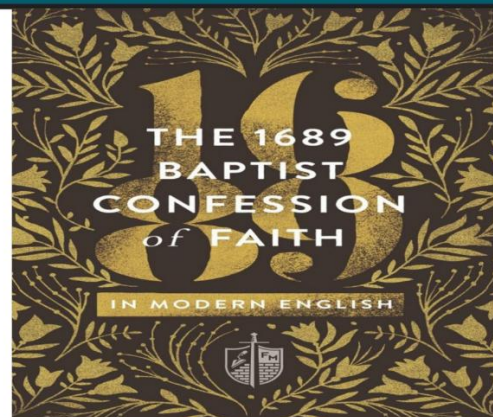


Chapter 5—Divine Providence



that His sovereign plan includes even the first fall and every other sinful action both of angels and men.<sup>11</sup>

God's providence over sinful actions does not occur by simple permission.

Instead, God most wisely and powerfully limits and in other ways arranges and governs sinful actions.<sup>12</sup>

Through a complex arrangement of methods He governs sinful actions to accomplish His perfectly holy purposes.<sup>13</sup>

Yet He does this in such a way that the sinfulness of their acts arises only from the creatures and not from God.

Because God is altogether holy and righteous, He can neither originate nor approve of sin.<sup>14</sup>

<sup>11</sup>Romans 11:32-34; <sup>2</sup>Samuel 24:1, <sup>1</sup>Chronicles 21:1. <sup>12</sup>2 Kings 19:28; <sup>13</sup>Psalms 76:10. <sup>13</sup>Genesis 50:20; <sup>14</sup>Isaiah 10:6, 7, 12. <sup>14</sup>Psalms 50:21; <sup>1</sup>John 2:16.

5. The perfectly wise, righteous, and gracious God often allows His own children for a time to experience a variety of temptations and the sinfulness of their own hearts. He does this to chastise them for their former sins or to make them aware of the hidden strength of the corruption and deceitfulness of their hearts so that

they may be humbled. He also does this to lead them to a closer and more constant dependence on Him to sustain them, to make them more cautious about all future circumstances that may lead to sin, and for other just and holy purposes.<sup>15</sup> So whatever happens to any of His elect happens by His appointment, for His glory, and for their good.<sup>16</sup>

12 Chronicles 32:25, 26, 31; 2 Corinthians 12:7-9. <sup>16</sup>Romans 8:28.

6. God, as the righteous judge, sometimes blinds and hardens wicked and ungodly men because of their sins.<sup>17</sup> He withholds His grace from them, by which they could have been enlightened in their understanding and had their hearts renewed.<sup>18</sup> Not only that, but sometimes He also takes away the gifts they already had<sup>19</sup> and exposes them to situations that their corrupt natures turn into opportunities for sin.<sup>20</sup> Moreover, he gives them over to their own lusts, the temptations of the world, and the power of Satan,<sup>21</sup> so that they harden themselves in response to the same influences that God uses to soften others.<sup>22</sup>

<sup>17</sup>Romans 1:24-26, 28; <sup>18</sup>Romans 11:7, 8. <sup>19</sup>Deuteronomy 29:4. <sup>20</sup>Matthew 13:12. <sup>21</sup>Deuteronomy 2:30; <sup>2</sup>Kings 8:12, 13. <sup>22</sup>Exodus 8:15, 32; <sup>14</sup>Isaiah 6:9, 10; <sup>1</sup>Peter 2:7, 8.

7. The providence of God in a general way includes all creatures, but in a special way it takes care of His church and arranges all things to its good.<sup>23</sup>

<sup>23</sup>1 Timothy 4:10; <sup>9</sup>Amos 9:8, 9; <sup>9</sup>Isaiah 43:3-5.

This may be found in its entirety @founders.org

1. God the good Creator of all things, in His infinite power and wisdom, upholds, directs, arranges, and governs all creatures and things,<sup>1</sup> from the greatest to the least,<sup>2</sup> by His perfectly wise and holy providence, to the purpose for which they were created. He governs according to His infallible foreknowledge and the free and unchangeable counsel of His own will. His providence leads to the praise of the glory of His wisdom, power, justice, infinite goodness, and mercy.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Hebrews 1:3; <sup>2</sup>Job 38:11; <sup>3</sup>Isaiah 46:10, 11; <sup>4</sup>Psalms 135:6. <sup>2</sup>Matthew 10:29-31. <sup>3</sup>Ephesians 1:11.

