinking.

Doctrine of Divine Decrees

1. Definition: The decrees are defined as the sum total of the Father's plan designed in Eternity Past. The decree is given in *Psalm 2:7*.

Before God created the universe, He had you in mind and had a plan for you. He is perfect and His plan is perfect. The purpose is given in *Ephesians 1:11* and *Ephesians 3:11*.

2. The plan centers around the person of Jesus Christ (*1 John 3:23 & Ephesians 1:4-6*). Jesus Christ is the Revealer of the Father and of the Father's grace.
3. *Acts 2:23* indicates a confidence in Eternity Past
4. God's plan was so designed in Eternity Past so as to include all events and actions. This is the omniscience of God. He knows them related to their causes and conditions.
5. Without interfering with human volition in any way, God has designed a plan so perfect that it includes cause and effect, directive, provision, preservation, and function for all believers.
6. Under God's Plan, He decreed to do some things directly, some through agencies like Israel and the Church, and some through individuals.
7. The plan of God is consistent with human freedom. God does not limit or coerce human freedom, however, distinction should be made between what God causes and what God permits (i.e. God *caused* the cross and God *permits* sin).
 - a. God created man with free-will, therefore He permits that free-will to function. That is how Adam sinned.
8. The difference between foreknowledge and predestination (*Ephesians 1:5*)
 - a. Foreknowledge is that God knows all the knowable. God does not learn anything. He knows what is going to happen before it happens.

- b. Predestination is the work of God the Father in Eternity Past on behalf of every Church Age believer to execute God's plan, purpose, and will for his life. There, predestination is the grace provision of God the Father for the Royal Family.
9. God knew ahead of time which way every free-will would decide at any given point in history. This does not imply divine coercion! God's plan *anticipates* every decision of history. Every single decision of all of history were all known to God before anyone lived. (*John 3:36 & 1 John 3:23*)
 10. Since God cannot contradict His Essence (who He is), He plans the best for the believer. God is perfect, therefore His plan and His provision are perfect.

Three Phases of God's Plan

1. **Phase One: Salvation - to believe in Jesus as Savior** - "*Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and you will be saved...*" *Acts 16:31*
2. Jesus Christ went to the cross and became our substitute. Every sin we have ever committed actually went to court at the cross. Our sins were poured out upon Christ and were judged. Since all sins were judged, the barrier between man and God was removed. Now all that stands between man and God is the person of the Lord Jesus Christ and our attitude toward Him.
3. Positive Volition is expressed through a non-meritorious system of perception known as FAITH. That is why the Scriptures say, "*Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and you will be saved...*" *Acts 16:31*
4. By a simple act of faith, we can enter into salvation.
5. Grace is God doing the work (Divine Good) and man doing the receiving.
6. Legalism is man doing the work (Human Good) and God supposedly doing the receiving.
7. The work for salvation was accomplished at the cross and by personal faith in Jesus Christ, we now have eternal life.

Phase Two: the Believer in Time (begins one second after the act of faith-salvation) to execute the spiritual life while living

1. God has provided unlimited Divine Operating Assets whereby we may represent Him.
 - a. Priesthood: the believer is a priest representing himself
 - b. Ambassador: the believer represents God in this world
 - c. Servant: the believer witnesses to the world

Phase Three: the Believer in Eternity—to spend eternity with God in Heaven
2 Corinthians 5:8 (NASB) we are of good courage, I say, and prefer rather to be absent from the body and to be at home with the Lord.

1. The plan of God is perfect, given by a God who is perfect. If man who is imperfect can add to the plan of a perfect God then that plan would be imperfect.

God has a marvelous system for living the spiritual life—doing the right thing in the right way!

God's Plan for Your Life

Romans 8:28 (NKJV) “And we know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are the called according to His purpose.”

God's Plan for your Life is:

1. **Definite:** “*And we know*”
2. **Comprehensive:** “*...that all things...*”
 - a. Every event possesses a significant purpose
 - b. Every event possesses a dual perspective (God's & Man's)

3. **Detailed:** “...*work together*...”
 - a. God’s plan does not contradict itself or cause confusion
 - b. The three effects of adversity (*Romans 5:3-4*)
 - i. “*We also glory in tribulation, knowing that tribulation produces perseverance*”
 - ii. “*and perseverance, character;*”
 - iii. “*and character, hope.*”
4. **Good:** “...*for good*...”
5. **Eternal:** “...*to those who love God, to those who are called according to his purpose.*”

Accomplishing God’s Plan

1. We do not have the power of ability to execute the will of God because we still have a functioning sin nation after salvation.
2. God the Father and God the Son have sent God the Holy Spirit to provide the power for us to do everything the Father and Son ask.
3. God never demands anything from us without also providing the necessary power to accomplish the task. This is our motivation in the spiritual life to the will of God.
4. We are not motivated to obey God apart from the filling or power of the Holy Spirit.
5. We have no desire to do what God wants unless we are in fellowship with God by being filled with the Spirit. (*1John 1:9; Ephesians 5:14-18*)

God's Purpose

How to Discover Your Purpose

Five Steps to Discovering My Ministry (*Romans 12:1-8*)

