

# The Wise and Planning

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Preachers: Chris Thornton, Oscar Chow

- [ 0 : 00 ] Okay, good morning, everybody. That's not bad, not bad. Today we're continuing our series in Proverbs, and again, we're going to do a tag team approach.
- Oscar's going to be sharing for part of the session. I'm going to be sharing as well for part of the sermon. And really, one of the hearts of what we're trying to do as Watermark is to be able to use different gifts to develop and to grow as God moves us on, and as we raise up and develop leaders and people who can preach in different ways.
- And so it's very much some of the heart of what we're trying to do as a church, which is why we have different people preaching at different times. This sermon, how many of you thought there was going to be a typhoon today?
- Okay, there's a few people. We're talking today about planning, and I think it's totally ironic because we were going to talk about this sermon last week. And then a typhoon 8 comes in and completely messes up all of my plans.
- My whole sermon series has been changed completely because God seems to know that we need a life lesson sometimes in what planning looks like and the sovereignty of God looks like in our lives.
- [ 1 : 20 ] And I don't know about you, but actually, a lot of the struggles that I think we have in faith in our lives are actually because of that collision between our plans and what God seems to be doing in the world, right?
- You see, I've got a really good friend. Seven years, he was planning language learning, planning, gathering a team to go and do mission work in Kurdistan in Iraq.
- Seven years. Finally, he'd got the team together. He'd got everything together. It spent a lot of time, a lot of effort. And then a few months before, his wife gives birth to a child, and the child has Down syndrome.
- And they're unable to go after seven years. And those questions come, well, it was supposed to be for you, God.
- So what's going on here? Why do you sometimes, God, seem to interrupt the plans, even the very good plans that we seem to make? And sometimes, I don't know about you, but we ask those questions which are, well, if God is really good, why has he let this happen?
- [ 2 : 38 ] Why has he not worked things out the way that I thought they were going to work out? And so that's kind of what we're going to have a little look at today in terms of how God works in our lives through these plans and what he's up to in the world.
- So if I can ask you a question, what's your plan for your life? What's your plan for your life? Some of you may say, I have no idea.
- But if I asked you, in 20 years' time, where would you like to be? What would you like to be doing? How many kids would you like to have? Would you like to be married or single? How much money? What level of comfort? What would you like to happen in your family?
- Those are things which actually tell you what your plan for your life is. That's your vision for where you want to go in life. And so we're looking at this book of Proverbs, and we're looking at what it means to have chokmah.

Do you remember chokmah? Chokmah is the word for wisdom. It's a world where there isn't a formula, a kind of plug-and-play formula for how to live. And there are many situations, we just don't have a set answer.

[ 3 : 49 ] The Bible doesn't kind of say, okay, go to page three, and there you go. You're going to be able to sort out all your problems in life. It doesn't work quite like that. And we need chokmah. We need this wisdom which comes out of a healthy fear in this relationship with God, getting Him in the right place in our lives to enable us to be able to navigate the complexities of life.

So in this series, we've talked about a number of things. Two weeks ago, we talked about affirmation, okay? And we talked about using our words. Who was here two weeks ago? Who was here two weeks ago?

About five of you admit to being here. We talked about how God wants us to be wise with our words. We talked about three to one ratio in terms of affirmation and correction.

And I asked you to go and affirm someone who you don't normally go and affirm. How do we do with that? Anyone do that?

Because we want to be people who don't just hear the word. We want to be people who actually do the word. And actually, I went out and I decided I was going to contact a relative of mine to just encourage her.

[ 4 : 59 ] And I was going to WhatsApp her, just some things that I'd noticed. And suddenly, as I got to WhatsApp, I realized I was really nervous about WhatsApping her. And I realized that having the wisdom that God wants for the words that I use is totally unnatural in so many ways.

And God calls us as a church to be this church of wisdom in our words, in our friendships, in our relationships, and in our plans. And today, God is going to say to you, He wants you not just to hear His word, He actually wants you to do His word.

So, let me just pray for us. Let me just pray for us. And I want you to pray in your heart as well. Father, I don't just want to listen to Your word.

I don't just want to hear words. I want to hear from You. And Father, I pray that with the words that I speak, Lord, we would not just, and Oscar speaks, we would not just be talking, but Lord, this would create life in our hearts and You'd change us so that we live out in a way which is consistent with what You say and call us to.

