

Connect the Dots

“For I know the thoughts that I think toward you, saith the LORD, thoughts of peace, and not of evil, to give you an expected end.”

Jeremiah 29:11

“Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap.”

Galatians 6:7

Introduction:

1. A child's game connects numbered dots that end up revealing a picture unseen before.
2. These puzzles may be 10-20 dots (easy) or 1500 dots (hard) or obscure (much harder).
3. Your life is the accumulation of many dots of various kinds made by God and by you.
4. Your life will soon be over, and it will reveal a final and total picture unseen before.
5. Many of your dots were already placed before you were conceived – including today!
6. None of the dots of your life are by Fate; things do not just happen to you or by you.
7. Some dots deserve praise and thanksgiving to God for making choices to bless you.
8. Some dots call for humble reflection for they show God's chastening or longsuffering.
9. Some dots do not show a connection of reward or punishment, but truth will prevail.
10. Some dots confirm scripture by revealing the cause of an outcome the Bible foretold.
11. Some dots are promised rewards or punishments for your choice to obey or disobey.
12. My purpose is to glorify God, confirm His perfect word, and exhort you to godliness.
13. We sometimes speak of piles of rocks for individual dots, but today is about all dots!
14. It is a duty and pleasure to connect the dots for *what God hath wrought* (Nu 23:23)!

GOD'S DOTS

- A. God's providence is His government of the universe and the choices He makes.
 1. Your life is the present value of an infinite number of His dots, affecting every part of your life and all your opportunities from now through eternity.
 2. There is no time and chance, if you let the Bible guide your view (Ec 9:11).
 3. David knew God had picked many precious dots for his life (Ps 139:13-18).
 4. God moves in mysterious ways to place His dots, but we want to see them.
 5. God's dots may be good and bad at the same time for His will (II Kgs 5:1-2).
 6. It is our duty and pleasure to see God's works (Ps 18:50; 31:19-24; 126:1-3).
 7. The Gadarene had dots in his life he was to share with others (Mk 5:19-20).
- B. Consider Bible examples to bless your heart and provoke your mind to praise.
 1. Abraham's servant *hapt* to find Rebekah while still praying (Gen 24:15), and she was everything and more than Abraham and Isaac could have desired!

2. Moses' parents put him in a river, and Pharaoh's daughter *hapt* to be moved when she opened the basket, for the babe wept, eliciting her compassion.
3. Ruth went to glean; it was her *hap* to find Boaz's field (Ruth 2:3); she made a diligent choice to do a dirty, lowly job; she is David's great-grandmother!
4. David *hapt* to visit the army with food for brothers when Goliath appeared.
5. Josiah *hapt* to find the word of God when he began to cleanse the temple.
6. Esther and Mordecai had gracious haps in Persia; Haman had horrible ones!
7. Philip *hapt* on a eunuch reading Isaiah 53, who found an oasis in the desert!
8. Conversion of Gentiles, a shock to many, was His ancient plan (Acts 15:18).
9. Paul's nephew *hapt* to overhear a murder plot against him (Acts 23:12-35).
10. A deadly viper *hapt* to bite Paul for protection and provision (Acts 28:1-10).

- C. Consider historical examples causing great joy in God's providential dealings.
1. The American Revolution with George Washington had many providences!
 2. Weather and German mistakes at Dunkirk saved 340,000 Allied soldiers.
 3. Weather and mistakes cost the Japs Midway, six months after Pearl Harbor.
 4. Both Germany and Japan were relatively easy work due to overextension.
 5. These examples can be multiplied indefinitely for real history ... His Story!

- D. Consider examples in your own life of extraordinary providence or chastening.
1. A man got hired 8 months after applying, to marry a single aid with an IPO.
 2. A girl working at Hardees parked her car at Ingles where a guy was working.
 3. A Roman Catholic in Michigan on business *hapt* into a Baptist ordination.
 4. A frustrated young man *hapt* into a church service with a girl's testimony.
 5. A prodigal came home – the perfect girl for him visited his house that day!
 6. How in a city of 500,000 do two run into each other at a Blockbuster Video?
 7. It is impossible to get a 15% extra raise while everyone else is getting fired!
 8. It is impossible for a house buyer to want two elderly cats, Button and Bear!
 9. What can you add about parents, spouses, jobs, houses, churches, and truth!
 10. Connect the dots to see how they work together for good (Rom 8:28)! Glory!
 11. A family with 3 teenagers and 2 children visited for preaching on authority!
 12. A young man attended a wedding far away and got a princess and a convert!
 13. A man interviewing at the largest employer walks into his career counselor!
 14. A man far away and a woman far away meet via Greenville for another girl!
 15. Connections and numbers are large of two BJU students talking prophecy!
 16. One of homeschooled eight met one of seven for another and then some!
 17. The first year our church tried Bible quizzing introduced two quizzers well!
 18. It is your wisdom and worship to think of these with family and give thanks.