1. I Dedicate My Body

- a. ***Romans 12:1*** - *I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service.*

2. I Eliminate Competing Distractions

- a. ***Romans 12:2*** - *And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God.*

3. I Evaluate My Strengths

- a. ***Romans 12:3*** - *For I say, through the grace given to me, to everyone who is among you, not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think, but to think soberly, as God has dealt to each one a measure of faith.*

4. I Cooperate With Other Believers

- a. ***Romans 12:4–5***: *For as we have many members in one body, but all the members do not have the same function, so we, being many, are one body in Christ, and individually members of one another.*

5. I Activate My Gifts

- a. ***Romans 12:6–8***: *Having then gifts differing according to the grace that is given to us, let us use them: if prophecy, let us prophesy in proportion to our faith; or ministry, let us use it in our ministering; he who teaches, in teaching; he who exhorts, in exhortation; he who gives, with liberality; he who leads, with diligence; he who shows mercy, with cheerfulness.*

God's Will

The Basics of God's Will

1. **The Direct Will of God:** Plan A - the best for you
2. **The Permissive Will of God:** Plan B - not the best thing for you
3. **The Overruling will of God:** God will not allow anyone to defeat His plan for the ages

Categories of the Will of God

1. **The Operational Will of God:** What does He want me to do?
 - a. This is the same for every believer.
 - b. The believer is to be filled with the Holy Spirit.
 - c. Specifics (Divine operating assets) in the Operational Will of God that are all given by grace.
 - i. Bible
 - ii. Local Church
 - iii. Pastor-teacher, evangelist, and other spiritual gifts
 - iv. Indwelling Holy Spirit
 - v. Rebound - confessing our sins
 - vi. Faith-rest technique – rest in what you know about God from your studies
 - vii. Living in the Word
 - viii. Occupation with Christ - putting Him first in your life
 - ix. Prayer
 - x. Witnessing
2. **The Viewpoint Will of God:** What does He want me to think?
 - a. This is the same for every believer.
 - b. His *Divine Viewpoint Will* is what we are to think. (***Proverbs 3:5; Isaiah 55:8; 2 Timothy 2:15; 2 Peter 3:18***)

3. **Geographical Will of God:** Where does He want me to go?

- a. This is DIFFERENT for EACH BELIEVER.

Six Things Declared to be the Will of God

1. It is the will of God that every member of the human race be born-again (**2 Peter 3:9** “...not willing that any should perish.” **1 John 2:17; 1 John 3:23**).
2. It is the will of God that all believers be controlled (filled) with the Holy Spirit (**Ephesians 5:18**).
3. It is the will of God that we give thanks in everything. (**1 Thessalonians 5:18; Romans 8:28**).
 - a. If you are going to do the will of God this must be your mental attitude. Suffering is designed to bless us, therefore I can give thanks in suffering. Discipline is designed to remind us to use **1 John 1:9 (NASB)** - *If we confess our sins, He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.*
4. It is the will of God that believers suffer. Since it is God’s will that you suffer then the purpose of suffering is blessing (**1 Peter 3:17; 4:19**).

Suffering is...

- a. God’s way of blessing the believer
 - b. God’s way of bringing maturity in a quicker way
 - c. God’s way of directing our attention to the things that are really important in life such as fellowship with Him and knowing doctrine
5. It is the will of God for every believer to trust the Lord (**Proverbs 3:5-6**).
 6. It is the will of God for every believer to be productive. All production is in the area of divine good. The filling of the Spirit, the exhale of epignosis, and the erection of the edification complex (**1 Peter 2:15**).

*Sooner or later, every believer is faced with the question: **What is the will of God for my life?** “To know the will of God is the greatest knowledge; To find the will of God is the greatest discovery; To do the will of God is the greatest achievement.” - George W. Truett*

Four Points about the Will of God

1. When you are executing the plan of God you have hope, which is absolute confidence in the fulfillment of His plan in your life.
2. Every Church Age believer, as a member of the body of Christ and as a member of the Royal Family of God, has a destiny. The fact that you have personally believed in Christ is the beginning of a fantastic destiny for you in time as well as in eternity.
3. Once you know you have a destiny, it completely changes your attitude toward everything in life. It destroys all the boredom, self-pity, and all the problems we manufacture for ourselves. You have an inescapable destiny which you cannot cancel.
4. Remember that the only destiny you have is in the protocol plan of God. If you depend on money, wealth, success, authority, power, or influence for your destiny, you lose. If you are building your own destiny from your talent, ability, or even your dreams, you will end up with a wasted life.

Remember Who You Are as a Believer

1. **Priest:** Our relationship with God - prayer life
2. **Ambassador:** Our relationship with the world - we represent God to others
3. **Servant:** Our appearance (humility) before others (helping others)
4. **Witness:** The function of all three - Holy Spirit opens the door to share the gospel

Once of the saddest things in the family of God is that we reach a spiritual plateau and remain there. We need to realize the urgency of moving forward in our spiritual growth.

What kind of grade would you receive on these things?