2. All things come to pass unchangeably and certainly in relation to the foreknowledge and decree of God,<sup>4</sup> who is the first cause. Thus, nothing happens to anyone by chance or outside of God's providence.<sup>5</sup> Yet by the same providence God arranges all things to occur according to the nature of second causes, either necessarily, freely, or in response to other causes.<sup>6</sup>

<sup>4</sup>Acts 2:23. <sup>5</sup>Proverbs 16:33. <sup>6</sup>Genesis 8:22.

3. In His ordinary providence, God makes use of means,<sup>7</sup> though He is free to work apart from them,<sup>8</sup> beyond them,<sup>9</sup> and contrary to them<sup>10</sup> at His pleasure.

<sup>7</sup>Acts 27:31, 44; <sup>8</sup>Isaiah 55:10, 11. <sup>9</sup>Hosea 1:7. <sup>10</sup>Romans 4:19-21. <sup>10</sup>Daniel 3:27.

4. The almighty power, unsearchable wisdom, and infinite goodness of God are so thoroughly demonstrated in His providence,



From The Pastor's Desk

We will again tackle the topic of salvation and the order in which it is applied to our lives. We dutifully consider what Scripture teaches and arrive at a sequence regarding those details, not just how we are saved, but the specific steps in salvation and the order they are granted to the believer. The subject begins in eternity past with God's sovereign work of election that led to the atoning act of Jesus Christ on the cross becoming the propitiation for our sins. This is followed by the Effectual Call, not to be confused with the General Call for all to repent and believe, that through the Holy Spirit draws people to God in a right relationship. After this, in June, we reviewed the truth of Regeneration or what is also known as New Creation. This is God's work in making us new. He transforms us from our old lives that are devoted to ourselves into new creations devoted to God and His desires. This month, we will consider the natural outcome of the transformation that we just discussed. The heart that has been effectively called and transformed into a new creation is now capable of Faith and Repentance. When John the Baptist was deep in ministry, his proclamation was always a call to repentance (Matt.3:1-3).

Jesus called people to repentance in response to God's Kingdom (Matt. 4:17). At Pentecost, Peter implored the crowd to repent (Acts 2:38). Paul's bid to the Athenians was also one of repentance (Acts 17:30). From this, I think we can ascertain that repentance is an important topic in the Bible. Equally important is the belief part of our salvation. Jesus urged people to repent and believe in the gospel (Mark 1:14-15). Converts are called to believe in Acts 17:30, 34. We can clearly see that repentance and faith are inextricably linked. Sinclair Ferguson describes it as such: "Here repentance and faith belong together. They denote two aspects in conversion that are equally essential to it. Thus, either term implies the presence of the other because each reality (repentance or faith) is the sine qua non of the other. In grammatical terms, then, the words repent and believe both function as a synecdoche—the figure of speech in which a part is used for the whole. Thus, repentance implies faith and faith implies repentance. One cannot exist without the other." Much theological ink has been spilled arguing over whether faith or repentance comes first. Some argue that faith is what motivates the soul to repent while others insist that repentance and the knowledge of sin must precede faith. Still others assert that the two are absolutely simultaneous meaning one cannot exist without the other. Regardless, the reality is that no conversion can take place apart from both repentance and faith being present in the life of the one being saved.

All this talk about the necessity of faith and repentance without a word about what they are. I find John Murray's definition helpful: Faith... is a whole-souled movement of self-commitment to Christ for salvation from sin and its consequences." It is an all-in devotion to Jesus as Lord. It is far more than mental knowledge or assent; it carries with it the vital aspect of trust that holds nothing back. On the other hand, we have repentance. Genuine repentance brings a real sense of our sin and guilt while having a comprehension of mercy shown through Jesus Christ's work. It brings us to a place of hating sin and turning away from it and towards God. It motivates us to live holy by walking according to God's commands for our lives. The word literally brings the mindset of a change of direction meaning we travel opposite of our previous course. Rather than moving towards sin and away from God, we turn our backs on sin and run towards God. Faith and repentance are both required for salvation. They both are a gift of our gracious, merciful and loving God. Walk daily in repentance rejecting sin and drawing nearer to God. Grow in faith by trusting God with all you have including the salvation He has provided. God's blessings to you all,

Bro. Jim Tennery

FBC Family,  
Over the last three months we have looked at what doctrine is, why doctrine is important, and how all sound doctrine is always in agreement with the Gospel. Doctrine simply means teaching or instruction. The purpose of doctrine is so that we would teach and learn how to properly follow God, find freedom in Christ, and promote good works in our Christian life.

In the book of Titus, Paul is instructing a younger Titus to continue establishing the Church in Crete for godliness and good works. He weaves sound doctrine into the life of the Church, which is centered around God's message of salvation, the Gospel.

