

God's Providence #6

We have been studying God's providence by stories – some from scripture, and some from history, illustrating how God directs all things to accomplish His ultimate purpose. Until now they have been showing God's providential hand in guiding the affairs of men and nations according to his perfect will. The other aspect of providence is his providing for the needs of his creation.

This can be seen in

1. Normal activities of life

Mt. 5:45 – God gives sun and rain to all, even the unjust

Mt. 6:25-34 – Take no thought for food, drink, clothing ... Consider the birds of the air and lilies of the field

Ps. 37:3-5 – “Trust in the Lord, and do good; so shalt thou dwell in the land, and verily thou shalt be fed ...”

Ps. 103:1-5 – “... Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits: ... who satisfieth thy mouth with good things ...”

People generally make it a habit to thank God for our food when eating, but do they really believe it? The skeptic would say “I will eat whether or not I give thanks, so why thank God? I am the one who earned it and prepares it. What does God have to do with it?” The unbeliever eats in ignorance and ingratitude, and self-deception. The believer recognizes the true source of all blessing and acknowledges his dependence on God in thankfulness. Prov. 21:4 – “An high look, and a proud heart, and the plowing of the wicked, is sin.”

1 Cor. 10:31 – “Whether therefore ye eat, or drink, or whatever ye do, do all to the glory of God.”

2. Supernatural provision - manna, quail, and water in the wilderness, multiplication of loaves and fishes, tax money in fish's mouth, multiplication of oil for widow and son

3. Divine protection

Ps. 34:7 – “The angel of the Lord encampeth round about them that fear him, and delivereth them.”

Ps. 91:5-13 – not to fear arrow, pestilence, or destruction. He gives his angels charge over us.

Ps. 121:7-8 – “The Lord shall preserve thee from all evil ... “

4. Unusual, but not really miraculous circumstances

- a. Our first rental home

- b. Groceries and cash when I was preparing for ministry

- c. Odd jobs while trying to find a regular job

- d. My first computer job, other jobs to follow

Notice that while we recognize God's hand of providence in the feeding and caring of all his creation, he still takes special concern for those who are his own, who are serving him out of a pure and faithful heart. He expects us to look to him in faith, and not just ignore him, like unbelievers. Dt. 28:1-14 (followed by 15-68)