

Theology 1
God's Plan
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*Where is history going and why? These are questions which confront all thinking persons and which crucially affect their way of life. Christianity's answer is that **God has a plan** which includes everything that occurs, and that He is now at work carrying out that plan.*

Biblical Conclusions Concerning the Plan of God

1. God's plan is from all eternity. – Psalm 139:16, Eph. 1:4, Isa. 22:11
 - a. Has it occurred to us that **nothing** has EVER occurred to God? His plan is eternal.
2. God's plan and the decisions contained therein are free on God's part. – Isa. 40:13-14
3. The ultimate purpose of God's plan is God's glory. – Eph. 1:5-6, Matt. 5:16, 1 Cor. 10:31
4. The plan of God is all-inclusive; no detail has been left out. – Eph. 1:11, Psalm 119:91
5. What God has planned from eternity will surely come to pass. – Isa. 14:24, 27
 - a. Consequently, God will not change His mind or discover any unknown concepts.
6. God's plan is consistent with His nature.
7. Creating, preserving, directing, and redeeming are essential parts of God's plan.
8. Human actions are included in the plan of God. (e.g. – Christ's betrayal and crucifixion)
9. The plan of God is **unchangeable**. Any change would indicate an imperfect plan.

Logical Priority: God's Plan or Human Action?

- Historically this question has been answered in one of two ways:
 - Calvinism argues that God's plan is logically prior, and that human decisions & actions are a consequence of His perfect plan.
 - Arminianism places a higher value on human freedom. Thus, some would say that human action is a precursor to God's plan.
- Erickson's approach: *A Moderately Calvinistic Model*
 - In a nutshell, Erickson says that humans have freedom, but that their freedom is limited by the plan of God. ("God rendered it certain...I would freely move" p. 126)
 - **Question:** If humans have any freedom, can it still be said that God is sovereign?

God's Wish and God's Will (aka. Perfect Will and Permissive Will)

- God's **perfect** will – God's perfect standard for all mankind (Garden of Eden)
- God's **permissive** will – That which God permits to happen (forbidden fruit)
- God's plan includes both the ends & the means – He sees the end from the beginning
- A.W. Tozer used **the analogy of a ship** – while it sails from one definite point to another, its passengers are free to move about the ship as they will.
- So it is with the sovereignty of God and the free will of man: While God has permitted men to act as they will, He has brought all their movements under the providence of His perfect plan.