

## Study of the Doctrine of Jesus Christ

We have dealt with the gathering and preservation of the church: both the visible and invisible church. We also determined that Jesus Christ is immediately preserving the church, that is, it is a task under the immediate control of the Second Person of the Godhead.

If we, then, understand that Christ is the ultimate Mover in the gathering and preservation of the church, we should not see disorder in apparent chaos in churches and other religious and secular organizations.

Christ is fiercely zealous, methodical, efficient, and diligent when it comes to preserving the elect.

PSA 37:28 For the LORD loves the just and will not forsake his faithful ones. They will be protected forever...

PSA 103:17 But from everlasting to everlasting the LORD'S love is with those who fear him, and his righteousness with their children's children--18With those who keep his covenant and remember to obey his precepts.

ISA 54:17 "No weapon forged against you will prevail, and you will refute every tongue that accuses you. This is the heritage of the servants of the LORD, and this is their vindication from me," declares the LORD.

JOH 10:28 I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; no one can snatch them out of my hand.

JOH 17:12 While I was with them, I protected them and kept them safe by that name you gave me. None has been lost except the one doomed to destruction so that Scripture would be fulfilled.

We have also seen that Christ allows visible churches to grow and some to crumble and break into smaller denominations so that they can be scattered all to reach some of the elect caught up in their new surroundings.

Some are snatched from the most heinous of organizations, Satanism, occults, and idolatrous doctrines.

It doesn't mean we shouldn't resist these wicked organizations believing that they are working at the behest of the will of God. We are called to resist evil regardless of how small or apparently insignificant, so that the elect caught up among them might see our efforts at combating evil and have their consciences stirred by the Holy Spirit and come to faith in Christ.

### Providence of God

Distinguish between foreknowledge, providence and predestination.

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## Foreknowledge

It has everything to do with God's knowledge, not only what He himself would do but also what others would do by his permission, such as man's sin, Jesus' crucifixion.

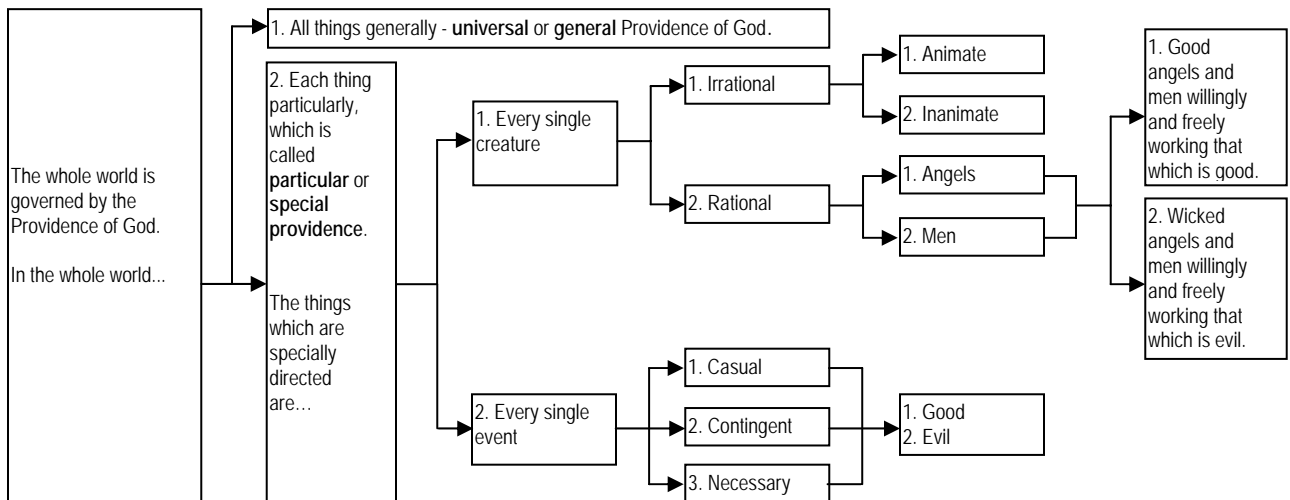
## Providence

Providence are only those things that God himself will do. Providence extends to all the things and works of God. It is, therefore, the etername, most free, immutable, wise, just, and good counsel of God according to which He affects all good things in his creatures. He also permits evil things to be done by removing his restraining force on evil so that it may flourish only to the degree God permits. He directs all, both good and evil, to his own glory and the preservation of the church.