In Jesus' name, amen. So, we're looking at plans. Okay, have your bulletin with you because we're going to go through some of the passages here.

[ 6 : 26 ] And we're going to look at God's plan and our plans. We're going to go look at God's heart and our heart. We're going to look at God's love and our confidence. Okay? So, God's plan, our plans to start with.

One of the really interesting things in the Bible is it contains some very hard truths. Let me give you one very hard truth. The world is not about you.

The world is not about you. It's about God and it's about His glory. The sun doesn't orbit around us. We orbit around the sun. In the beginning, Chris, is not how the Bible starts.

It starts in the beginning, God. And though everything in me wishes that I was in charge of my life, the Bible story is that God is working out a plan.

And He's working out a plan of flourishing and redeeming and restoring a broken creation. And He invites us to be involved and part of His plan. And the question is, how do we get involved with His plan?

[ 7 : 36 ] Well, Proverbs 21 verse 5 says this. The plans of the diligent lead surely to advantage. But everyone who is hasty comes surely to poverty.

Okay? The word diligent means someone who's strategic. They plan. They think through things. Someone who is hasty is impulsive. They do things just according to their own feelings at the time.

And what He's saying is this. He's saying, what you plan has consequences in your life. Okay? What you plan has consequences. You don't go into parenting or go into a war just saying, I'm just going to wing it.

Okay? That's not a good strategy. That's not a good plan. We have to plan. Now, our culture kind of looks at this and it says, in the words of Invictus, you know the poem Invictus?

It says, I am the master of my fate. I am the captain of my soul. Which is, I mean, we like that kind of thing. Right? We want to believe that we have this kind of, the free will to decide our lives.

[ 8 : 45 ] And our plans are kind of the way that we shape our future. We can act. We can do. We can make it happen. You know, that's why we kind of love these rags to riches stories.

Or why we love, you know, movies about rats who become top chefs. And one's about geeky celebrities who then, geeky kind of whatever, who become celebrities through talent competitions.

Because we want to believe that our plans, like, you can do anything. You can follow your dreams. Just plan your way and you'll make it happen.

Does anyone else's life revolve around your Google calendar and your to-do lists? Because we can sometimes believe that our life is fully worth living if we've achieved everything we've done on our to-do list.

We believe we are the masters of our fate. But it's quite interesting that, although some people think there's free will, other people will say, well, life is just determined. Okay?

[ 9 : 46 ] It's just fixed. You know, there's quite a few brain scientists now who believe these kind of things. And whether it's a God or the spirits or our DNA, they say, well, this has decided how you're going to live.

You know, we say things like, the fortune teller told me that this year was going to be a bad year. And I reshaped my office. I put in a water feature to get better feng shui. But no matter what I've done, bad luck is happening to me.

It's just determined. It's fixed. It's fate. So some of us think it's all about free will. Some of us think it's determined. Proverbs 16, 31 says, the lot is cast into the lap, but it's every decision is from the Lord.

It's every decision is from the Lord. Casting lots is a bit like tossing a coin. You know, you toss a coin, you know, you have a tennis match.

You toss the coin to see who's going to start first. Right? And what Proverbs is saying here is that even who's deciding first who's going to play at Wimbledon is under God's sovereign hand.

[ 10 : 56 ] Every little detail of my life is ultimately going to work out in some way how God has planned it. The fact that you're here this morning is under God's great plan.

The fact that my printer broke down is in some way under God's great plan. And the fact that you're here this morning, I don't think anyone put a gun to your head.

I hope they didn't. Okay? That's not a great way to get people to service. But we made a choice to come here. But in some way, God is working through our choices to work out his plan.

And what it is, it's a bit like having a rope like this on a pulley. And at one end of the pulley is my actions have consequences and I have freedom.

And the other end of the pulley is, well, God is completely in control of every aspect. And it's difficult. I can't put those two things together. Intellectually, I don't know how it works.

[ 11 : 55 ] Because either I think I've got freedom or I think it's fixed. I can't put them together. But the Bible says you've got to hold those both in tension. It says, many are the plans in the mind of man, but the purpose of the Lord will stand.

I plan the sermon series. God's not going to plan the sermon series for me. The typhoon hits and the outcome is under his control. And you see, the thing that we struggle with is if you just try and hold one end of the rope and you don't hold the other end of the rope, life becomes actually impossible to live.

If you think that life is completely on God's autopilot and it's just fully determined, you just become passive, you know, and you become cynical and become bored with life.

