

Finding God's Plan for You by Mary J. Ferrill



Jeremiah 29:11 (NIV) states: "For I know the plans I have for you," declares the LORD, "plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future." Have you reflected on the meaning of this verse?

At first glance, people find comfort in Jeremiah 29:11 because it is reassuring to reflect on the fact that God wants good things for each of us. But if you look more closely, it starts with a powerful proclamation: "I know the plans I have for you."

The CPFPI board of directors and other CPFPI members attend the Global Missions Health Conference in Louisville, KY every year. Medical missionaries from around the world come to speak. One story that a speaker shared helps to illustrate the point that God has an individual plan for each of us. The story is about a husband and wife, one a veterinarian and the other a pediatrician. Both were atheists. The husband decided to go back to school to become an MD, which caused the family to move. While they were riding together in the car, the couple discussed where to send their 4-year-old daughter to school. In the middle of their conversation, the daughter exclaimed, "I only want to go to a school where they teach about Jesus." The couple was surprised by her statement because they had never taken her to church or referred to the name "Jesus" in front of her. Nevertheless, they decided that it would not hurt her to go to a Christian school, and they agreed a private school was preferable to a public one. The mother took

the child to church to make sure she would feel comfortable in that environment. As a result, the mother, and subsequently the father, came to know Christ, all because a 4-year-old girl steadfastly heard and obeyed God's voice and followed His plan for her.

But the story doesn't end there. After becoming Christians, the couple followed God's plan for them to become medical missionaries in Africa. Several tribes lived in the area where they were stationed. Most of their time was spent ministering to an anti-Christian tribe around which they could not mention Christ for fear of death. They finally earned the trust of this tribe and were able to provide medical care. They soon realized that poor nutrition caused many of the tribe's medical problems because they relied on beef that was often tainted. The husband's veterinary background came in handy: He vaccinated their cattle and taught them how to do it. At first, the tribal leaders were skeptical of the missionaries' intentions; but eventually, the leaders came to trust in the sincerity of their service. In fact, the husband became one of the tribal leaders (the first white man to hold that position) and the tribe's laws about Jesus were revised. The original law called for anyone speaking about Jesus to be killed. The revision states that if a missionary speaks to you about Jesus, you MUST listen! As this story illustrates, God knew the plans He had for this couple long before they had the slightest idea of who God was and what that specific plan entailed. Little did they know how their daughter's choice of school would drastically alter the course of their lives, as well as bring them into a relationship with the God whose very existence they had denied. The major lesson from this story is that we need to be attentive to hear God's voice and

follow His plan so we can take part in all of the blessings that He has in store for us. A wonderful story in the Bible about God's plan and blessings is found in the book of Esther. She was a Jew who married the king of Persia. There was an order given that all Jews were to be slaughtered on a certain day. Esther's cousin Mordecai told her, "For if you remain silent at this time, relief and deliverance for the Jews will arise from another place, but you and your father's family will perish. And who knows but that you have come to your royal position for such a time as this?" (Esther 4:14 NIV). Esther heeded the call, saved the Jews, and preserved the line of the Messiah. God's plan for Esther certainly impacted everyone who has placed their trust in Jesus the Messiah for their salvation! In contrast, we can choose to be like Pharaoh at the time of Moses and stubbornly refuse to follow God's plan in spite of numerous miracles... or we can choose to be like Moses and give excuses to God as to why we cannot help with His plans and then later cooperate... or we can choose the best path as depicted by Mary, who responded to the angel regarding her virgin pregnancy: "I am the Lord's servant. May your word to me be fulfilled" (Luke 1:38 NIV). Have you found God's plan for your life? If so, then you have experienced the blessings that come from following the Lord. If not, I encourage you to listen to the Lord so that you can take part in His great plan for you. Pure joy only comes from the Lord and is often found in the journey as well as the destination. As Jeremiah 29:11 tells us: God has a unique plan and purpose for each person's life and we should play a willing part in both of them. The quality of our life, from an eternal perspective, is defined by the extent to which we are obedient in following God's call.

Incorporation of Soft Skills into the Curriculum through Coursework in Spirituality at Shenandoah University by Mark Johnson

Introduction

Soft skills are becoming increasingly recognized as critically important in the workplace setting. Soft skills are defined as "personal attributes that enable someone to interact effectively and harmoniously with other people."¹ As applied to the practice of pharmacy, soft skills enable the practitioner to best interact and relate to patients, colleagues, and others in a self-aware and professional manner.

The 2013 Center for the Advancement of

Pharmacy Education (CAPE) outcomes and the 2016 Accreditation Council for Pharmacy Education (ACPE) Standards have acknowledged the importance of these soft skills in the practice of pharmacy and now require pharmacy schools to incorporate them into their curricula along with the traditional pharmacy practice knowledge and skills outcomes.^{2,3}

Soft skills (or the affective domain) are specifically addressed in ACPE Standard 3 (Approach to Patient Care) and Standard 4 (Personal and Professional Development).

Standard 3 (Approach to Patient Care) states: "The program imparts to the graduate the knowledge, skills, abilities, behaviors, and attitudes necessary to solve problems; educate, advocate, and collaborate, working with a broad range of people; recognize social determinants of health; and effectively communicate verbally and nonverbally." Key elements of this standard include: problem solving, education, patient advocacy, interprofessional collaboration, cultural sensitivity, and communication. Standard 4 (Personal and Professional Development) states: "The program imparts