

**St. Luke Ev. Lutheran
Church**

**Sermon by Pastor
Anthony E. Schultz**

July 24, 2016

Proverbs 16:1-9

Pentecost 10. Eisenach Series



16 To humans belong the plans of the heart, but from the LORD comes the proper answer of the tongue. ² All a person's ways seem pure to them, but motives are weighed by the LORD. ³ Commit to the LORD whatever you do, and he will establish your plans. ⁴ The LORD works out everything to its proper end—even the wicked for a day of disaster. ⁵ The LORD detests all the proud of heart. Be sure of this: They will not go unpunished. ⁶ Through love and faithfulness sin is atoned for; through the fear of the LORD evil is avoided. ⁷ When the LORD takes pleasure in anyone's way, he causes their enemies to make peace with them. ⁸ Better a little with righteousness than much gain with injustice. ⁹ In their hearts humans plan their course, but the LORD establishes their steps.

Children of our Heavenly Father-precious in His sight for Jesus' sake:

Planning! Seldom is planning more important than in war—planning for battle is literally a matter of life or death! On August 2nd, 216 years before baby Jesus was born there was a terrible battle at a place called Cannae in Italy. On the one side Roman soldiers—extremely disciplined—*Rome's forces used typical Roman equipment including pila (heavy javelins) and hastae (thrusting spears) as weapons as well as traditional helmets, shields and body armor. On*

the other hand, the Carthaginian army used a variety of equipment. The Iberians fought with swords suited for cutting and thrusting, as well as javelins and various types of spears. For defense, Iberian warriors carried large oval shields and the falcata. The Gauls were likely wearing no armor, and the typical Gallic weapon was usually a long, slashing sword. The heavy Carthaginian cavalry carried two javelins and a curved slashing sword, with a heavy shield for protection. The Numidian cavalry were very lightly equipped, lacking saddles and bridles for their horses, and used no armor but carried small shields, javelins and possibly a knife or longer blade. Skirmishers acting as light infantry carried either slings or spears. The Balearic slingers, who were famous for their accuracy, carried short, medium and long slings used to cast stones or bullets. They may have carried a small shield or simple leather pelt on their arms, but this is uncertain. Hannibal himself was wearing musculata armor and carried a falcata (a sickle shaped sword) as well. (Wikipedia) To make a long story short~Hannibal had about 40 to 50 thousand soldiers. The Romans had about 86,000 soldiers. Hannibal by means of brilliant tactics – a brilliant plan – utterly crushed the Romans. Almost 2,000 years later General Dwight D. Eisenhower would defeat Rommel – the desert fox. Elephants were replaced by tanks and swords and spears were replaced by rifles and machine guns and artillery! But Hannibal’s plan was the same and the victory belonged to him again. Today God’s Word talks about planning – always we pray, “Thy will be done!” Today we will consider a part of the book of Proverbs and be reminded:

With the LORD’s Permission~

- I. In our ♥s we make plans**
- II. But in His wisdom God decides!**

For many years God's people were led by Judges. Remember Hebrews – the chapter of heroes of faith? Remember what it says, ³² **And what more shall I say? I do not have time to tell about Gideon, Barak, Samson and Jephthah, about David and Samuel and the prophets, ³³ who through faith conquered kingdoms, administered justice, and gained what was promised; who shut the mouths of lions, ³⁴ quenched the fury of the flames, and escaped the edge of the sword; whose weakness was turned to strength; and who became powerful in battle and routed foreign armies. ³⁵ Women received back their dead, raised to life again. There were others who were tortured, refusing to be released so that they might gain an even better resurrection. ³⁶ Some faced jeers and flogging, and even chains and imprisonment. ³⁷ They were put to death by stoning; they were sawed in two; they were killed by the sword. They went about in sheepskins and goatskins, destitute, persecuted and mistreated – ³⁸ the world was not worthy of them. They wandered in deserts and mountains, living in caves and in holes in the ground.** After judges the people told Samuel we want a King – like all our heathen neighbors – we want a King! Samuel reminded them they didn't need an earthly king – the LORD – the Great I AM – the Holy One of Israel is your King! Still the people clamored – we want a king! The LORD gave them a King – King Saul – who was literally and figuratively – head and shoulders above all in Israel. The LORD blessed Saul – and through him God blessed Israel. But then Saul got off the track – ran off the rails – and that was bad for everyone. Saul met a terrible end – falling on his own sword – and his dead body abused by the godless Philistines. The new King would be David – the shepherd King! David who wrote by inspiration of the Holy Spirit – **“The LORD is my Shepherd, I shall not want.**

He maketh me to lie down in green pastures. He leadeth me beside still waters. He restoreth my soul!" Martin Luther wrote – green pastures and still waters are not just nourishing things to eat – and refreshing things to drink. It's the ultimate nourishment – the Bread of Life – refreshment – living water from Law and Gospel! How the LORD gave David courage and skill – in the battle of David and Goliath. How blessed was David for the LORD to call him a man after the LORD's own ♥! And how spiritually tragic that David committed actual physical adultery with Bathsheba – the contract murder to kill her husband Uriah – then to deny his sin for the better part of a year – until the faithful Nathan told David, "You are the man!"