Why do I need to send out CVs to get the job? Well, God's going to provide. Right? Or worse, some people say, I know I committed adultery, but God made me do it.

Really? You see, we don't take responsibility for what God has given us. But on the other hand, if it's all on you, that's really scary. Really scary.

[ 13 : 03 ] My best friend, when he was younger, he tried desperately to get a girl to marry him. Who, looking back, would have been a disaster for him to marry. Like, complete disaster.

And Tim Keller, pastor in the States, says, Imagine you looking back in your life to whether you were a teenager or in your 20s, depending on how old you are.

Think about the ratio of the goodness of your plans. Probably about two-thirds of my plans were bad plans when I was a teenager. Right? Now, the question is, the more frightening question is, what's the percentage for you now?

How good are your plans now? Maybe I've improved a little bit. Maybe I'm kind of at 50% good planning. But still, if the planning is all on you, then our lives, we can screw up our lives really easily.

But the Bible says, if you hold both of those ropes together, God's totally in control, but you have free choices in what you make to make, then there is a freedom to live well.

[ 14 : 13 ] You know, in the Bible, there's the story of Joseph. You know the story of Joseph? Joseph. You know, he's the favorite kid of his father. He has dreams about his family bowing down to him, and he tells all his family, and it just annoys his brothers so much that they want to go and kill him.

So they go and throw him in a pit, but eventually they change their minds and decide to sell him to slave traders. Gets down to Egypt, and he's a great worker, but he's thrown into prison anyway.

He's waiting, doesn't know what's going on in his life. But eventually, the whole plan comes through where he becomes second in command in Egypt. Yeah, you know the story? And you know what's really interesting is that at the end of the story, his dad dies, his brothers come back to him, and they're really terrified about what he's going to say.

And they say to him, Hey, please give us mercy for how we treated you. And Joseph, with incredibly great grace, says to them, he says in Genesis 50, 20, he says, You meant this for harm, but God meant this for good.

You meant this for harm, but God meant this for good. You were planning something evil. God was working something bigger and greater. You know, just for the ordinary things in life, I signed up for a new broadband package just this last week.

[ 15 : 38 ] It was my choice, okay? I chose it. But the company has tried to mess me around all this week, and then last night, two hours late, they turned up at my house to try and install it, and they arrived at 11 p.m., and they didn't leave till midnight last night.

And it's driving me nuts, because I've got to preach this morning, and I want to get some sleep. Was God in control? Absolutely.

Absolutely. But have I made choices? Absolutely. But is God going to work in me and wanting to change me in some way through this? In my frustration and anger, absolutely.

So I'm going to pass over to Oscar to share a little bit more about God's heart. Thank you. Guys, ever seen WWF wrestling?

Like tag team? Yeah. Leo's seen it. Yeah. Leo's laughing. Morning. Morning. Great.

[ 16 : 57 ] The microphone is enthusiastic. So as Chris explained, it is fundamentally good for us to plan. God, in his infinite wisdom, has given us the ability and responsibility to plan for our lives and for the lives under our care.

But I think the challenge for me and perhaps for some of you here is that oftentimes we have the wrong motivation behind our plans.

Proverbs 16.1 says, The plans of the heart belong to man, but the answer of the tongue is from the Lord. Plans of the heart belong to man.

Our plans, our desires, our future intentions, they come from the heart, don't they?

If you've been to Watermark for any period of time, you probably hear us talk about the heart a lot. We teach about actions, what we do, words, what we say, but we emphasize the heart because everything that happens outwardly, it comes from within.

[ 18 : 11 ] Our actions and our words, they stem from our heart, the core of our inner person, source of our will and our desires. But as Jeremiah says, the heart is deceitful above all things and desperately sick.

Who can understand it? The heart is deceitful above all things. You can hear the pain in Jeremiah's voice. He's talking about the people of Judah.

They had seen and heard the goodness of God for hundreds and hundreds of years. Their forefathers had told them the faithfulness of God. And at time and again, they turned their back on their father and they went and worshiped idols.

It made no sense. It's totally illogical. But as Jeremiah says, the heart is deceitful. This is the human condition. We are prone to do things that benefit ourselves.

We are inclined to serve ourselves, to make plans that put us number one. A few weeks ago, my wife Celeste, a few months ago now actually, my wife Celeste asked me if I still had plans to run my own hedge fund, start my own hedge fund.