Paul tells Titus this in Titus 2:1

*"But as for you, teach what accords with sound doctrine."* – Titus 2:1

Do you know, something I have realized over the past years; God's people want to learn and follow Him properly. God's people desire sound doctrine. Teaching and learning sound doctrine is not some lifeless pursuit that simply gives us lofty knowledge about Scripture. Rather, it helps us in godliness, bearing good fruit, and strengthens our assurance.

Doctrine matters and it's always in agreement with the Gospel

(1Timothy 1:11). Over the last few months, we have looked at the foundations of doctrine. We see who God is. He is holy, holy, holy.

God is holy in all that He does.

That means He is pure and without blemish in all that He does. He will never act in an unholy way. This doesn't seem like a big deal, but when we begin to see ourselves in light of who God is, it is. God created mankind perfect and pure, but in our sin, we have chosen to rebel against God. This has made mankind unclean and unrighteous in the eyes of a holy God. God's standard for mankind to be right before Him has always been perfection.

Therefore, our sin has brought us under condemnation before God.

There is nothing we can do to make ourselves perfect before Him. This is mankind's problem, that God is going to judge mankind one day soon. He is going to judge us and if we have broken one of His commandments, we will stand guilty before Him. It brings us before the rightful condemnation of God. This should drive us to realizing that we cannot be made right before God on our own. We need someone else to represent us before God. One who is perfect and pure, and this is exactly what Christ Jesus has done.

In Titus 2:14, Paul says that Jesus gave Himself for us. He did this to redeem us from our sinful rebellion, and to purify us from uncleanness before God. Jesus redeems through His perfect life.

He redeems through shedding His blood on a cross, His death and His resurrection. Jesus conquers both sin and death for us, and He has the right to represent us before God.

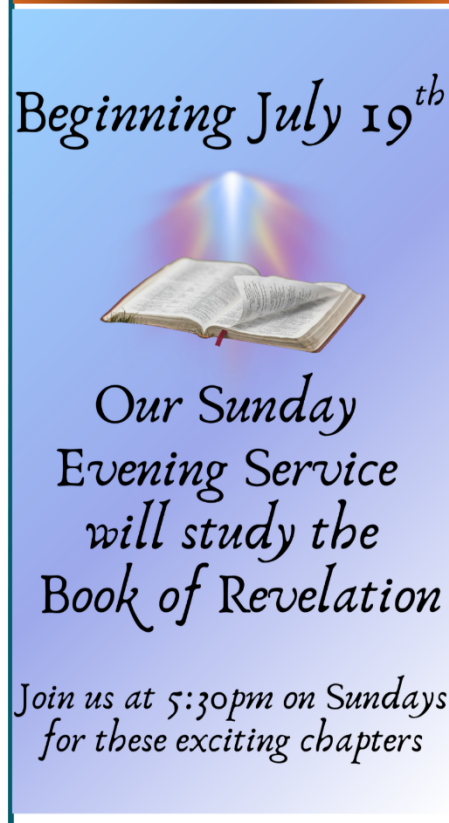
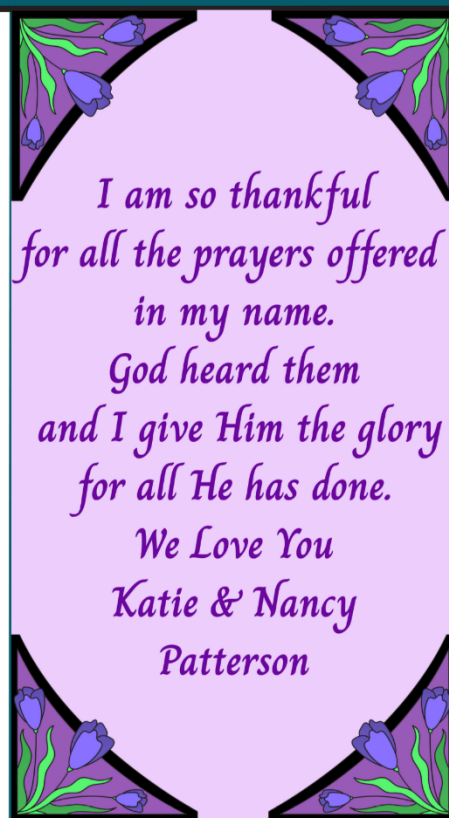
This is Good News; Jesus will represent His people before God! When God judges the secrets of mankind. Jesus Christ is going to represent all who have come to Him through faith and repentance.

