

Providence in Our Church

During December, Cain & I have both worked from the pulpit to help us all see and become more aware of the providence of God. Romans 8.28 - *God is working all things for our good.* Everything has a purpose, even though we may not see how in the moment. God is not detached or removed. He is not far away. He is right there in the middle of it all ... in the same way that He has worked with His people from creation. Today, we want to look at the doctrine of providence from the standpoint of how God is working in our church.

I. For What Did God Design the Church?

A. A Place for Redeemed Sinners

1. We have a new identity, location, and life. 1 Timothy 1.12 - who gets the credit?
 - a) *I give thanks to Christ **Jesus** our Lord who has strengthened me...*
2. Paul's past humbled him. 1.13 - Formerly *a blasphemer, persecutor, an **arrogant** man.*
3. 1.15-16 - this is the type of spirit we need to have.

B. A Place of Togetherness

1. Ephesians 2.14 - the goal was **peace** ... which was only possible by the work of Christ.
2. 2.15 - the vision of God was togetherness ... in **one** new body ...
3. 2.18 - with everyone having the same access through the **Spirit** to the Father.
4. 2.19-21 - resulting in: *...members of God's **household***
5. What's in this for us?

C. A Place of Safety & Healing

1. Sin always promises more than it delivers
 - a) Psalm 38:4 - *For my iniquities have **flooded** over my head; they are a burden too heavy for me to bear.*
 - b) This is the reality of the lost ... and many Christians who battle setback and sin.
2. We want to be a place where people feel comfortable in reaching out to God in their humility and brokenness.
3. Jeremiah 30.11: *For I will be with you—this is the Lord's declaration— **to save you***
4. We want to be a place for those who are weak, exhausted, weary, and burdened to cast those things on Jesus ...

II. How is God Working in Our Church?

III. How You Can Fit into What God is Doing

- A. c.a.s.t. groups, 2-6 people who work to provide support and help for the hurting.
- B. Discipleship groups, 3-12 people who will be a place where someone can learn about Jesus.
- C. Community groups, which focus on groups of men, women, or seniors getting together for encouragement and study.

IV. Conclusion

- A. If you're trapped in sin, the more you thrash about, the more you are going to hurt yourself or others. Just stop. Surrender. Give it to God.

B. Will you embrace the new life He promises?