

AUTHOR OF A SOVEREIGN PLAN
September 21, 2014 –Hebrews 12: 1-2
The Church of the Covenant

Do we believe God has a sovereign plan for our lives? Do we believe that a Sovereign God has a sovereign plan to bless us in our lives? I do. I believe that the Lord has crafted a perfect plan for each one of us. It is unique and put together for our unique personalities and for the unique things we will face in our life. No two sovereign plans are the same; there is no “one size fits all”; there is no “cookie cutter plan”. So would it be worth taking time in your life to discover what that plan might be?

Our scripture from the New Testament book of Hebrews notes that He Jesus is the “*pioneer and perfecter*” of the plan of faith for our lives. (Hebrews 12: 2) He Jesus is the pioneer. He has forged the trail ahead of us. He has pointed the way. He is the pioneer who has broken the ground ahead of us that we might travel the same road He has traveled. Was there JOY in the plan God had for Jesus? Absolutely, yes. Was there trial in the plan God had for Jesus? Absolutely, yes. Was there a cross along the way for Him? Absolutely, yes. Why would we think there would be no trials nor cross for us in our own life if Jesus is the pioneer who has shown us the way? A servant is not greater than our Master. Indeed, this scripture says that Jesus endured the cross “*for the joy that was set before him*” (v. 2) The plan is not that there will be no trial, tribulation, cross or pain along the way of God’s plan; no, the plan is to get us through those times and to get us back to JOY –to the joy of our salvation. Jesus is the “*perfecter*” of the plan of faith for our lives. He does not have us face this plan alone. No, HE comes to us, HE lives in us, HE guides and directs us. He is the One who perfects this plan; HE alone is the perfecter of our faith. He enters our life and He through His Holy Spirit does this work of laying out the perfect plan for us in our life. He is pioneer AND He is perfecter. And were we to turn to the King James Version of the Bible and see what it translates these words from the Greek to be, we would read there that HE Jesus is the “*author and finisher*” of the plan of faith for our lives. (v. 2) HE Jesus wrote the book. He is the one who has laid out the plan. Our plan fits with His plan. Our life fits with His life. Our plan fits with His book. We learn of Him and of the plan He has for our lives by reading the book above every book, the Holy Word of God, the Bible. Most people take little time to study the Book, to learn of the plan for their lives. Is it then shocking that they find themselves lost and dismayed by life? Is it a surprise that people who do not study the instruction manual do not know the plan of God for their lives? He Jesus is the author and HE Jesus is the “*finisher*”. That which HE has begun in us HE will bring to completion in the Day of Jesus Christ. He does the work of salvation in us and HE does the work of sanctification in us and He is the One who lays out this magnificent, unique and powerful plan for our lives. What HE begins in our heart HE finishes in our life. What HE begins in our faith He finishes with the gift of eternal life when we die. Jesus is the pioneer and perfecter. Jesus is the author and finisher. We may have confidence today and every day because we do not do this –HE does this for us.

So how do we get so messed up in our life if Jesus is doing it all? We take our eyes off of Jesus is the answer. Our scripture passage says, we are to be “*looking to Jesus...*” (v. 2) We are to keep our eye on the prize. We are to keep the focus of our life focused on HIM. We are to keep our heart fixed upon HIM. Our faith transfixed by HIM. We are to keep our mind and our thoughts riveted upon HIM. How do we do this? We go to church and hang out with Him and others who love Him. We pray and speak less and listen more to what HE has to say. We study the Word of God, the Bible, and discover how His life parallels our own and how everything we need in order to discover God’s plan of faith for our lives is written there. Look deep into the eyes of Jesus. Keep our spirit focused on His Spirit. Have our heart and mind be filled with HIM. And then He shows us and He leads us and He directs our paths and we discover more and more our lives being in synch with Him and in synch with plan He has for our lives.

We become troubled and messed up in life when we take our eyes off of Jesus. We focus on the issue and not on the Savior. We become consumed thinking about our problem to the point we cannot see Jesus. We fill our thoughts up with endless looping thoughts of how terrible this is, how impossible this is, how I cannot make it. Instead of filling our thoughts up with thoughts of how much Jesus loves us, how He always keeps His promises, how even in the midst of whatever it is we face in life that He has a plan and He will see us through. If you are troubled about something, if you are frustrated about something, if your heart is at sea about something, if your thoughts are negative thoughts, if you are tempted to anger, if you have planted a root of bitterness in your heart about something, if you find yourself more and more losing the joy of your salvation, if you find faith more about duty and going through the motions rather than about being fulfilled and filled up by the Spirit then I will tell you something that you may not want to hear –Then all of these symptoms are sure indicators that you have taken your eyes off of Jesus. And somehow your will is getting in the way of His will for your life. And you have proof positive that your faith in that moment is not in synch with the plan of Jesus, the author and finisher, the pioneer and perfecter of that personal plan set in heaven just for you.

The issue that you may focus on other than Jesus may even feel like it is a good thing or a right thing. Lots of time in churchworld we focus on issues rather than on Jesus. It leads to frustration and discord and even anger. And those are proof positive that we have lost our focus on Jesus' plan for our lives. *The issue* that you may focus on may be a health issue and your prayers more and more are, "Lord, please fix me and heal me and take away this pain." But if you think about it, in a subtle way, even in your prayer you are not focusing on Jesus, you are focusing on your issue, pain or disease. *Rather*, with consummate trust and assurance look to Jesus as the author and finisher, pioneer and perfecter of your faith. State your trust in HIM in your prayers. Read your Bible to discover how God overcomes every issue in life through faith and trust in HIM. Study the life of Jesus who as a pioneer went before us to show us the way to go; trust even in the midst of the worst time of the cross in your life that God intends to bring new life and resurrection power and blessing and yea, verily, even JOY through what you face in life. Remember always that the end of our faith is our salvation and eternity.

Do you believe God has a plan to bless you in your life? Impossible you say. I conclude with the story of the Apostle Peter and walking on water. A storm comes up and the disciples are in the boat and they see what may be Jesus walking to them in order to save them from the sea. Jesus will never leave us in a place that is bad for us. And Peter, always rash and bold, says, "Lord if it is you, bid me come to you on the water." And Jesus bids Peter "Come." (Matthew 14: 28) I have a plan for you, Peter. It is to bless you in your life. It is to take even tough trials and turn them into stronger faith if you let me. So Peter, seeking to be obedient to Jesus' plan, gets out of the boat and "walked on water and came to Jesus." (v. 29) What is impossible with God at work in your life? BUT, unfortunately, Peter sees the strength of the wind and "he was afraid". (v. 30) What is stronger than God? Of whom and of what shall we fear? And Peter began to sink into the waves. Peter took his eye off of Jesus. Peter was watching the storm of life instead of the Master of the storm. It was Jesus' plan for Peter to walk on water. But Peter took his eye off of the prize, off of His Savior, and so began to sink beneath the waves. He cries out to Jesus, "Lord, save me." And of course, Jesus does. He turns his gaze back upon the Master and so is saved; he took his eye off of his Master and was about to sink beneath the waves. Beloved, keep your eye and your faith, your thoughts and your prayers, your heart and your spirit always, always, always "LOOKING TO JESUS" ...because Jesus is the author and finisher, the pioneer and perfecter of an amazing, wonderful, unique and perfect plan to bless you in your life, and to fill your life with JOY. **That's worth studying your Bible, isn't it???????** Amen.

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