

THE BULLETIN

THIS WEEK:

Sunday:
Bible Study & Worship
Monday:
Fl. School of Preaching Class
Tuesday:
Ladies Night Out 7:00
Wednesday:
Bible Study

**UPCOMING
EVENTS:**

Sunday:
Teen Devo After
Services Sunday nite

**PRIVILEGED
TO SERVE:**

Month of April
Announcements:
Ray Cauthen

Singing:
a.m. – John Loanzon
p.m. – Mark Nortz
Wed. –Luther Honey

Prayer:
Tom Mikell

Bible Reading:

Preaching:
Doug Frazier

Lord's Supper:
Larry Pahman
Randy Howe
Doug Myers
Greg Green

Prepare communion
Ashley Lydon

4th Sunday Fellowship:
March
Kim Stanley
Chris Nortz
Jessica Frazier

A Study of Divine Providence

by Wayne Jackson
continued from last week

Special Providence

When we speak of “special providence,” we are thinking primarily of two things. First, there is the providential operation of God in the lives of those who earnestly are **seeking the truth**. Second, there is the divine activity that operates in the interest of **Christian people**. Let us consider each of these.

(1) God knows of those who long for the truth (see Acts 16:6-10), and promises that they who “hunger and thirst after righteousness” shall be filled (Matthew 5:6). Accordingly, the Father has the ability to work within the circumstances of human activity to bring about his desire. That being the case, it reasonably follows that God’s providence may be employed to facilitate the journey of those whose hearts are longing to find and serve their Maker.

A case in point may be found in the following narrative.

In the book of Philemon the story is told of a slave named Onesimus. He belonged to Philemon of Colossae. Onesimus ran away from his master and made his way to Rome, where he encountered the apostle Paul. Paul led Onesimus to the truth. Commenting upon this matter, the apostle sees the possibility of providence in this situation. He writes:

For perhaps he was therefore parted from you for a season, that you should have him forever; no longer as a servant, but more than a servant, a brother beloved (Philemon 15,16).

The verb *echoristhe* (“was parted,” ASV) is a passive voice form. The passive represents the subject as being acted upon. Some scholars have noted that the passive here “may contain a conviction of the divine overruling . . . to denote the hidden action of God as an agent responsible for what is done” (1980, 314). Also, by the terms “for a season” and “forever,” some suggest the apostle shows his “conviction that the hand of God was at work in the whole situation” (1978, 461).

(2) The New Testament is filled with promises which affirm that God will answer the prayers of his people and work in their lives. But since Jehovah is not functioning miraculously (see 1 Corinthians 13:8-10), obviously he is operating providentially. Things that may appear perfectly natural, from the human point of view, may be being directed by Jehovah!

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Here is a case in point. When Paul wrote to the Christians in Rome (from Corinth, during his third missionary journey – cf. Acts 20:2; Romans 16:23), he told these brethren that in his prayers he continually made request (a present tense form) unto God that he might some day visit them (Romans 1:9,10). As he concluded the book, he urged the Roman saints to join him in prayer, to the end that this request be granted (Romans 15:30-32). God will answer those prayers, but in his own providential way!

Consider the following facts:

- After his third missionary campaign, Paul returned to Jerusalem where he was arrested for allegedly defiling the temple (Acts 21:28). In the night, the Lord told him to be cheerful. He would not die in Jerusalem; rather, the apostle would bear witness in Rome (23:11).
- To save his life from a Jewish mob that had vowed to murder him, Roman officials sent Paul to Caesarea by night (23:31ff).
- There, he was imprisoned for two years (24:27).
- Finally, when he concluded that he would get no justice from the authorities, exercising his right as a Roman citizen, the apostle appealed his case to Caesar (25:11).
- In early autumn (ca. A. D. 60), he was put on a ship bound for Rome (27:1).
- En route, the vessel was wrecked and all hope of being saved was abandoned (27:30).
- But an angel appeared to the apostle and promised: “You must stand before Caesar” (27:24).
- The following spring, safe and sound, Paul arrived in Rome (28:16). His prayers (and those of the Roman saints) had been answered, but through the mysterious workings of divine providence!

Later, writing from Rome to the brethren in Philippi, the apostle could say that the things which had happened to him “have fallen out rather unto the progress of the gospel” (Philippians 1:12). There is no doubt but that Paul saw the helpful hand of Providence in this series of events in his life (see Acts 26:22).

Let God’s people thus rejoice, and live each day with calm confidence, knowing that the Lord is near, and that Heaven’s operations through providence are an abiding presence in our daily existence.