[ 19 : 31 ] I've been in this business for a number of years. I love what I do. I'm passionate about it. I love going to work every single day. And so she logically asked me this question. And I think if she asked me five years ago, I would have said, 100%, totally.

I want to do it. Be my own boss. But you know, as I've thought about this in recent times, you know what I've realized? My motivations weren't that pure after all.

He wanted to run my own hedge fund because I wanted to be the boss. I didn't want to have to report to somebody. I wanted my name on the door. And to be honest, I also wanted to be able to work from home so I can see my daughter every day.

You know, there's nothing inherently wrong with running a hedge fund or being a CEO or a leader in the political world, in government or in academia.

Nothing wrong with planning your career either. I think the issue that I have, and maybe for some of you today, is when we pray to the Lord about our plans, our prayer is, God, this is what I want.

[ 20 : 44 ] These are my plans. God, please help me to get where I want to go. But our prayer should be, Father, what are your plans for my life?

What do you want from my career? And how can I fit into your plans so that I can do your work? One way to check or test our hearts is to ask ourselves, if I didn't have this career, would I still be content?

Would I still be able to say that God is good? And then there's the aspect of trusting God with our plans, which is so important. We can make a plan today, tomorrow.

We don't know the outcome. One year down the line, we don't know the outcome. We didn't even know we could be at church today. Thank God the weather's okay, though. Planning typically involves some aspect of the unknown, of uncertainty.

That is why trusting God is so important. Proverbs 3, 5 and 6, trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding.

[ 22 : 00 ] I think if you've been a Christian for any amount of time, you probably know this verse. Trust God. Pastors love to say it. Elders love to say it. It's probably one of the most commonly used directives from Christian to Christian.

Trust God. But what does that mean to trust God? What does it look like? Proverbs 16, 3.

Commit your works to the Lord and your plans will be established. Commit your works to the Lord. Commit. The word commit, the word commit literally means to roll.

As in to roll a ball away from yourself, out of your hands, out of your control, and into the control of another. Like you roll a bowling ball down the alley and it's out of your hands and in the hands of gravity and air conditioning.

What the passage is saying here is that if we commit our works to God, if we surrender our plans to Him, God begins to shape our planning. And this is where the wisdom of Proverbs comes in.

[ 23 : 10 ] Through the wisdom of God, our planning improves. We're better at planning. Our plans become more efficient, more orderly, and we start to plan what God wants for us, not only what we want for ourselves.

For some of us, our plans become a weight on our shoulders, a ball and chain around our ankles. So if we can release that ball and roll it to God, a weight is released and a lightness and a peace and a freedom is what comes out of that.

How many parents do we have in the room? Parents? Lots of parents, don't we? Yes. My wife Celeste and I, we have a 17-month daughter named Kiva. In the past two years, I think I've had more conversations about family planning and raising children than I've had in the combined 30 years of my life.

It's such a huge topic, right? And if you're a parent here this morning, God has given you a precious gift. God has entrusted His child into your hands.

And as parents, we have an active responsibility to take care of our children and part of that is planning. And in Hong Kong, especially, a huge part of that planning relates to schooling, doesn't it?

[ 24 : 38 ] You know what I'm talking about if you're a parent here, right? We all spend a fair amount of time researching schools, doing school site visits, talking to other parents about schools, networking to increase the probability of getting into schools.

My daughter's only 17 months old and I've done all of those things already. I admit to you. And I also admit to you that it's tough.

I get anxious. I get worried. Will my daughter Kiva get into school in Hong Kong? I don't know. If she's as smart as my wife, then yes, I think she will.

But will she survive the school system in Hong Kong? It's tough, right? The stress, the pressure. The question that I ask myself and maybe you should ask yourself is, do we commit the planning, do we roll the planning of our kids schooling to God and do we surrender that to Him?

For example, when we pray, I think a lot of us probably pray for our children to get into school. But when we pray, is our prayer simply, Father, Father, please help little David get into GSIS or CIS.

[ 25 : 55 ] That's a good prayer. That's a fine prayer. But it's only half the prayer. You know, rather, we should be praying, Father, please help little David get into GSIS. But also, we should pray, Lord, I know you're a good God.

Lord, I know you're sovereign. I know you're a faithful God. You have proven your love to me through the Bible, the Word of God, through my life, through even giving me a child.

I know you're faithful, Lord, so I commit, I roll this plan to you, Lord. I surrender to you, Father. Father, I've done my responsibility.