The question I want to leave you with is, has this taken place in your life? Has Jesus Christ redeemed you from your sinfulness and made you clean before God?

Look at how Paul describes our salvation in Titus 3:4-7

*"But when the goodness and loving kindness of God our Savior appeared, He saved us, not because of works done by us in righteousness, but according to His own mercy, by the washing of regeneration and renewal of the Holy Spirit, whom He poured out on us richly through Jesus Christ our Savior, so that being justified by His grace we might become heirs according to the hope of eternal life."* – Titus 3:4-7

-Jeremy Martinez



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2026 Edition

### Week Twenty-eight July 5-11

Day 1: 1 Kings 12; 2 Chronicles 10-11; Titus 1

Day 2: 1 Kings 13-14; 2 Chr 12; Ps 47; Titus 2

Day 3: 1 Kings 15; 2 Chr 13-14; Titus 3

Day 4: 2 Chr 15-16; 1 Kings 16; Philemon

Day 5: 1 Kings 17-18; Ps 119; Jude

### Week Twenty-nine July 12-18

Day 1: 1 Kings 19-21; 2 Chr 17; Ps 129; Matt 1

Day 2: 1 Kings 22; 2 Chr 18; Matt 2

Day 3: 2 Chr 19-20; 2 Kings 1; Matt 3

Day 4: 2 Kings 2-3; Psalm 48; Matt 4

Day 5: 2 Kings 4-6; Matt 5

### Week Thirty July 19-25

Day 1: 2 Kings 7-8; 2 Chr 21; Matt 6

Day 2: 2 Kings 9-10; Psalm 49; Matt 7

Day 3: 2 Chr 22-23; 2 Kings 11; Ps 131; Matt 8

Day 4: 2 Chr 24; 2 Kings 12; Psalm 50; Matt 9

Day 5: Joel 1-3; Matthew 10

### Week Thirty-one July 26- August 1

Day 1: Jonah 1-4; Matthew 11

Day 2: 2 Kings 13-14; 2 Chr 25; Ps 53; Matt 12

Day 3: Amos 1-3; Matthew 13

Day 4: Amos 4-6; Psalm 55; Matthew 14

Day 5: Amos 7-9; Matthew 15

I came across the following article a few weeks back and thought it worth sharing. Adapted from an article by Brad Brandt in **"The Focused Pastor", Focus on the Family**. A few weeks ago, I asked the chairman of our deacons to meet with our current new members' class to share his perspective on what God is doing in our church. I love this brother. After talking for a few minutes about ministries and opportunities, he finished by saying something rather interesting. Here's my paraphrase of what he told the class:

*"Basically, we're a pretty boring church. We do the same things week after week." We all chuckled. A boring church? Really? Yes, he emphasized. And then he elaborated on what he meant by those "same things." The careful study of God's Word. Prayer. Fellowship. And so forth. "This is what happens at our church," he concluded. "Week after week after week. The same things. And it's wonderful."*

*Think about the word "boring." We don't typically consider "boring" to be a compliment. We usually associate boring with being dull, monotonous, uninteresting, and so forth. Boring is a bad thing, right?*

*But, there's another side to boring. Notice the root "bore." That word brings to mind a tool in my workshop called a drill press. Have you ever stared at a drill press while it's doing its thing? It's pretty boring, and I mean that literally! A drill press is a tool designed to drill holes, and it accomplishes this assignment by doing the same thing over and over and over. When you watch a drill press in action, it doesn't look like much is happening. The bit keeps hitting the same point again and again. But that's not true, for the bit is not hitting the same point. It's hitting a new point every time it turns. The drill is making progress, slowly, yes, but unmistakably. Every time the bit turns, progress is happening. By doing the same thing over and over, the desired result occurs.*

*I'm convinced that we need more boring churches. I'm talking about the resolve to keep doing the same God-ordained, Christ-exalting, Scripture-commanded, joy-producing activities over and over, regardless of whether we see an immediate outcome. In Acts 2:42, Luke describes the activities of the first church this way.*

*"And they devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers (ESV)." The first church poured themselves into these same four activities week after week – teaching, fellowship, breaking bread, praying.*

*As a wise pastor told me when I first entered the ministry, "Remember, Brad, what you hook them with is what it will take to keep them. If you reach them by pulling a rabbit out of the hat today, you'll need to pull out an elephant tomorrow." Here is the simple truth. I am not smart enough to be innovative, creative, and novel week after week after week. And that's a good thing—a necessary thing. Why? Because the Lord has already made it clear what He wants to occur in His church week after week after week. He wants to put himself on display, not my creativity.*

Blessed to Serve,

Bro. Vernon