## Predestination

Predestination are also those things that God himself will do, but, unlike providence, it only pertains to rational creatures (man). It is, therefore, the most wise, eternal and immutable decree of God by which he appointed and destined every man, before he was created, to his certain use and end.

## Table of the Providence of God



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Let's look at some of the key concepts pertaining to the providence of God:

### Counsel of God.

Scripture refers to Divine providence as the counsel or the purpose of God.

Heb 6:17 Because God wanted to make the unchanging nature of his purpose very clear to the heirs of what was promised, he confirmed it with an oath.

Rom 8:28 And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose.

Isa 46:10 I make known the end from the beginning, from ancient times, what is still to come. I say: My purpose will stand, and I will do all that I please

Job 12:13 To God belong wisdom and power; counsel and understanding are his.

Psalm 73:24 You guide me with your counsel, and afterward you will take me into glory.

Isa 11:2 The Spirit of the LORD will rest on him--the Spirit of wisdom and of understanding, the Spirit of counsel and of power, the Spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the LORD.

From these declarations, and there are many more in Scripture, it is evident that by the term providence we are to understand not only the knowledge of things present and future, but also the decree or will and effectual working of God. The word counsel comprehends an understanding or foreknowledge of things which are to be done. It also shows a will to cause the things foreknown to happen. Providence is not merely the bare fore-sight or fore-knowledge of God but it also includes the will of God.

Therefore, we conclude that God doesn't have an observant foreknowledge, but a creative foreknowledge. Nothing that God comprehends can fail to come to pass, and nothing can come to pass without God's knowledge and will to allow it.

### God is Eternal

Since God cannot be ignorant about anything, nor experience an increase or decrease of His knowledge, nor any change of His will, it is inescapable to conclude that God had known and decreed all things from everlasting.

Prov 8:22-31 wisdom.

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The LORD brought me forth as the first of his works, before his deeds of old; I was appointed from eternity, from the beginning, before the world began. When there were no oceans, I was given birth, when there were no springs abounding with water; Before the mountains were settled in place, before the hills, I was given birth, Before he made the earth or its fields or any of the dust of the world. I was there when he set the heavens in place, when he marked out the horizon on the face of the deep, When he established the clouds above and fixed securely the fountains of the deep, When he gave the sea its boundary so the waters would not overstep his command, and when he marked out the foundations of the earth. Then I was the craftsman at his side. I was filled with delight day after day, rejoicing always in his presence, Rejoicing in his whole world and delighting in mankind."

Isa 46:10,11 I make known the end from the beginning, from ancient times, what is still to come. I say: My purpose will stand, and I will do all that I please. From the east I summon a bird of prey; from a far-off land, a man to fulfill my purpose. What I have said, that will I bring about; what I have planned, that will I do.

Eph 1:4,5 For he chose us in him before the creation of the world to be holy and blameless in his sight. In love He predestined us to be adopted as his sons through Jesus Christ, in accordance with his pleasure and will—

1 Cor 2:7 No, we speak of God's secret wisdom, a wisdom that has been hidden and that God destined for our glory before time began.

### God is most free

God had the power to have arranged his counsel otherwise, or to even have omitted it altogether, or to have accomplished things differently from what we see. But he decreed it as it is from everlasting, as was pleasing to himself, according to his immense wisdom, and goodness. He is indeed most free.

Psalm 115:3 Our God is in heaven; he does whatever pleases him.

Jer 18:6 "O house of Israel, can I not do with you as this potter does?" declares the LORD. "Like clay in the hand of the potter, so are you in my hand, O house of Israel."

Psalm 135:6 The LORD does whatever pleases him, in the heavens and on the earth, in the seas and all their depths.

Dnl 4:35 All the peoples of the earth are regarded as nothing. He does as he pleases with the powers of heaven and the peoples of the earth. No one can hold back his hand or say to him: 'What have you done?'

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### God is unchangeable

Neither error nor change can occur with God. What he has once decreed from everlasting, that being most good and just, he wills everlastingly, and at length brings to pass.

Mal 3:6 I the LORD do not change. So you, O descendants of Jacob, are not destroyed.

1Sam 15:29 He who is the Glory of Israel does not lie or change his mind; for he is not a man, that he should change his mind.

Num 23:19 God is not a man, that he should lie, nor a son of man, that he should change his mind. Does he speak and then not act? Does he promise and not fulfill?