Now it's in your hands. You know, there's an old, there's an old TV show in the 80s called The A-Team. Anybody ever see The A-Team? Yeah, Ed's seen The A-Team, yeah.

I was made into a movie a few years ago starring Liam Neeson and Bradley Cooper. The basic storyline of The A-Team is that there's a team of former soldiers and they are part of The A-Team and in each episode, effectively, they have this elaborate plan to outwit the bad guys and they typically do every single episode outwit the bad guys and at the end of each episode, Hannibal, the leader of The A-Team, he lights up a cigar, takes a puff, leans back in his chair and says, I love it when a plan comes together.

[ 27 : 26 ] But it never always happens that way, does it? Life has a way of surprising us and in some cases, life throws us massive curveballs that we totally never prepared for.

I became an elder of Watermark a year and a half ago and when I became an elder of Watermark, I didn't verbalize a lot of stuff but in my head, I had plans. Yeah, it was going to be a smooth job, really great, you know, no problems, no heartache, no difficulties, no challenges.

Why was I wrong? I didn't plan for our lead pastor, Tobin, who Celeste and I are very close to, to have to go back to the U.S.

I didn't plan for us to have to leave our community center because the rent went up three times. I didn't plan for us to have to move from Satterport to Ebenezer. And I admit to you this morning that there were times when I would come home from elder meetings and I'd tell my wife, I don't know what's going on, I'm worried.

I'm not sure if our staff will be able to go to the office next week because we may not be able to pay our rent because they've increased their rent so much. Many of you here today have plans, you've made plans.

[ 28 : 48 ] And for many of you today, your plans also haven't worked out exactly as you wanted. For some of you, maybe you plan a certain financial security level or career.

But as housing prices in Hong Kong continue to go up year after year, you're like, I still can't buy a house? That wasn't part of your plan, was it? And you're frustrated. Maybe for people here who are single, you've wanted to be married for a very long time and you've been praying to the Lord and nothing's happened and you're also frustrated.

But you know what? And I acknowledge this is not that easy to swallow. But you know, in our multi-year journey as Christians, some of our plans are going to go very smoothly.

But others, for some of our other plans, the outcome is going to be the exact opposite of what we had hoped and desired from the beginning. But instead of seeing these things as bad things, I just want to encourage you guys today, let's use opportunities to learn and grow.

We actually want to be in a place where we have to say, Lord, I can't do this. I cannot figure this out with my own intellect. I cannot fix this with my own hands.

[ 30 : 14 ] I surrender this to you. I roll this challenge to you, God. Because, you know, it's through these experiences that God can teach us.

He can restore our broken hearts. The heart, right? Maybe He needs to humble us. He does all these things to change us, to shape us, to shape our hearts, so that we can be used to do His work.

For me, as an elder of Watermark, you know, I've learned so much in the past 18 months. Firstly, I've learned that I lack faith. But also, I've learned how amazing God is, how much He's provided for this church.

You know, we're not perfect, right? I'm not saying that we are. If we were perfect, we wouldn't even have to come to church on Sunday morning, right? What I see is today, we're still meeting. I see the community is blossoming.

New friendships are forming. We have a community lunch happening today. I see God at work. You know, what I realize is that God is infinitely bigger than my biggest impression of Him.

[ 31 : 24 ] And when I look forward, I have confidence in Him because of the amazing faithfulness that He has shown us. So the final question for us before I hand it back to Chris is, you know, will you allow God to teach you something about Himself when your plans blow up, when they don't go as you expected, when the opposite happens?

You know, just as in a marriage relationship, a husband and wife continually seek, should continually seek, to learn more about each other as they grow in their journey as a married couple. And in the same way, in our journey as Christians, you know, the beauty of being a Christian is that God uses good things and bad things, good experiences, bad experiences, triumphs and tragedies to teach us about Himself, about His goodness, about His character.

The God of the universe has said that I know you and He's asking us, do you want to know me? Let me hand it back to Chris. Thank you, Oscar.

Thank you, Oscar. So we've looked at actually God's plans, our plans, the heart of how God changes us and wants to use us.

And I want to just kind of, for the final point, to really think about God's love and our confidence in this because the call to trust to roll everything to Him is a call to total surrender.

[ 33 : 15 ] That means I acknowledge my responsibility to plan in life and make decisions, but I also acknowledge that my plans are not ultimate. and John Newton, a writer of Amazing Grace, he prayed this beautiful prayer of surrender.

