

The Secret to Effective Planning

The heart of man plans his way, but the Lord establishes his steps. (Proverbs 16:9 ESV)

I've struggled with the paradox of my life's role and God's providence, the understanding that he wisely and purposefully governs our world and engineers all circumstances. With a fatherly hand, he sees to it that his will is done. I also struggle with the tension between my planning, making decisions, acting, and knowing that God controls everything. *Does my work really matter? Can I be a positive influence on my business, community, and church?*

I've always been wary of these phrases:

- "If you don't like the circumstances you're in, go make new ones."
- "If it's meant to be, it's up to me."

Many leadership experts espouse the belief that we can take control, make changes, and grow, and that the results are up to us. That's the tension within me. Maybe it's within you as well. I believe people can do all these things, but the Bible teaches that God is responsible for the outcomes.

So, what are the alternatives?

I may think that, if God controls everything, one option is to sit back and passively observe. Let things play out on their own. Stick my head in the sand and not get involved. What happens then?

Entropy sets in—the natural tendency toward chaos, disorganization, randomness, degradation, deterioration, disorder, and erosion. Things move toward disorder without our involvement. It's like watching someone drown although you

have the means to save them yet choosing to look away and leaving the rescue up to God.

Another option is to take matters into your own hands and make things happen. Just do it. But when you race ahead of God, you'll find that your choices, actions, and results end up being suboptimal. Often, you'll crash and burn.

The best option is to actively participate in God's purposes. Collaborate with him. Wait on him, gain his insight, understand what he wants to accomplish, seek his direction, and then move when prompted.

As you surrender your heart to God and seek his guidance, you will begin to act as a catalyst to transform, innovate, and positively influence the world around you. God will work in you and through you to:

- bring chaos into order
- empower you to lead in times of crisis
- solve impossible problems
- make wise decisions
- move people and resources toward reaching their potential.

If you seek God and place him at the center of your decisions and plans, he will guide you and establish the work of your hands.

Consider: Are you actively participating in God's purposes? If not, why not?

Do you want to learn more? Visit my website, www.prestonpoore.com.

Cheers,

Preston