

# WEEKLY SERMON

communicate@blackburn.anglican.org



## Do you have a plan for your life?

*James 4.13-17*

Do you want to know how to make God laugh? – tell him your future plans!

James says: ***'you do not even know what will happen tomorrow' v14***

Should you have a plan for your life?

If it is about your own success and making money then James in verse 13 would say, 'No'.

Or if it is about seeking God and his righteousness, knowing that all these things will be yours as well, then James' brother Jesus would say a definite yes: ***'Strive first for the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well.'*** Matthew 6.33

Does God have a plan for your life?

I used to think the answer was a simple 'yes' and our job was to stay on the right track, which can be very stressful; especially when we are faced with a choice and we aren't sure which way to choose.

Or when we make what turns out to be a poor choice and we think we have messed up and missed our chance in life. Like Moses, who as a young man had a fit of temper and killed an Egyptian who was oppressing an Israelite and had to flee to the desert, where he was for years.

He must have thought, 'I've blown it!' and yet God comes looking for him at the burning bush. Moses discovers that God can redeem even the many years 'wasted' in the desert, learning how to survive in that harsh environment, to equip him for the biggest task of his life.

Looking back on my life there have been times when I have sensed very clearly God saying, 'This is the way, walk in it' or a strong sense from God that a particular choice or job was not his will. But at other times I have sensed God is much more open about what might be the best next step, and whispers to me: 'What would you like to do?'

I suppose I used to see God's plan for my life a bit like an architect's plans for a cathedral or great building – all set out in detail, and if you get one measurement wrong the whole thing could fall apart.

But I now think of God's plan for my life as more like the satnav in my car. The destination is set but there are different routes to get there and sometimes the choices are equally good.

HEALTHY CHURCHES TRANSFORMING COMMUNITIES

And if I go wrong at any one junction, God can still get me there in the end. Sometimes I can make the route harder or longer for myself when I choose to trust my own judgment, but God will always find an alternative route to get me back on the right track, if only I will listen.

And just as sometimes the guidance from the satnav can seem to take me out of my way, (because it knows there are roadworks or a blockage up ahead) so God may block the way and send me on a more roundabout route, because He knows there are blockages or hazards ahead.

So let us learn yield our hopes and plans to God's guidance, and be willing to say: ***'If the Lord wishes, we will live and do this and that.'*** V15

**Archdeacon of Blackburn, The Ven. Mark Ireland**