Ps 33:11 But the plans of the LORD stand firm forever, the purposes of his heart through all generations.

Prov 19:21 Many are the plans in a man's heart, but it is the LORD'S purpose that prevails.

### God is most wise.

This is evident from the wonderful course of events, and things in the world.

Job 12:16 To him belong strength and victory; both deceived and deceiver are his.

Rom 11:33-36 Oh, the depth of the riches of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable his judgments, and his paths beyond tracing out! Who has known the mind of the Lord? Or who has been his counselor? Who has ever given to God, that God should repay him? For from him and through him and to him are all things. To him be the glory forever! Amen.

Ps 33:15 He who forms the hearts of all, who considers everything they do.

Job 12:13 To God belong wisdom and power; counsel and understanding are his.

Jer 10:12 But God made the earth by his power; he founded the world by his wisdom and stretched out the heavens by his understanding.

### God is most just

The will of God is the fountain and pattern of justice.

2Chron 19:7 Now let the fear of the LORD be upon you. Judge carefully, for with the LORD our God there is no injustice or partiality or bribery.

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Neh 9:33 In all that has happened to us, you have been just; you have acted faithfully, while we did wrong.

Ps 36:6 Your righteousness is like the mighty mountains, your justice like the great deep. O LORD, you preserve both man and beast.

Dan 9:7 Lord, you are righteous, but this day we are covered with shame--the men of Judah and people of Jerusalem and all Israel, both near and far, in all the countries where you have scattered us because of our unfaithfulness to you.

Dan 9:14 The LORD did not hesitate to bring the disaster upon us, for the LORD our God is righteous in everything he does; yet we have not obeyed him.

### According To Which He Effects All Good Things

It is important to bear in mind that the counsel of God is never inactive, but efficacious, as Christ declared

John 5:17 Jesus said to them, 'My Father is always at his work to this very day, and I, too, am working.'

The working of God is two-fold, namely general and special.

The general working of God is that by which he sustains and governs all things, especially the human race. The special is that by which he, in this life, commences the salvation of his people, and perfects it in the life to come. It is said in reference to both, "(And for this we labor and strive), that we have put our hope in the living God, who is the Savior of all men, and especially of those who believe."<sup>1</sup>

"Because those who are led by the Spirit of God are sons of God."<sup>2</sup>

"The eyes of the LORD are on the righteous and his ears are attentive to their cry;"<sup>3</sup>

God works in both ways, either immediately or over time. He works immediately when he does what he wills independent of means, or in a manner different from the order which he has established in nature. Such as when he supports life in a miraculous manner. He works immediately when he produces those effects, through other creatures and nature, that sustains us with food and health. "Isaiah had said, 'Prepare a poultice of figs and apply it to the boil, and he will recover.'<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> 1Tim 4:10

<sup>2</sup> Rom 8:14

<sup>3</sup> Ps 34:15

<sup>4</sup> Is 38:21

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It is in this way that God reveals himself and his will unto us through the Scriptures as read and preached. "Abraham replied, 'They have Moses and the Prophets; let them listen to them.' "<sup>1</sup>

The other way in which God works, is over time. It is effected through various instruments, such as voluntary and involuntary, good and evil, yet, always in such a way that what God effects in and through them, is always most holy, just and good. The goodness of the works of God does not depend upon the instruments, but upon his bounty, wisdom and righteousness.

That God works through good instruments is generally admitted by the godly. There is, however, a diversity of sentiment as far as the evil and sinful instruments are concerned. If we accept that the trials and chastisements of the righteous, as well as the punishments of the wicked, are just and proceed from the will and power of God, then we must admit that God does also execute his just and holy judgments and works by instruments that are evil and sinful. We must simultaneously accept that the virtues and actions of the wicked which have contributed to the well-being of the human race, are gifts of God. God is not the author or originator of evil and sin, but the works of God in this respect, is accomplished by the wicked themselves.

God sent Joseph into Egypt, through his wicked brothers and the Midianites, blessed Israel through the false prophet Balaam, tempted the people through false prophets, vexed Saul through Satan, punished David through Absalom and the blasphemies of Shemei, chastised Solomon by the revolt of Jeroboam, tried Job by Satan, carried Judah and Jerusalem into captivity by the hands of Nebuchadnezzar, and so on.

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<sup>1</sup> Luk 16:29