

**6/24/21: Kendall Fike**  
**Planning or Preparing?**

I was talking with my mentor recently about the plans I had for my life before graduating college - none of which have come to be reality. The big question that graduates are asked is: What are your plans after graduation? The most terrifying word for many people is *plans*. What am I supposed to do? Where am I meant to go? Where does my story fit into the narrative of the world? I think most people can relate to the haunting reality of trying to answer the question of plans for their future. If Covid has taught us anything, it is how plans don't always come to fruition, no matter how meticulously or thoroughly we plan them out. I wonder if maybe a shift in our mindset from planning to preparing is necessary for us moving forward.

Throughout the Bible's narrative, there are countless stories of preparation taking place on earth in order for something greater to come. I think we often believe that we need a plan in order to achieve something greater. A plan indicates that there are steps or a path that must be followed and veering off that path is not an option. What if we took the pressure off ourselves from feeling like we must follow a plan and instead choosing to allow moments to prepare us for what is to come? Reflecting on my short life, I can already see the way things have unfolded in order to prepare me for something greater than myself rather than sticking to what I had planned.

The Exodus story comes to mind when I think of preparing versus planning. There was a plan for the Israelites but they did not follow the steps in order to get to the end most efficiently. The Jews came to the banks of the Red Sea and saw nothing but water in front of them. How could this be a part of the plan? Then each step forward was a step of faith, as slow as those steps may have been. They could see the water beside them close enough to look into it as fish swam by. They trusted that God would hold the walls of water up as they walked on dry ground to the other side. I doubt any of them planned to go through that experience that day, but they were given a choice afterwards of what they would do going forward.

Planning is not at all a bad thing, but preparing is worth more to me than wanting to stick to a plan. The pressure the world places on individuals to achieve success and what plans you have in order to reach them is not what God intended for His people. Wisdom is about life experiences and what we learn from them. The Lord gives us the opportunity to pursue wisdom, but only if we choose to commit to Him and allow it to be revealed over time and through our preparation for what is to come.

“All the ways of a man are pure in his own eyes,  
but the Lord weighs the spirit.  
Commit your work to the Lord,  
and your plans will be established.”  
Proverbs 16:2-3