He said, Lord, what you will, when you will, how you will. What you will, when you will, how you will.

You know what I tend to pray? For my internet connection. Lord, what I will, good broadband. When I will, now.

How I will, in the smoothest possible way at my total convenience. Amen. But you see, even though it's a silly little example, we do that in all of our lives because some of us put so much weight on certain of our plans.

A kid's getting into certain schools, as he said. The internet company turning up. Whatever it is, that when it doesn't happen, it's not just disappointing, it can be devastating to us because we've lent so much on those plans because we believe that's where our future is held.

[ 34 : 34 ] Because our plans can become our saviour, our plans can become our hope, our plans can become our security. And if we get that, that's when we feel like life's happening. And if we don't, we feel like life has failed.



But you see, the surrendered life is one where we become the kind of person who is able to make wise decisions. We should love our kids, but when we make our plans for them ultimate, what happens is, don't we often end up being so controlling, trying to make them who we want them to be, that actually it can be devastating for the emotional health of your kids.

Have you seen that so many times? Because you see, trust means I plan, but I say, here's what I want, but what you will, when you will, how you will.

And here's the key thing. The degree to which you know God's love for you is the degree to which you will surrender to Him. Did you get that?

The degree to which you know God's love for you is the degree to which you will surrender to Him because you can see that He is trustworthy. Because God interrupts our plans to show us that we're not in control because He wants to reshape the way you view His love.

[ 36 : 00 ] Because, do you know, nobody ever knows that God loves them just by being told that God loves you. You know that? I can tell you God loves you a hundred times, and it may intellectually you say yes, yes, yes, but it will only go down here if God shows you in your life how much He loves you.

Because you see, for Joseph, God could have come in and He could have fixed everything for him. Right? You know, He could have gone, Jacob, okay, here's a parenting book. Okay?

Joseph, just keep your mouth shut. Okay? Brothers, just kind of quit the jealousy, and in 15 minutes could have all been done. Fixed the whole thing for Joseph. Why doesn't God do that?

Because, you know, He could do that with your plans. He could fix everything right now. You know that? He could change everything. Why doesn't He?

Because if you look as Oscar's story showed, as Joseph's story shows, that through the trials and the frustrations, Joseph learned to trust God through this experience, and he knew God's presence walking with him every step of the way.

[ 37 : 11 ] And at the end of the story, he has now changed from being an arrogant kid to being somebody who was so gracious to the brothers that he had that he could have been, could have hurt so much in his life.

And through it, he could look back and see, wow, God has loved me all the way through. And that's what He wants to do in your life. Sometimes you can't see now how He's loving you, but it's only when you get to the end of the story that you look back and say, wow, I can see how He loved me.

Because He's growing us. I wouldn't have planned many of the illnesses I've had, I wouldn't have planned the failures I've had, but actually what God is doing, He's taking my fingers off the steering wheel and He's wanting to say, I know how to steer this thing better than you do.

Tim Keller, again, he says, any parent knows that at some point your child is going to look at you when you withhold something from them.

And when you don't let your child have something which they really want, they're going to turn around to you and look at you and say, you don't love me. Right? And when that happens, He says, he says, as a parent, you've got to try not to kind of blow up and get angry because you want to say, how dare you?

[ 38 : 27 ] You want to say, you have no idea of what I've done for you. You have no idea of the sacrifice I've put in from your life. You've no idea the things I've withheld to raise you.

You have no idea. If you knew all that I'd done, you would never question my motive from withholding that from you. If you knew that I had sacrificed for you so much, you would know that I have a loving purpose from withholding from you right now.

in Acts 4, Jesus is crucified by the deliberate plan and choice of the Jews and the Romans and the Bible says even it's what we would have done because we want to plan our lives and we want to be in control of our lives and we want it all to work according to my regime.

But the Bible says it was actually working out according to God's predetermined plan. You see, Jesus goes into the garden of Gethsemane before he's about to die and he says, he says, God, I don't like this plan.

He says, this hurts. He says, can I get out of this some way? I don't want to have to take the weight of the outcome of all of your and my plans which have been for my selfishness.

[ 39 : 48 ] I don't want to take the outcome of their rebellious plannings on myself and this is the son of God. This is the perfect human. This is the one who did everything right but then he says in a moment of surrender he says, but not my will but yours be done.

