

Letting Go of the Future

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Today's Truth

For I know the plans I have for you," declares the LORD, "plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future (Jeremiah 29:11, NIV).

Friend to Friend

We like happy endings.

During the difficult World War II years, Hollywood movie directors re-wrote the endings to popular books such as *The Grapes of Wrath* to have happy movie endings. Since there was so much sadness around the war, the movie studios wanted to create a cinematic happy ending, even if the books didn't end that way. One article called this revisionist process, "happyendingification" or the taking of a bad situation and turning it into a happy one.

Do you ever try to do some "happyendingification" in your life? When we or someone we love is struggling or when a situation we hate is out of control, we grab our control-loving remote to point and click our way to an ending in which everyone is smiling and happy when the final credits roll.

However, we don't watch movies just because we want to see the end. The unfolding storyline draws us in. Watching the characters face tragedies and triumph over their personal problems makes for a rich and full story. The ending is only part of the experience.

The same goes for you. While you might be fixated on creating a happy ending, God wants to change your heart along the way. His ultimate plans for you include making you more like Christ. God is more concerned with your character than your comfort.

In John 11, Jesus received an urgent message from two sisters, Mary and Martha, that their brother, Lazarus, was very sick. It's not hard to imagine them splitting their attention between taking care of their brother and impatiently waiting for Jesus to arrive. In time, Lazarus' physical condition declines and he dies. That's not the ending that Mary or Martha wanted.

When Jesus arrives four days after Lazarus death, both sisters make the same comment to Jesus: "Lord, if you had only been here, my brother would not have died"

(John 11:20, John 11:32). Both women believed that if Jesus would have come in time, he would have ensured their happy ending.

However, in John 11:25, Jesus teaches a greater perspective beyond our desire for a happy ending: “I am the resurrection and the life. Anyone who believes in my will live, even after dying.” Jesus knew that even if Lazarus was healed from that earthly condition, Lazarus would still die again in the future because of humanity’s sin.

Therefore, Jesus casts a vision of eternal life and redemption that gives us hope far greater than whatever happy ending that we could ever want in this life.

You can’t control what will happen in the future, but you can trust God here and now. Keep praying for God to restore a marriage, rescue a prodigal child, heal an illness or provide finances. However, let God’s promises, not your plans, direct your hopes and dreams. When you let go of your view of how the future should look, you’re free to see the possibilities through God’s promises, not just your perspective.

God’s plan for the beginning, middle, and end of your life will bless you when you trust Him. Jeremiah 29:11 reminds us that God has more for us, because God has put more in us. So, when God says that He has a plan, you can be certain that God can handle everything, even if you can’t.

One of the treasures I’ve learned in my surrender journey is this: God is my future. He is my outcome.

The same is true for you. God is your future. He is your outcome.

God knows your storyline from the beginning to the middle and the end. You can be certain He knows how to land the plane when the time comes.

As you reflect on what you’re praying about or worried about for the future, what do you need to let go of and trust God for today?

Let’s Pray

Dear God, You are my future! Today, I need to let go of the future I want to see in regard to _____ and focus my eyes on You. I trust that Your presence, Your promises, and Your provision will be all I need.

In Jesus’ Name, Amen.

Now It’s Your Turn

What are some of the bad endings you fear?

When you consider that God is your future, how does that shift your perspective on whatever you're facing today?