Now King David has died and his son Solomon is the King. Again by grace alone-the LORD is good to Solomon. The LORD promised Solomon any blessing he wants. Think of the options! Solomon could have asked for great earthly riches – for the illusion – the mirage it provides of control and happiness. He could have asked for a long life – to be healthy and strong for a hundred years. You hear people say again and again – if you have your health – if you have good health you have everything! Solomon could have asked for the death of his enemies – the utter and total frustration of those who hated him and sought to frustrate his reign. But Solomon didn't ask for any of these things. Solomon asked for a discerning ♥--literally a ♥ with ears! And again – God in His great mercy and goodness not only gave Solomon a discerning ♥, He also gave him a long life – great earthly riches and the destruction of his enemies! It is out of this discerning ♥ the Holy Spirit moved Solomon to write:

16 To humans belong the plans of the heart, but from the LORD comes the proper answer of the tongue. To humans belong the plans of the ♥. People make plans. It starts very early. When

you are in grade school people ask you, “What do you want to be when you grow up?” Your job – your occupation is not the most important thing. Abraham, Isaac, Jacob and Judah were shepherds as was David. Joseph and Jesus were carpenters. Peter, Andrew, James and John were fishermen – Matthew was a tax collector. The Apostle Paul made tents and mended sails. What you do to pay your bills isn’t nearly as important as why and how you do it. Truth be told – if you work in a factory – in retail sales – work in hospitals or hospice or anything where you come in contact with people – you might very well have more opportunity to talk to unbelievers than I do! I spend lots of my time with believers – in Church and Bible Class and Confirmation Class and visiting people in hospitals and nursing homes and seeing shut-ins. And sometimes – when I visit with people who don’t believe in Jesus – they think I am doing so for selfish motives. That if I have more and more people come to “my” church – I come out ahead! To prepare to share your faith – again – it’s important to read God’s Word. The more you read your Bible the more you will realize and appreciate how important to know Jesus as your only Savior from sin and the only way to Heaven!

16 To humans belong the plans of the heart, but from the LORD comes the proper answer of the tongue. We can make plans in our ♥ but the LORD is the one who enables us to put them into words. What do you want to do with the rest of your life? What do you want to be? What do you want to do? Do you have goals? Do you make plans? Or do we just sort of get up in the morning – and see what’s going to happen to us? Do we see where the ship is leaking and try to plug the leaks? Do we hunker down and hang on for dear life – and hope the storm doesn’t last too long? Do we grumble and complain that we have so many

troubles and so many problems and life isn't fair? God's Word talks again and again about attitude. **Be joyful always. Pray continually. Give thanks under all circumstances!** " And again, **"Rejoice in the LORD always. I will say it again, 'Rejoice!' Let your gentleness be evident to all. The LORD is near. Don't be anxious about anything – but in everything by prayer and petition with thanksgiving. And the peace of God – which is beyond any mind to fully understand will keep your hearts and minds through faith in Christ Jesus!"** There is an optimism – an unmistakable anticipation and optimism that comes from faith in Christ crucified and risen!

⁸ Better a little with righteousness than much gain with injustice. ⁹ In their hearts humans plan their course, but the LORD establishes their steps. By the grace of God I have seen many strange things in this world – but none stranger than the Catacombs of Paris. In 1774 there were two problems in Paris. One – the cave in of tunnels under the city – and the fact that cemeteries – especially what was called the *Cemetery of the Innocents* – were overflowing so it was determined to take the bones from Paris cemeteries and place them in tunnels deep under the city. If you go through the door of what looks like a small home/almost garage size – and buy a ticket that costs about \$3 you go down a spiral stair-case – some 88 steps – some 11 stories – into a tunnel as wide as the pews in Church – with bones. From 1786 to 1788 in the night – under cover of darkness – the bones of more than 6 million people were carried down into these tunnels. First they were just in a heap – then they were organized – skulls and femurs – neatly arranged with a pea gravel path between them. It is about a 3 city block walk between the creamy Watertown brick colored bones – without even a musty or dusty smell. When it occurs to you – they are all

painfully alike! Oh, some skulls have small holes broken through them – some have lots of teeth – some skulls not so much. But the fact is – you cannot tell who was rich and who was poor – who was beautiful and who was not – who was highly educated – and who had lots of very practical skill and ability. Who lived a long life – and who was cut down in the prime of life – who had \$ in the bank – who had a beautiful home – and who was homeless – who was powerful and influential – and who was looked down upon – as a tax collector and sinner? You can't tell. All the things that so many people think are so very important – in the eternal scheme of things – don't matter at all! All that matters is Christ crucified and risen. Jesus is my Savior and yours! When the sky tears open and Jesus returns with all his holy angels – I don't believe there is a place on the planet where more people will wake up than the catacombs of Paris. Some to the horror of eternal destruction of soul and body. By grace alone – we will come home to Heaven – to peace and rest forever. Amen!

To God alone all glory!



Rev. Anthony E. Schantz