

## God is the Master of My Fate

In the poem *Invictus*, poet William Ernest Henly comes to the conclusion that in any and all circumstances, man is the person in charge of what occurs. "I am the master of my fate," he states, "I am the captain of my soul." Many people subscribe to that belief. All of us have the final say in what happens in our life. Plans are made, and then carried out. When things don't go as planned, it is OUR failure to carry them out properly. Then we simply make another plan.

Jesus told a parable concerning those who feel this way. It is found in **Luke 12:16-21**. A farmer has been very successful, due completely, he believes, to his agricultural skill. References to himself are used over and over in the story. The text reads:

**"The ground of a certain rich man produced a good crop. He thought to himself, 'What shall I do? I have no place to store my crops.' "Then he said, 'This is what I'll do. I will tear down my barns and build bigger ones, and there I will store my grain and my goods. And then I'll say to myself, "You have plenty of good things laid up for many years. Take life easy; eat, drink and be merry."' "But God said to him, 'You fool! This very night your life will be demanded from you, Then who will get what you have prepared for yourself?' "This is how it will be with anyone who stores up things for himself but is not rich toward God."**

The man was prepared for a long life of leisure. But, like a slap in the face, God made him aware of who was in charge of his life and his future.

Is it wrong to make plans? Is it wrong to want a particular outcome? No. However, we need to keep in mind that God will carry out our plans in such a way that will bring about His will. His outcome. You see, God knows what is best for us. We think we do, but we don't. James says in **James 4:13-15**:

**"Now listen, you who say, 'Today or tomorrow we will go to this or that city, spend a year there, carry on business and make money.' Why, you do not even know what will happen tomorrow. What is your life? You are a mist that appears for a little while and then vanishes. Instead, you ought to say, 'If it is the Lord's will, we will live and do this or that.'"**

When something happens that we don't expect, something we didn't plan on, our attitude should be that God has made the determination that, for now, what we wanted to happen was not what He wanted for us. I tell people who face disappointment "God has a plan," and although it sounds cliché, it is true.

Some years ago, Garth Brooks recorded a song called "Unanswered Prayers." He thanks God that his life turned out the way it did, not the way he had planned it. His conclusion, in his words, is: "Just because He doesn't answer, doesn't mean He don't care. Some of God's greatest gifts are unanswered prayers." I agree with the sentiment, but I disagree on one point: There are no unanswered prayers. God has answers to our every request. Happily, sometimes the answer is "yes." But quite often, the answer is "no" or "not right now." We need to be spiritually strong enough to accept those answers as well.