

When the Unexpected Strikes, Go for Plan 'G'

Unplanned events such as a major loss, trauma or injury inevitably will occur, often forcing a shift from Plan A to our trusty backup Plan B in life. In the last few days and weeks, we've witnessed a horrific compound fracture sustained by NBA great Paul George, the apparent suicide of comic legend Robin Williams, death of actress Lauren Bacall, reported crucifixions and beheadings of Christians in Syria, and on-again, off-again truce between Israel and Gaza.

Remember playing the game Battleship? The opponent would call out a target such as, "B-10" and we reply with a "Hit" or "Miss." Well, life has a way of dropping bombs into plans that may challenge our identity, our family, our marriage, professional status and even our faith. Like the game, the bombs hit where it hurts, and we begin to sink.

These are only the newsworthy examples and a board game illustration, but I'm sure in all our lives, something has forced our Plan A to be sidelined so that Plan B could be called in.

We're not alone. Even Jesus tried to call an audible before going to the cross, asking God for another way, a Plan B (Matt. 26:36-46). But ultimately, like Jesus, we need to resort to the fact there is a much better Plan G—God's plan.

Typically, our Plan A includes what we want, dreams unfettered. The Plan B is our rescue, fix-it option. But Plan G involves neither of these. Many times, He uses pain in our life for a greater purpose, to draw you closer to him and to do great things in your life. Here's how to let Plan G reign over your Plan A and Plan B.

- 1. Remember, God knows.** No matter the loss, remember that God

allowed the traumatic crucifixion of His Son, Jesus, so that those who believe in Him would be saved. God knows pain; He knows your pain.

2. Relinquish control. Like Jesus, we have to know when to let go and let God further His plan. You may or may not be surprised by this, but God's plan for you is good (Jer. 29:11). Tragedy often raises questions in our minds about God's sovereignty. We may wonder why He would allow this or that to happen, if He's real and still in charge. Let go of these questions, and just go with Plan G.

3. Renew your faith. Our mutual enemy wants us to question everything about God. He wants us to ask "Why bother following a God who would do this?" The Bible tells many stories about how faith in Jesus led to healing. God's promises are true. He is faithful. It's OK to question God, or even be angry with God, but don't let unplanned events shake your faith. Instead, renew your faith by reading these true stories, and trust that Plan G is the best way.

4. Reactivate your life. Rather than resigning from it all, reactivate your life in faith. Do what you can do. Start by asking yourself, "What's my responsibility?" Before Jesus could feed the 5,000 or more, His disciples resigned to telling Jesus that maybe they should send them away for take-out. But the boy did what he could do and brought Jesus some bread and fish. Jesus worked with this act of faith and fed them all, with surplus left over.

You don't have to act like unplanned tragic events don't suck. But there's such a thing as 'sanctioned pain' that God uses for His purposes. By faith, we need to remember God knows our pain, relinquish control, renew our faith, and do what we can.

Plan G involves the knowledge that God is working, and you may not know why until you're in heaven. But that's OK. In fact, it's good, really good.

Kenny Luck, founder of Every Man Ministries, men's pastor at Saddleback Church, and ChristianMingle advisory board member, provides biblically oriented teaching and leadership for men and pastors seeking relevant, timely material that battle cultural, worldly concepts threatening men and God's men. Follow Kenny and Every Man Ministries now on Facebook, Twitter (@everyMM) and YouTube.

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