

The Detour of Providence

Genesis 50:15-26

Introduction

Providence is God's governance over events and circumstances in your life so that you arrive at your appointed end. Providence is a subset of God's sovereignty or rulership over everything. It is in God's nature to be sovereign. He is the ruler of the universe. Providence takes into consideration what God does in time as He orchestrates the events of the universe.

Joseph recognized that even when bad things happened in his life, God was with Him. It's God's invisible hand over the glove of history that causes or allows things to happen. God allows both good and bad things that occur in history to bring us to the place that He wants us to be. While we are experiencing a detour, God's hand may or may not be clearly seen. However, in retrospect, God's invisible hand is evident.

God's providence means that luck doesn't exist. Luck is actually a form of idolatry. Luck says that some impersonal force exists that determines the events of your life and that line of thinking leaves God out.

Providence involves your responsibility. Your choices are a part of the calculation. God's plans include you. They do not happen apart from your ability to choose. Your involvement in this process is critical in determining the length of your detour.

Getting Started

1. What one point resonated with you from this morning's sermon?
2. Prior to today's sermon, did you understand the difference between providence and sovereignty? In your own words, define those terms and explain the difference between the two.
3. Do you believe in luck (good or bad)? Do you believe or have you ever thought that things happen to you by chance?

Let's Get Personal

1. Can you look back over your life and identify a place, event, or season that you can see God's "invisible hand" at work?
2. If you are able to see God's providence *now*, could you see God's providence *then*? If you can remember, tell your group about what it was like to walk through that previous season when you were *not* sure of how God was working things together for your good.
3. God's plan includes you! Is there an area of your life where you are not fully engaged or actively choosing to get on board with God's revealed will for your life?
4. How do you know that God is with you? How are you able to walk confidently in the knowledge of God's presence and provision for your life?

Take the Next Step

1. Now that you understand God's providence, how does that help you respond to God differently?
2. How will the understanding of God's providence affect your attitude about your past, present, or future life?
3. What is one decision or choice that you can make this week to align yourself with God's will based on His Word and the conviction that we have through the work of the Holy Spirit?

Renew Your Mind

"As for you, you meant evil against me, but God meant it for good..." Genesis 50:20