

Take Your Pick

CONCEPTS

God, through His Word and us, accomplishes what He intends. God's sovereignty is manifested either by divine intervention or the leading of the Spirit. He creates and changes man's destiny through man's free will. Other times, His will changes our destination by opening doors that no one can shut and closing doors only He can open.

PURPOSE

Often, we intend to do one thing, and the outcome is another. I love those stories people tell about how their lives were changed instantly. God's sovereignty reigns in our lives. Sometimes, we accept it; other times, we fight it. Then, there are times when we have no choice in the matter. People should consider when God makes a different pick for our future. It isn't good luck or bad luck; it's God. Christians should expect His will and prepare to accept His will.

SCRIPTURE BASE

Proverbs 16:9, Isaiah 55:11, Revelation 3:7, Psalm 73:28, 2 Samuel 7:28

BACKGROUND

Consider Mary and Joseph's story in the Bible. They intended to get married and live happily ever after. Then God, through His messengers, changed their lives in ways they could not have imagined. God has a way of getting His way through changing our ways. Maybe you have a story you could insert in place of mine.

SPUR

You can take your pick on anything, but the Lord gets His way when you have given your life to Him. If you have earnestly told the Lord that your life is His to use, hang on! You better mean it because He will use you for His glory and your blessing.

Think of a time when you had plans to do one thing, and God took control and changed your plans. I'm talking about life-changing plans. Maybe something happened that you didn't expect or was entirely out of your control. A list of possible life-changing events would be too numerous and unique to record. But if one or more happens to you, you'll know.

The change He set into my life altered my entire life's path. Becoming a chef was my life's ambition. I liked cooking and preparing food, baking, and fry-cooking. I was good at it because my first several high school jobs were cooking short orders at restaurants. I desired to become a chef by attending a local culinary college in my town. It was a well-established vocational school, and some excellent chefs were found there. While attending there, my grades and progress allowed me to look forward to a bright future doing what I enjoyed. Then, the bottom fell out. Life-changing news came to me in the mail that required me to leave the program three-quarters through the course.

My instructor was a master chef, an older man who retired from the Navy as a chef on battleships and aircraft carriers. He served seamen of all ranks and became the Officer Quarters' master chef. He was challenging, motivational, and an excellent teacher. When I showed him the induction (draft) notice I received in the mail, he told me that maybe I could become a cook in the military. The education of my choice was no longer an option. The following months of military school prepared me for the Vietnam War, and the Air Force seemed to have plenty of cooks. What God and the military turned me into was utterly different. I was totally out of control of my life.

Non-Christians say that's what you can expect when life happens. They're not wrong—it is life, and if you are a child of God, it is a life He has called you into for a purpose. His purpose. You may or may not believe God has that kind of control or that He would do—whatever it was—to change your path. Be assured that God is sovereign and in control of you and everything else around you.

My blessing is to be able to look back over all those years. Knowing that God steered my life and created the tests and tribulations, experiences, and situations that molded my character as I grew into manhood increases my faith. God made and shaped me like clay to be the man He wanted. I was to serve Him as He willed for His purpose. It is a blessing to me to see how His hand has shaped and crafted my life. I know God still has control of me, and my life continues without fear as His will is the best for me.

It is possible that God hasn't drastically changed your life in the manner described above. However, that doesn't mean He won't. It could all change tomorrow. That's

what this Spur is all about. When you give your life to Jesus and walk in the Spirit, you must expect that God's will for you might differ from your plans. When you plan for your life, I pray that you are attuned to God's will and that your life path is synchronized with His.

It would be remiss not to mention those little changes in our plans that God does to provide an experience, make a divine appointment, or give you a blessing. Those times might be another Spur entirely, for God is sovereign over your whole life, including your day-to-day experiences.

PRAYER

God, Father, and Sovereign Lord of all the earth, bless us with Your countenance and favor. Use us to be Your hands and feet to accomplish Your will in our lives and the lives of others. Guide us, Holy Spirit, wherever we walk with You. Keep us from temptation and deliver us from evil. We ask these things in Your heavenly name, Jesus. Amen.

CREDITS AND/OR INSPIRATION

As a Christian, it is hard to comprehend what it would be like without God. Sit in prayer and contemplation and reflect on what God has done for you. Thanksgiving becomes the attitude of gratitude for Jesus, who saved you and gave you all good things. That concept is inspirational right there.