1. How would you do on the subject of love?
 - How would someone else like your spouse grade you?
2. How would you do on discernment?
 - Are you living your life with a sense of priority?
3. How are you glorifying God by righteousness?
 - Are you living your life with a sense of priority?
4. Is there sin in your life that has halted your spiritual growth?

Seasons of waiting are designed to prepare you and stretch your faith to get you ready for everything that is coming next. During tough times, emotions are not reliable. Scripture builds character. Remember that God is near whether you sense His presence or not.

Promises Rooted in God's Character

Every promise God makes flows from who He is. Scripture repeatedly anchors His promises in His nature:

- **God is faithful** — He cannot lie (Titus 1:2).
- **God is unchanging** — His promises don't shift with circumstances (Malachi 3:6).
- **God is sovereign** — He has the power to fulfill what He declares (Isaiah 46:9–10).

In other words: God's promises are as secure as God Himself.

Attribute	Meaning
Personal	God makes promises to <i>people</i> , not abstractions
Powerful	He has the ability to fulfill them
Permanent	They don't expire or weaken
Purposeful	They shape us into Christlikeness
Protective	They sustain us through life's trials

Summary

1. God Has a Plan

The universe is not a car without a driver, nor a driver without a map. There is a purpose behind everything. The Bible often speaks of this great plan of God. God has planned out this purpose in advance. (*Romans 8:28*) He thought it out, planned every detail, and carries it out “on purpose”. It is an absolute purpose, not merely a wish or command. In theology, it is called the “decree”. God has decreed His purpose and it shall happen. See *Romans 9:11, Isaiah 46:10-11, Ephesians 3:11, Acts 4:28 and 2 Timothy 1:9*.

2. God Predestined Everything

The plan of God is also called predestination. God pre-programmed everything that will come to pass (*Ephesians 1:11*). Everything can be traced back to God’s ultimate plan. He not only created all things (*Genesis 1:1*), but drew up the blueprints for everything. He foreordained what will happen, and He did this in advance in eternity past. He drew up the plan before He laid the foundation. He pre-determined what would happen, not merely what could or should happen. Then He set the ball rolling in a certain course, and it must follow the pre-arranged course.

3. God Planned Every Detail

There is a time for every purpose under Heaven, says *Ecclesiastes 3:1*. God has planned out this great purpose to the smallest detail. This includes the exact timing when everything would occur. He also prepared every relationship with every other detail. Nothing was ignored. Even the smallest and seemingly insignificant detail was included, such as the number of hairs on our heads. In theology, we speak of the great plan as the decree, the individual details as decrees.

4. There is No Such Thing as Chance

Since God has determined everything in advance, there is no such thing as chance. “*Chance*” was a concept invented by certain Greek philosophers, especially promoted among the Epicureans (opposed in *Acts 17*). It denies the existence of a personal and sovereign God who foreordains everything. Similarly, there is no such thing as luck, either good or bad. Even the roll of dice has been determined by God (*Proverbs. 16:33*).

There is also no such thing as blind fate, a concept promoted by the ancient Stoics. Whatever will be, will be, because it has been determined to be so by God.

5. God’s Plan is Certain

This plan will, shall and must come to completion. It is inevitable because God is sovereign and omnipotent. Neither, angel, demon, sinner or saint can stop it in any detail, for even their actions to stop it are part of the plan. Nothing can stop it. See *Psalms 33:11, 148:3, Titus 1:2, Proverbs 19:21, Isaiah 14:27, Hebrews 6:17, and Job 42:1*.

He is not fickle like a man who can change his mind (*Jeremiah 4:28, 23:20, 30:24, 1 Samuel 15:29*). He keeps the oath He has sworn.

6. God Consulted Only With Himself in the Plan

This should be obvious, since nobody else existed when God made the plan. He did not consult with the angels, for they are not on the same level as God. He consulted only within the Trinity (*Ephesians 1:11; Psalm 33:11*). Who is able to serve as advisor to God on such things? (*Romans 11:34; Isaiah 40:13-14*).

When it comes to pass, then only God can take the credit for the accomplishment of what was planned. God does not consult with Man today.

7. God Has Not Revealed All the Details of the Plan

“The secret things belong to the Lord our God, but those that have been revealed belong to us, that we may do the words of this Law” (*Deuteronomy 29:29*). God has revealed that there is a plan, and has even revealed a few details of the plan. But He has not revealed it all, nor could we comprehend it all even if He did. God has revealed much to us about our responsibility. We are still accountable and responsible for our decisions and actions.

8. Christ is Central to the Plan of God

Colossians 1 describes how Christ is pre-eminent above all things, prominent in the plan of God and the great pivot of all history. *Philippians 2* also describes how Christ is the center of God's plan, specifically the plan of redemption. We are not saved merely to enjoy God forever; we are saved in order to give glory to Christ and through Him give glory to the Father.

9. God's Plan is to Reveal His Glory



The bottom line of this plan is just this: the glory of God. God does all things for His own glory. Everything that is, was or ever shall be will give glory to God (*Psalms 46:10, 145:10*). God does not share His glory with another (*Isaiah 42:8, 48:11*).