

What Pleases God?

Isaiah 46:10: "I make known the end from the beginning, from ancient times, what is still to come. I say: My purpose will stand, and I will do all that I please."

Are you a planner? Do you like mapping out your day? Your work schedule? Your vacations? I try to do this most of the time. I plan because I like to prepare, or be prepared, for what I'm planning to accomplish. Isn't that the point of a plan – to start something and eventually conclude with something or get something done? I'm very methodical. I love putting together Lego figures because they come with a very well thought-through plan, or guide, to start with just a few blocks and end up with the finished figure you can feel good about putting together.

There's one challenge, at least for me, in being a planner. What happens when my circumstances don't come into alignment with my plan or plans? Something, or someone, needs something from me or wants to talk to me, and that becomes an interruption to my plan. Back in 2009, my wife Vickie and I had a life-plan that was on course. Our youngest son was nearing the end of his high school years, we lived in a great home that we could spend the rest of our life in, we were financially stable, and we were planning a vacation to Orlando. Then an epic interruption to that plan came along. Vickie got very sick, we ended up having to sell our home at a deep discount as it was full of mold that was killing her, and the ramifications of what happened to her set us on a multi-year journey that made even thinking of making a plan to do anything but try to get through a day a complete waste of time. To this day, Vickie and I still have some serious PTSD when it comes to making any long-term plans.

There's a Yiddish saying that says man plans; God laughs. Our memory verse lays out the sovereignty of God. I want to focus on the final words, "*I will do all that I please.*" How does those words make you think or feel? What question does, or should, that provoke you to ask? How about what exactly pleases God? In line with the opening portion of our memory verse, "*I make known the end from the beginning,*" the LORD makes known to those who read His Word what pleases Him in Hebrews 11:6a, "*But without faith it is impossible to please Him.*"

The faith that God is looking for is one that finds peace and hope, as opposed to fear and frustration, with sovereignty statements like our memory verse. "*My purpose will stand*" basically says God is going to do what He is going to do, and nothing, or no one, can or will stop Him. Our trial forced this reality upon Vickie and me. I'm certain that was one of the countless lessons we have learned through the pain. To fully accept God's sovereignty is to fully surrender your plans to Him. You might as well – otherwise, you're going to be fighting God a lot. Good luck with that.

There's nothing wrong with making plans, but good wisdom is to check in with the LORD through prayer and reading His Word to see if the plans your thinking of are in line with His. Perhaps He'll confirm them. Perhaps He'll reject them. I'm good with either of these answers because they are definite. However, what happens when you check in with God, but you hear nothing? Our mindset is we move forward, cautiously with our plan with the complete understanding He may step in and course correct us.

The bottom line of our faith is trusting in the character of the One we've placed our faith. He does what He pleases. If you're ever in doubt that your eternal benefit isn't in His thoughts as He does what He pleases, just take a look at His Son nailed to the cross. We'll soon read in Isaiah 53:10 that it pleased the Father to bruise, or crush, His only begotten Son. That may be a hard thing to hear, but when you understand *why* that pleased the Father – to make a way for each of us to be saved from our sins and be reconciled forever with our Creator - that should help us come to peace that God is sovereign. I'm positive that what pleases Him, if not now, certainly in eternity, will please you.