

## DO YOU LOVE MY WAYS?

Introduction: What is providence?

“God sustains, nourishes, and cares for everything that He has made.” (John Calvin)

“God’s providence is His constant care for and His absolute rule over all His creation for His own glory and the good of His people

Jerry Bridges in “Trusting God: Even when Life Hurts’

“... the conviction that God, in His goodness and power, preserves, accompanies, and directs the entire universe. The Bible speaks of God as one who creates, preserves, upholds, wills, acts, governs, foreordains, elects, calls, predestines, judges, redeems, forgives, reconciles, provides, heals, and loves. That God is directly in command of His universe – past, present, and future, is not merely a supposition of Biblical faith, it is a central motif of the Bible.

Benjamin Farley in “The Providence of God”

### 1. Why Would We Love God’s Providence?

A) Because we love God and trust Him (Psalm 31:14-15)

“But I trust in you, O LORD; I say, "You are my God." My times are in your hands”

> Knowing and loving God precedes loving His sovereignty over our lives (Ex. 16:1-8)

B) Because we love God and believe that He is committed to His glory and our good

> God is totally sovereign over the events of my life (Ecclesiastes 7:13-14)

> God is perfect in love and always acts in love toward His children (Romans 8:38-39)

> God is infinitely wise and always knows what is best for His children (Roman 11:33-36)

God in His love always wills what is best for us. In His wisdom He always knows what is best, and in His sovereignty He has the power to bring it about.’

Jerry Bridges

### 2. How do we Act when we Love God’s Providence?

A) We can confidently obey Him

> What a delight to know that God, not fate or any enemy, is in control of the events of my life

Therefore, my love for Him, evidenced by obedience, will not be changed by circumstances

Joseph exemplifies a man who loved God and His providence (Gen. 50:19-21)

B) We can give thanks to God in every circumstance (1 Thes. 5:18)

- > Giving thanks to God is easy when everything is going well for us
- > But how can we give thanks in the midst of hardship or suffering?

We must remember that hardship can produce choice fruit in my life

Maturity (James 1:2-4)

Opportunities to reveal God's glory (John 17:1)

The ability to minister God's grace more effectively to others (2 Cor. 1:3-7)

C) We can praise God in the most troubling circumstances

- > When I embrace God's sovereignty in my life I can praise Him no matter what

Job is a man who loved God and His providence during a time of great testing  
(Job 1:20-22)

D) We can forgive others when we love God and His providence in our lives

- > Although people may purpose to hurt me I can forgive them because of my confidence in God's providential care

Stephan's example (Acts 7:59-60)

E) We can endure through times of great hardship when we know that this isn't the end of the story

- > Jesus provides a great example of enduring because of His confidence in God's sovereignty and providential purposes (Hebrews 12:1-4)

### 3. How can we Strengthen our Commitment to Love God's Providence?

A) Walk by FAITH

- > Without the spectacles of faith our eyes may be blinded to the wisdom of God's plan
- > Consider Abraham's love for God's providence (Hebrews 11:17-19)

B) Persevere in HOPE

- > Not a hope characterized by foolish or wishful thinking
- > Rather, a hope rooted in the ultimate plan of God (Romans 8:18-25)