

The Providence of God - Matthew 10:29

8-10-14 AM

The Providence of God

Many different views on providence:

1. God is responsible for every little detail of our lives. i.e. a paper cut is from God
2. God is only involved in the big things of life, i.e. marriage, job, health
3. God is involved in matters that relate to the faith and accomplishing His will for mankind, only He knows when and why
4. God is not involved in creation, He created the world and left it alone

God's providential promises:

- Basic Provisions
 - Matt 6:25-34 and 1 Tim 6:8
 - Psalms 37:25 "I have been young, and now am old; Yet I have not seen the righteous forsaken, Nor his descendants begging bread." (NKJV)
 - Just because God promised food and clothing doesn't mean that you always get it on your own terms (Acts 6)
- A way of escape for temptation
 - 1 Corinthians 10:13 "13.God is faithful, who will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able, but with the temptation will also make the way of escape, that you may be able to bear it." (NKJV)
 - 2 Peter 2:9 "9. then the Lord knows how to deliver the godly out of temptations...." (NKJV) (Also 2 Thess 3:3)
- Providential protection of His word:
 - Isaiah 40:7-8 "...The grass withers, the flower fades, but the word of our God stands forever." (NKJV)
 - Mark 13:31 "31. "Heaven and earth will pass away, but My words will by no means pass away." (NKJV)
- God's promise of salvation to the faithful.
 - Galatians 6:6-9

- If we sow to the Spirit, we will reap everlasting life – that’s a promise.
- 2 Peter 1:3, 5-11 “If you do these things, you will never stumble”
 - Not “Once Saved Always Saved.” Christians can fall away, “If you do these things,” meaning it’s conditional.
 - But conditional doesn’t mean impossible. God provided an abundant entrance, not an impossible entrance (vs 11)
- 2 Pet 1:5-11 - Those who give their best, are virtuous, seek true knowledge of God’s word (not just casual), show self-discipline, are kind, and are loving, “will never stumble”
- We will still sin at times, but if we have a life like 2 Peter 1:5-11, we will have prepared ourselves to recognize and repent of our sins. (vs 8)

Misunderstanding Providence

- Exodus 1:22, 2:1-3.
 - God providentially saved baby Moses, many other babies would have died.
 - It is not that God wanted the babies to die, but that He has given us freewill.
 - With freewill comes the responsibility to choose between right and wrong, and consequences for choosing the wrong.
 - The Egyptians were later punished.
- We cannot presume that God will save us from facing persecution or evil deeds, just the opposite, God told us to expect persecution.
- 2 Tim 3:12
 - Many Christians died in the 1st and 2nd century for their faith.
- Romans 8:35-39 (also Hebrews 11:13, 36-38)
 - God’s limits our persecution so that nothing man can do will steal our salvation if we stay faithful.
 - This world is not our home. Our hope and trust should rest in heaven.
- Romans 8:28 –“All things work together for good...”
 - **Does this mean:** My physical or financial well-being or my spiritual well-being?
 - Many Christians suffer for their faith, often persecution helped spread the faith. (Romans 12:14)

- God never promised a long life of comfort and freedom. If serves the good of the kingdom, our lives might need to be given up for God.

Providence doesn't always overrule chance

- God has told us some things are simply time and chance. (Eccel 9:11-12)
- We might prefer to think that some event has meaning, but it might not have any deep meaning or purpose.
- Ecclesiastes says that battles, wealth, and even when we die can be time and chance.

The danger of being superstitious (being lead by feelings)

- Jeremiah 10:23
 - We can easily misinterpret any event.
 - An example: You get a flat tire on the way to an interview. Could be interpreted as God not wanting you to get the job, OR someone careless let some scrap wood fall out of their truck (time and chance).
 - This matters because to wrongly attribute our decisions to God is to presume God's place.
- Isaiah 55:8-9 "My thoughts are not your thoughts"(NKJV)
- Philemon
- Philemon 15 "For perhaps he departed for a while for this purpose, that you might receive him forever," (NKJV)
- If Paul didn't presume about Onesimus running away and being saved, we shouldn't presume about the events of our life either.
 - **God has given everything we need to live our life faithfully**

2 Tim 3:16-17 (and 2 Peter 1:2-3)

- For example: What Bible has told me about work:
 - I am required to work (1 Thess 4:11)
 - I need to give me best in what every my hand finds to do (Col 3:23)
 - I need a job that is not immoral/dishonest gain (1 Tim 6:11)

- I need a job that is not all consuming. (Luke 12:34) “For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also”(NKJV)

Prayer

- *Matthew 6:11-13, Luke 11:9-13, 1 John 5:14-15.*
- When we pray, we are often asking for God’s hand of providence and guidance.
- We have assurance that God will hear us, and that if the request is according to His will, He will fulfill our request.

Conclusions:

- Humans cannot know the mind and reasons of God.
- Don’t be led by feelings and then claim that God’s providence is guiding.
- Recognize that time and chance happen to all and not every event has some deeper meaning.
- Don’t presume God’s stamp of approval on every opportunity.
- Make sure we are using the Bible as the ultimate authority to guide our lives and determine the whether or not what we are doing is right, not our feelings.