



LIFE NEWS

GOD'S WONDERFUL PLAIN FOR YOUR LIFE!

by Ron Story, Community Life Pastor

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When I was in youth ministry in the Bay Area during the '70s and early '80s, a popular witnessing tract was called "*The Four Spiritual Laws*," developed by Bill Bright of Campus Crusade. In our desire to see others come to faith in Jesus, many of us had these four laws memorized and carried the tracts with us to whip out and share with people. In brief, the laws read:

1. God **loves** you and has a wonderful **plan** for your life.
2. Man is **sinful** and **separated** from God.
3. Jesus Christ is God's **only** provision for sin.
4. We must individually **receive** Jesus as Savior and Lord.

A solid basic outline of the Gospel, although in place of "receive," I used the words "repent and trust." This tract was particularly popular on college campuses, and tons of people came to Christ through this basic Gospel message.

My purpose in this article is to reflect on the "wonderful plan for your life" component in Law One. One of the scripture references used was John 10:10 (Christ speaking), "I came that they might have life and might have it abundantly" (that it might be full and meaningful). Talk about good news ... that's great news! Who doesn't want a full and meaningful life? As believers, we know that a full and meaningful life is only available through Jesus. My concern is that people might think that wonderful life is

instant, relatively free of suffering and problems, and somehow a promise of health, wealth, and the Giants winning the World Series every year!

God does have a wonderful plan, but the process is a killer! The wonderful life God promises is not so much external but rather internal. It's not about comfort but character. It's not about possessions but people. It's not about income but integrity. It's not about being a winner but being a witness. It's not about what you've got but what you give. Not about what you bought but what you built. It's not about pleasing people but pleasing God. Ultimately, it's not about our flesh but the fruit of God's Spirit.

That wonderful plan of abundant life involves love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control. (Galatians 5:22-23) That only comes when we are surrendered to God's Spirit – which means our flesh, our sinful nature, has to be denied (Luke 9:23), considered dead (Romans 6:11), crucified with Christ, so that Christ lives in us. (Galatians 2:20)

In other words, God's wonderful plan for our lives is to kill our natural, selfish, me first, sin nature so that the life of Christ might be manifest in us. (2 Corinthians 4:11) The plan of becoming like Jesus and spending eternity in heaven with Him is amazing ... but the process of denying self and killing off our selfish sin nature is often agonizing. The Apostle

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Paul reminds us: “For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worth comparing with the glory that is to be revealed to us.” (Romans 8:18)

God does love us, and He does have a wonderful plan for our lives... a plan for an abundant life of love, joy, and peace, and the spiritual fruit of a life surrendered to Him, both in this life and especially in the life to come. The plan is ultimately “out of this world!” The process involves getting your eyes off of this world and putting off your old sinful nature, and putting on the new spiritual nature with your eyes on Jesus. (Colossians 3:1-17)

God’s goal is to restore us to the image in which we were originally created. Our part is to completely surrender to His plan to kill off our sinful nature and trust Him to complete the goal of making us more like Jesus.

Romans 8:28 - 29: “And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose. For those God foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brothers and sisters.”

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It's not about **possessions.** . . but **people.**

It's not about **income.** . . but **integrity.**

It's not about being a **winner.** . . but being a **witness.**

It's not about **what you've got.** . . but **what you give.**

Not about **what you bought.** . . but **what you built.**

It's not about **pleasing people.** . . but **pleasing God.**



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