God's Plan for Man

From reading Scripture we can see that, in His eternal plan, God intended not merely to create beings higher than the angels. His purpose was to make a being in whom His own nature would be revealed, a being made in His image and after His likeness. He created a being utterly different from everything He had made until then. ("And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness… So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him." Genesis 1:26-27)

We can say with certainty that when God created man, He had a purpose entirely different from His purpose for the angels, who were created to be servants. God determined to give the Lord Jesus brothers and sisters, to fill His Kingdom with beings who would be like His Son.

We have a soul and a spirit. He has given us the ability to think, to reason, to believe, to make decisions, to admire, to love and to choose. This is because He determined beforehand, in His plan, that we should be like Him. ("For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren." Romans 8:28-29)

God created us and gave us these abilities so that we would use them. It is our responsibility to make the most of them and to work together with Him so that we reach the stature He has determined for us. This is the highest thing a human being can aspire to. ("That ye put on the new man, which after God is created." Ephesians 4:24)

The first man was deceived by Satan, and his sin passed on to all. That does not mean a mistake crept into God's plan. Everything happened just as it was foreseen in this plan, drawn up in eternity, which God worked out with great care down to the smallest detail.

God begins this work of restoring the image of Christ in a person at the moment of the new birth, and He has all the power needed to bring us to the perfection His Kingdom requires. ("Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ." Philippians 1:6)

God's plan is not limited to a cheap salvation that consists only of repentance **(putting off the old man)** and the forgiveness of sins. It also includes **the restoring of God's image** in us **(putting on the new man)** and bringing us "unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ." (Ephesians 4:13)

To illustrate this, think of building a house. The builder starts with the foundation, and at the end of the work the house stands finished down to the smallest detail.

God's school works the same way. He begins this work of restoring His image in us, and He finishes it down to the smallest detail. ("And he gave some… pastors and teachers; for the perfecting of the saints… till we all come… unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature

of the fulness of Christ." Ephesians 4:11-13)

If man, whom God created, can finish down to the smallest detail what he begins, how much more can God! God runs the finest school of discipleship there is, and in it He works together with every person who answers His call.

He gives us new birth and transforms us step by step into His image, until we reach the stature of His Son. ("But we all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord." 2 Corinthians 3:18)

It is a perfect plan, drawn up with great precision, point by point, without missing even the smallest detail. What He begins, He brings to completion. ("Who shall also confirm you unto the end, that ye may be blameless in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ." 1 Corinthians 1:8)

God has ordained that everything that comes into our lives should work on our character until we come to resemble the Lord Jesus. ("All things work together for good to them that love God… to them who are the called according to his purpose." Romans 8:28)

In His eternal plan, God determined to make us His sons and daughters, so that we would grow and come to be like Him. ("We know that, when he shall appear, **we shall be like him**." 1 John 3:1)

Source: *God's Plan for Man* — Unmodified Word
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