- E. The greatest dots in your life picture are the dots of the five phases of salvation!
1. From before the world began to after this world is burned up, God gave dots!
 2. The greatest dot in your life is an eternal, legal, and vital union with Christ!
 3. The effects of His everlasting love for you are traced from Adam forward.
 4. These dots overwhelm any other dots in your life as to consequential value.
 5. These dots have your future guaranteed by God's power to perform His dots.

YOUR DOTS

- A. Your dots are the choices you make every day that greatly determine your life.
1. You can choose to obey or disobey and receive the corresponding results.
 2. Many dots were made by your parents and grandparents affecting you also.
 3. Pastors and others, if they are faithful or not, put dots in your life (I Ti 4:16).
 4. You put a dot in your life right now by how you are listening to preaching.
 5. Connect a few dots of obedience, and you should see the blessing of God.
 6. Connect a few dots of disobedience, and you should see the cursing of God.
 7. You make dots six ways – commission and omission in thought, word, deed.
 8. You only get so many warnings about your dots, then judgment (Prov 29:1).
 9. You are deceived, if you assume safety (Ps 50:21-23; Ec 8:11-13; Ro 2:4-5).
 10. Sinful dots affect your life more than anything else, but it is pooh-poohed.
 11. Every man shall bear his own burden, so prove your goodness (Gal 6:3-5).
 12. God's ways are equal: He reacts to dots in spite of earlier dots (Eze 18:1-29).
- B. The Bible is totally true, and it has many things to say about results of choices.
1. The Bible says – *Whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap* (Ga 6:7).
 2. The Bible says with power – *Be sure your sin will find you out* (Nu 32:23).
 3. Prophets said – *I set before you blessing and cursing* (De 11:26-28; Je 21:8).
- C. The Bible is filled with principles of dots leading to God's blessing or cursing.
1. The way of transgressors is hard: sinful dots done today will cost (Pr 13:15).
 2. Righteousness or naughtiness will surely bring reward or trouble (Pr 11: 6).
 3. You keep your soul or you do not to very definite results (Prov 4:23; 22:5).
 4. Playing with sin, befriending this world, makes God your enemy. Beware!
 5. The path of the just and that of the wicked is entirely different (Pro 4:18-19).
 6. God tells you to mark the perfect man, for he has an end of peace (Ps 37:37).
 7. God wants you to consider what dots may lead toward (Prov 21:12; 28:22).
 8. You will either love or hate wisdom and reap the consequences (Pr 8:35-36).
 9. How many do love and trust or should love and trust Psalm 37:4 and 84:11?

- D. The Bible is filled with cause-and-effect verses for warning and motivation.
1. Haggai twice: consider your ways ... this day and upward (Hag 1:5; 2:15).
 2. Seek first God's kingdom and righteousness, He will provide (Matt 6:33).
 3. Place a dot today in parental honor for the great promised results (Ep 6:2-3).
 4. Place a dot today in child training for the promised results (Pr 29:15; 22:6).
 5. Good speech and seeking peace has rewards (Ps 34:12-16; I Peter 3:10-12).
 6. God recompenses in kind – mercy, upright, pure, froward (Psalm 18:24-25).
 7. If you allow a dot of bitterness, Satan gains place; it will grow (He 12:15).
 8. Marriage to an odious or virtuous woman is a big dot (Pr 30:21-23; 31:30).
 9. The ministry of every pastor will be treated according to his dots (I Co 3:13).
- E. The Bible is filled with examples of dots leading to God's blessing or cursing.
1. Lot played near sin and picked dots for his life that resulted in total ruin for an entire family tree, who picked dots for themselves by his poor fathering.
 2. Joseph's character placed many good dots; though God providentially gave him some serious setbacks, the majority and end of his life were glorious.
 3. Samson's character placed many bad dots; though God providentially gave him some serious victories, the majority and end of his life were horrible.
 4. Eli would not stop his sons from their sins, and it ruined his family tree.
 5. David shirked his office, saw Bathsheba, and many bad dots led to disaster.
 6. But he confessed his sin, so she had Solomon, and David died gloriously.
 7. Solomon's first dot was Pharaoh's daughter, and then 999 more to ruin!
 8. Jehoshaphat let Jehoram marry Athaliah, and it cost his family tree greatly.
 9. Even Ahab had tranquility in his life due to repentance (I Kings 21:27-29).
- F. Consider historical examples of hard living and God's painful judgment of sin.
1. The average life expectancy of American rappers is approximately 27 years.
 2. Study the painful lives and deaths of many musicians from Elvis to Hendrix.
 3. These examples can be multiplied indefinitely for real history ... His Story!
- G. You have illustrations in your lives of God's gracious response to your choices.
1. You can see a pin at 50' on a 50' long truck and trailer after Bible reading!
 2. A young man told of unexpected blessings from recent sermon conviction.
 3. Diligence leads to fatness, and a very young graduate has a very good job.
- H. You have illustrations in your lives of God's chastening or judgment for sins.
1. Think about times you chose to sin and the hard rod of God was on you.
 2. We know some that went out from us and the visible troubles were great.

