

God's Perfect Plan

One night when I walked in the door to my parents' house, something on the dining room table caught my attention. There, encased in a vintage gold wood frame, was a black and white photo of my mom's parents on their wedding day in 1945.

Fascinated, I picked it up and ran my fingers over the carved frame. I figured my mom had framed it with the intention of putting it up somewhere in the house.

Just as I was wondering where she would choose to display the precious memento, she peered down from the top of the stairs and saw me admiring it. "Oh, by the way, that's for you," she said. My jaw dropped.

"For me?" I couldn't believe it.

"Yes, I know how you like antique things. And that frame is one Grandma actually had in her house," Mom explained.

I was so touched by her thoughtfulness. I felt as if I had just won the lottery. What a treasure!

Even though it was late when I got home that evening, I couldn't resist taking out a hammer and nail to hang my new treasure in a prominent place.

After it was secured, I stepped back, gazing at the portrait. How pure and beautiful my grandparents looked! And how I hoped I would make them proud one day by marrying the person God had chosen for me and carrying on their godly legacy.

At the time my mother gave me the gift of the wedding portrait, I was struggling with my singleness, thinking that, unlike my grandmother, I would probably never be seen in such a shot—at least not in a wedding gown! But looking at the photo and thinking about my grandparents' relationship, I realized that it is worth the wait to marry the person God has

chosen for us. How beautiful it can be when we let the Lord write our love stories!

In fact, our lives will always be best when we follow His perfect plan for them-and in spite of the doubts that may try to assail us from time to time, we can rest assured that He DOES have a plan! His Word affirms it. “‘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’” (Jer. 29:11, NIV).

The aged photo of my grandparents reminded me how important it is for me to continue to trust the Lord, listen to Him and obey Him because the decisions I make will affect generations to come. It reminded me that who I marry and who we are together will make a difference not only in this world but also for eternity—for good or for bad.

I’m grateful that the Lord gave my grandparents the grace to make the right choices, and I’m grateful for the blessings my family and I are reaping as a result. I pray for a mighty dose of that same grace to live a God-centered, God-ordained life, single and married, so that those who come after me—even to the thousandth generation—will experience the benefits of following His perfect plan and dwelling in the assurance of His love.

“Know therefore that the Lord your God is God; He is the faithful God, keeping His covenant of love to a thousand generations of those who love Him and keep His commands” (Deut. 7:9).

Update:

Since this story ran in 2003 Lorie has married. Through God’s grace she met her husband, Christian, and was married this year on May 17. This story was read aloud at her ceremony by a friend and the picture of her grandparents was displayed at the wedding.

Mr. Christian and Lorie Coka 