

God Will Take Care of You

Q. What is God's providence?

A. God's providence is His completely holy, wise, and powerful preserving and governing every creature and every action.

(Westminster Shorter Catechism #11)

"Look at the birds of the air, for they neither sow nor reap nor gather into barns; yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not of more value than they?"

(Matthew 6:26)

Today we will be taking a look at one of the most comforting doctrines taught in the entire Bible, the doctrine of God's divine "*providence*". The English term *providence* comes from the Latin word "*providere*" which is broken down into two different parts: "*pro*" (*before*) and "*vide*" (*to see*). So when we speak of God's divine providence, we are referring to the fact that God has *foreknown* or *foreseen* absolutely everything that has ever, or will ever, take place. Not only that, but the Latin word "*providere*" also denotes the idea of a person "*attending to*" or "*taking care of*" that which is foreknown. In other words, when we speak of God's *providence* we are referring to the Bible's teaching that not only has God created all things, but He is also, as our catechism tells us, "*powerfully preserving and governing every creature and every action*".

There is a belief among some in our world today, that God exists, but that He has completely removed Himself from getting involved in human history. This belief is what is known as "*deism*". Deists believe that God created the heavens and the earth, but that God is in no way involved in His creation and remains a silent and detached bystander. This is completely antithetical to the teaching of the Bible. The Bible does not teach that God is uninvolved with His creation. On the contrary, the Bible clearly teaches that God is providentially at work over ALL of His creation, working ALL things according to the purpose of His good, pleasing and perfect will. We find this teaching of divine providence all over the pages of Scripture. In Psalm 103:19 we read that "*The Lord has established His throne in heaven, and His kingdom rules over all.*". Kings, presidents and nations are under God's providential control (Psalm 22:28). God is the One who determines where we live (Acts 17:26), He determines the weather and the seasons (Genesis 8:22), He even determines the length of our days on this planet (Hebrews 9:27). Paul teaches us that it's under the providential care of God that we "*we live and move and have our being*" (Acts 17:28). In Romans 11:36 we read, "*For of Him and through Him and to Him are all things, to whom be glory forever. Amen.*"

God's providence is so comforting to believers, because it means that God is always taking care of all His children, working out everything that happens to us for our good and His glory. In Genesis

chapters 37-50 we find the well-known story of Joseph. And you'll remember that Joseph did not have an easy life! He was sold into slavery by his brothers, wrongfully accused of attempted rape and imprisoned for a crime he didn't commit. However even in the midst of these terrible experiences we find that God's caring hand of providence was at work. Eventually we discover that God had allowed all of these terrible things to take place in order to bring Joseph to political power in the land of Egypt, so that when a massive famine struck the land of Canaan, Joseph was able to preserve the people of God by meeting their needs. Looking back on the horrible events that Joseph suffered during the course of his life, he was able to see the caring hand of God at work. At the end of the book of Genesis, Joseph famously declares to his brothers who sold him into slavery, that *"as for you, you meant evil against me; but God meant it for good..."* (Genesis 50:20).

No matter what you are going through today, if you are a believer in Jesus Christ, God in His providence, is working all things together for your good (Romans 8:28). The Heidelberg Catechism explains God's providence in this way: *"God's providence is His almighty and ever present power, whereby, as with His hand, He still upholds heaven and earth and all creatures, and so governs them that leaf and blade, rain and drought, fruitful and barren years, food and drink, health and sickness, riches and poverty, indeed, all things, come to us not by chance but by His fatherly hand."* (Q&A #27).

Dig Even Deeper into God's Word!

Nehemiah 9:6

Proverbs 16:33

Matthew 10:30