He says, I know you're good. I says, I know you love me and your plan is so much greater than what I feel right at this moment because so many, every one of us in this room is the result of his surrender.

if you have turned to Christ, your relationship with God is as a result that he was willing to put God's plan before his own. On the cross, what's the last thing that Jesus says?

What's the last thing he says? It's a quote he says, it's a quote from Psalm 31. He says, into your hands I commit, I roll, my spirit.

it wasn't just his kids' education. It wasn't just health. It wasn't just career. It was his very life. See, that's what he paid to secure your future for you.

[ 41 : 03 ] He paid with his own blood. That means your plans do not determine your future. His surrender did. Which is why right now God's calling you to roll his plans to him.

Because if there's anybody you can trust with your life, you can trust him more than you can trust yourself. D.L. Moody said this.

I'm going to finish. Sorry. Let God have your life. He can do more with it than you can. I like that. Let God have your life.

He can do more with it than you can. Some of us have placed the weight of our decisions and the weight of our lives on our plans and we're paralyzed to make decisions.

Because we want certainty that everything's going to work out. Some of you are in that situation right now. You know, I remember before I started dating Fiona. I was in indecision for a long time.

[ 42 : 05 ] I wanted a sign. I thought an angel would come down and say to me, do not be afraid, Chris. She is the one. I didn't.

But God did speak to me very clearly and he said, stop looking for a sign. He said it through some friends. He said, okay, is she godly?

Do you have, can you be friends? Is there a sense of commonality together? Do you like her? I was like, okay, yeah. And he said, now you've got a decision to make.

Stop trying to make it all about God having to make the decision for you. Because that's my responsibility to walk out prayerfully, prayerfully saying, God, I want to honor you.

I want with your heart. But actually, I've got to make a decision. God's not going to make it for me. Right? Some of you are at that point and you'll say, what does God want me to do? And he's saying, just do something.

[ 43 : 05 ] Do something. But some of you are angry because God doesn't seem to have kept your plans the way you thought. He's turned your world upside down and you, things just haven't worked out as the way you wanted.

There's cancer, there's health issues, there's all kinds of things and you secretly wonder, does God really care? You secretly wonder, is there something wrong with me? Maybe God is punishing me for something.

And what God wants to tell you right now, what the Father wants you to know, he wants you to say, it's grace that I've overridden your plans. And you say, how can it be grace? And he'll say, you know, when this movie ends, even though the scene you're in right at the moment seems bleak, when you get to the end, you'll see and you'll look back and you'll see, wow, that's what you're up to.

That's what you're up to. And he's leading you right now to say, will you take your hands off the reign of your life and will you trust me? What you will, when you will, how you will.

Some of us right now are waiting, we're in a waiting game and you feel like nothing's happening in your life right now. You know, God in your weight is working in you to make you the kind of person he can entrust with your future.

[ 44 : 24 ] So will you trust him? So I want us just to stop and pray. And I want you to think right now, what is it that I'm planning this week?

What is it that's kind of wrapping up my mind right now? What are the plans that I have in my, that I'm so dead set on at the moment? Am I saying what I will, when I will, how I will, and God just kind of, just bless my plans or are you willing to surrender those things and start saying, God, I really want this.

God, I want this relationship. God, I want this health. God, I want this job. But Lord, I'm tempted to complain. I'm tempted to doubt your love if I don't get this. Give me the grace right now to be thankful.

Help me to see your love in this because I don't see it at the moment. Lord, I surrender to you what you will, when you will, how you will.

So just bring that now before God. I just give you a minute for the Spirit just to touch you, just to open up your hands as a sign of surrender to him. Maybe there's something specific you just right now need to give him.

[ 45 : 48 ] You've been angry and frustrated. That's a sign you've been trying to hold the control of your life. If you're worried, just roll it to him.

Just roll it to him because he loves you. He says, get off the throne of your life. Turn to me.

Never mind You need to talk to me.

I know that you might like this. He was talking to the■■■■ that you might know what he is and the move the which takes .

Jesus, thank you that you surrendered your life for us. Because of that, our future is secure.

[ 47 : 27 ] Our past is redeemed. Our present is held. And we can trust you. Forgive us where we try and make everything about ourselves.

Help us to see you, Lord, where our plans, so often we make them about ourselves. And they can be devastating for others.

But I pray, Lord, that you just keep us rolling it to you. Help us to trust you. And to love you. In Jesus' name.

Amen.