

God's Eternal Plan

by Landon Jostes

"In [Christ] we have obtained an inheritance, having been predestined according to the purpose of him who works all things according to the counsel of his will." – Ephesians 1:11

Before working on a project as an amateur woodworker, I'll have my plans laid out before beginning the project. In these plans, I'll have the diagrams sketched out with measurements and dimensions, a complete materials list, and a thorough step-by-step guide to ensure a favorable result. Nevertheless, as any woodworking enthusiast can attest, things rarely go according to plan. Even the best laid out plans will go awry because of unforeseen circumstances.

Not so with God. God's eternal decrees (purposes) always go according to plan. Not one word from the mouth of God falls to the ground without accomplishing its intended result (Isa 55:11). That's because God is infinite, eternal, and unchangeable. Because God is infinite in wisdom and power, there is no possibility of a better outcome as all his decrees inevitably come to pass at its appointed time (Isa 46:9-11). Because God is eternal, everything that comes to pass was decreed before the foundation of the world (Eph 1:4). Because God is unchangeable, his decrees are as unalterable as is God himself (James 1:17).

This clear teaching from Scripture then brings up the tension of the moral responsibility for sin. If God decreed whatsoever comes to pass according to the counsel of his will, is God the author of sin? No. Though the fall of mankind was by the decree of God, this was by a decree of permission. God was not the active agent in the temptation to sin, for God can tempt no one (James 1:13). Yet, he also did not hinder Satan from tempting Eve, though it was in God's power to do so.

Here then arises the most natural of all questions: why did God decree the fall? With the fall comes sin and misery and the necessity for the death of Jesus on the cross for salvation. Would it not have been better to spare such suffering in not permitting the fall?

Oh the depth of the riches and wisdom and knowledge of God! The end and purpose of the fall is God's own glory. There are untold riches of God's steadfast mercy and grace that are only known through the glory of the cross. As Thomas Boston says, "Thus eternal life springs from death, glory from ignominy, and blessedness from a curse. We are healed by stripes, quickened by death, purchased by blood, crowned by a cross, advanced to the highest honor by the lowest humility, comforted by sorrows, glorified by disgrace, absolved by condemnation, and made rich by poverty. Thus the wisdom of God shines with a radiant brightness in the work of redemption." Soli Deo Gloria.

WSC Q. 7, What are the decrees of God?

- A. The decrees of God are, his eternal purpose, according to the counsel of his will, whereby, for his own glory, he hath foreordained whatsoever comes to pass.

February 2026

Sundays Weekly:

Prayer Meeting- 8:00
Sunday School- 9:00
AM Worship- 10:15
PM Worship- 5:30

Highlights for March:

- Missions Conference- 3/22
- Okaloosa County Spring Break- week of 3/16
- Palm Sunday Picnic and Egg Hunt- 3/29

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
1 Child Protection Policy Meeting- 3pm (Zoom)	2	3 Women's AM Bible Study- 9:30-10:45AM Women's PM Bible Study- 6:00-7:30PM	4 Women's Bible Study- 9:30-10:45AM MidWeek at WPC 5:15-7:00PM	5 Carpenters Apprentices- 6-7AM	6 Food Ministry- 9AM	7
8 Lord's Supper- AM	9	10 Women's AM Bible Study- 9:30-10:45AM Session Meeting 5:30PM Diaconate Meeting 6:30PM	11 Women's Bible Study- 9:30-10:45AM MidWeek at WPC 5:15-7:00PM	12 Carpenters Apprentices- 6-7AM	13 Food Ministry- 9AM Family Game Night- 4:30-7:30PM	14 VALENTINES DAY
15	16 PRESIDENTS DAY	17 Women's AM Bible Study- 9:30-10:45AM Women's PM Bible Study- 6:00-7:30PM	18 Women's Bible Study- 9:30-10:45AM MidWeek at WPC 5:15-7:00PM	19 Carpenters Apprentices- 6-7AM	20 Food Ministry- 9AM	21
22 Lord's Supper- PM	23 Missions Meeting- 5:30-7:00 PM	24 Women's AM Bible Study- 9:30-10:45AM	25 Women's Bible Study- 9:30-10:45AM MidWeek at WPC 5:15-7:00PM	26 Carpenters Apprentices- 6-7AM	27 Food Ministry- 9AM	28 MEN'S Breakfast- 8:00-10:30 AM

Key: BLUE- Church Wide Events | PURPLE- Bible Studies | ORANGE- NextGen | GREEN- Children's Events | BROWN- Food Ministry | RED- Meetings | BLACK- Holidays

Quarterly Communion Offering: Opportunity Place- a low-barrier shelter offering a safe haven for families and single women facing homelessness in Fort Walton Beach, FL

Missionary Highlight:



Robert and Lisa Stewart



Verne and Alina Marshall

Robert and Lisa Stewart, MTW Nagoya, Japan

stewartjapan@gmail.com

Pray for the Stewarts as they continue to serve at Nagoya Christian School and Nisshin Church. Pray that there would be many opportunities to have gospel centered conversations with the students and their families at the school. Pray also for wisdom as they want to pick a location for a new church plant this year. Recently, they were able to connect with a friend from their early days of ministry. Please be praying that she, and her husband, would hear the gospel and come to saving faith in Christ.

Verne and Alina Marshall, MTW Santiago, Chile

familiamarshall@gmail.com

Please pray for Verne and Alina as they are prepare for 2026. Pray for God to supply their support needs. Pray also for Alina as she counsels and disciples women. Pray in particular for their women's bible study - that all the women would be consistent in attending and for their neighbor Bernardita, who also attends to be drawn to Christ. Pray also for Verne's preaching ministry and their collective ongoing work with different church planting efforts in and around Santiago.

How can I support Missions?

PRAY for our Missionaries | **GIVE** to Missions | **GO** on a Missions Trip | **JOIN** the Missions Team

Local:

- Good News Jail & Prison Ministry, Chaplain Shane Hardesty

National:

- Presbyterian and Reformed Chaplain Corp (PRCC)
- Reformed University Fellowship (RUF) at UF, Pastor Steve Lammers
- Reformed University Fellowship (RUF) at FSU, Pastor Kelly Jackson

International:

- Middle East Reformed Fellowship, Pastor Victor Atallah
- Brenda Carter, MTW San Yi, Taiwan
- Chris and Savanna, MTW (sensitive)
- Franklin and Beth Beaver, MTW Worldwide
- David and Jill Martin, MTW Odessa, Ukraine/Brasov, Romania
- Ang Bahay Parola (The Lighthouse) Children's Home, MTW Manila, Philippines
- Evangelical Reformed Seminary of Kyiv, Ukraine
- Perry and Betty, MTW (sensitive)
- Robert and Lisa Stewart, MTW Nagoya, Japan
- Verne and Alina Marshall, MTW Santiago, Chile
- John and Lu Elliot, IXO Nicoya, Costa Rica