Sources/Footnotes

- Newman, A. H. 1933. *A Manual of Church History*. Vol. 1. Philadelphia, PA: American Baptist Publication Society.
- Rienecker, Fritz. 1980. *A Linguistic Key to the Greek Testament*. Vol. 2. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan.
- Robertson, A. T. 1931. *Word Pictures in the New Testament*. Vol. 4. Nashville, TN: Broadman.
- Rupprecht, Arthur. 1978. *The Expositor’s Bible Commentary*. Frank Gaebelin, ed. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

SICK AND/OR INJURED:

- Blu Earnhart's Uncle Bob is requesting our prayers. He had a heart attack last week and is recovering. They are monitoring now and wanting him to watch diet and exercise. However, he has bad arthritis and can't. They will continue to watch him closely.
- Please also continue to remember Patty Earnhart. She continues to have health issues due to her blood disease. Since the first of the year, antibiotics have not seemed to help. She needs our prayers.
- Larry Pahman's father is continuing to improve.
- Jean Gause was moved to a rehab facility this past week. She continues to improve but has a long road to recovery.
- Cathryn Scruggs is making great progress. We want to thank all who have sending out those prayers, cards and phone calls.
- Continue to remember Mike Elledge, Randy Adams, Shirley Rogers, Carl Lee, Sherrelle Kendrick, Randy Howe's mother, Linda Martin, Tommy Mikell, Della Brunson, Ann Ewing, Diane Jones, Terry Dickerson (nephew of Ruth Gufford), Betty Hitchcock, Shirley Kirby, Carolyn Canady (Rhonda's Mom), James Harrison, Edward Brown.

Please keep these loved ones in your prayers. Many of those who have chronic conditions suffer from day to day. Those that are confined need not only our prayers but visits, calls, cards or letters.

Ladies Night Out:

The ladies will be meeting for their monthly LNO on April 12 @ 7:00PM. We will be meeting at Olive Garden on Archer Road. Hope to see everyone there. Please let Jessica know if you will be going or if you need a ride.

Pre-Teen Devotional:

Thanks to everyone who came out to the pre-teen devotional on Saturday. They are continuing their study on the Fruits of the Spirit. Yesterday they studied gentleness. They all had a great time playing at the park and fellowshiping with one another.

Teen Devotional:

We will be having a teen devotional on Sunday the 17th following our PM worship service. Hope to see all the teens there.

TO OUR VISITORS

It is our sincere desire to help all men and women understand what God's will is for their life. Here at the Alachua Church of Christ, we stand ready and willing to help you with any needs you may have. Here are just a few of the services we offer: Marriage Counseling, Family Counseling and Addiction Counseling, free audiotapes of any lesson and In-home Bible Study. Feel free to make your request know. Ask any member of the congregation.

“What Must I Do To Be Saved?”

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Meeting Times:
Sunday Morning
Bible Study: 9:30
Worship: 10:30

Sunday Evening
Worship: 5:30

Mid-Week Bible Study
Wednesday 6:30

- A. There are many who desire to be saved.
- a. Jesus Christ is the only Saviour.
 - b. We must obey Christ. Hebrews 5:8-9
- B. In order for humanity to be saved they must do it according to the will of God.

- a. There are many in the world that think their way is right but it will only lead to eternal destruction. Proverbs 14:12

1. What must I do to be saved?

- i. The Bible is the only place that we can find this answer.
- ii. While Paul and Silas were in prison in Acts 16:22-29, the _____ was concerned about his salvation.
- iii. The jailor and his household was told to _____ and then they were _____.
- iv. _____ is what saves us and washes our sins away.
- v. Don't play Russian roulette with your life. II Corinthians 6:2
- vi. Life is but a vapor. James 4:14

2. Must be born again.

- i. Without the new birth we fail to comply with the word of God.
- ii. If we fail to comply we can not enter the _____. John 3:5
- iii. The new birth is _____. Colossians 1:13-14
- iv. God has delivered the Christian from _____.
- v. The _____ is the kingdom of Christ.
- vi. When we are baptized into Christ we become a new _____, we have a new _____, we have a new _____.

3. We must worship according to the scriptures.

- i. Those who worship must do so in _____ and in _____. John 4:24
- ii. There are 3 aspects of worship:
 1. We must worship God and only God.
 2. We must worship sincerely and whole heartedly.
 3. We must worship as He has directed us through the scriptures.
- iii. Worship that is out of harmony with God's word is worshipping in error.

We're on the Web!

alachuachurchofchrist.org