3. It is important that children be taught personal examples of counting dots.
- I. Your choices indicate evidence of eternal life or evidence of eternal damnation.
 1. Assurance of eternal life depends on good dots, and some of you need more.
 2. No wonder the apostle exhorted to all diligence in this matter (II Pet 1:5-11).
 3. Every man's dots will be judged here and/or hereafter by God (I Ti 5:24-25).

MIXED DOTS

- A. God's dots and man's dots mixed together are sorted out by believing His word.
 1. Sennacherib thought God's dots were his dots to his great ruin (Is 10:5-19).
 2. David and Jeremiah warned about presuming dots (Ps 50:16-23; Jer 7:1-15).
 3. Paul met Lydia and converted her by God's dots and their dots (Ac 16:6-15).
 4. If a man believes the gospel, it is God's dots using our dots (II Cor 2:14-17).
- B. God places dots in ways to affect our use of dots for His glory and our profit.
 1. Any dot you have ever placed that was good can be traced to His goodness.
 2. You cannot glory in your good dots, for they are fully from God (I Cor 4:7).
 3. God is in the business of mind control (Ps 119:27,35-36; Ezek 20:24-26).
 4. God places dots of longsuffering and great mercy in spite of our naughtiness.
 5. God chastens us in order to get us choosing good dots for His blessing.
 6. God blesses us in order to get us choosing good dots for further blessing.
 7. God may comfort for painful dots to comfort another for them (II Cor 1:10).
- C. God's providence by itself is not helpful dots; learn scripture (Eccl 7:14; 9:1-3).
 1. It is foolish and wrong to say that blessings alone are God's favor on you.
 2. It is foolish and wrong to say troubles alone are God's curse (Job 42:7-8).
 3. The rich man and Lazarus reversed their dots of life and eternity (Lu 16:25).
- D. In spite of the effect of others' dots on you, there is much hope (Ezek 18:1-29).
- E. We want to pray for God to make us place our dots well (Ps 119:35-36; 141:4).

Conclusion:

1. My purpose is to glorify God, confirm His perfect word, and exhort you to godliness.
2. Right now ... even hearing/reading this sermon ... you are placing dots for your life.
3. No matter what you do, you cannot stop the outcome of your dots (Prov 11:21; 16:5).
4. There is always hope – seek a reversal of fortune – as Manasseh (II Chron 33:11-20).
5. If a 50-year-old has 1000 dots in his life, likely 975 of them are past. Get serious now!
6. I had this sermon planned previously, but God called for Proverbs 11:6 last weekend!

7. We must pray for God to teach us to number our days for dots of wisdom (Ps 90:12).

For Further Study:

1. Sermon, “Be Sure Your Sin Will Find You Out,” ... www.letgodbettrue.com/pdf/be-sure-your-sin2.pdf.
2. Sermon, “Playing with Sin,” ... www.letgodbettrue.com/pdf/playing-with-sin.pdf.
4. Sermon, “Proverbs 11:6 Commentary,” ... http://www.letgodbettrue.com/proverbs/commentaries/11_06.php.
5. Sermon, “Character of Joseph,” ... www.letgodbettrue.com/pdf/character-of-joseph.pdf.
6. Sermon, “Consequences of Sin,” ... www.letgodbettrue.com/pdf/consequences-of-sin.pdf.
7. Sermon, “Magnificent Matchmaker,” ... www.letgodbettrue.com/pdf/magnificent-matchmaker.pdf.
8. Sermon, “Why Bad Things Happen,” ... www.letgodbettrue.com/pdf/why-bad-things-happen.pdf.
8. Sermon, “Dominion of God,” ... <http://www.letgodbettrue.com/sermons/god/dominion-of-god/sermon.php>.