



Introduction

- Psalm 115:3
- Isaiah 46:10
- Providence = God's purposeful sovereignty
- All things come to pass unchangeable and certainly in relation to the foreknowledge and decree of God, who is the first cause. Thus, nothing happens to anyone by chance or outside of God's providence. Yet by the same prudence God arranges all things to occur according to the nature of second causes, either necessarily, freely, or in response to other causes. LBCF 5.2
- Proverbs 16:33
- The almighty power, unsearchable wisdom, and infinite goodness of God are so thoroughly demonstrated in His providence, that His sovereign plan includes even the first fall and every other sinful action both of angels and humans. 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. Through a complex arrangement of methods He governs sinful actions to accomplish His perfectly holy purposes. 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. LBCF 5.4

Biblical Ground Rules

- God's providence over sinful human choices – causes, ordains, governs, decrees, produces, authors, guides, leads into, brings about, rules, determines, controls, regulates, decides.
- God can see to it that sin happens without sinning or removing the responsibility of the sinner.

God is Holy

- Isaiah 6:1–3
- 1 John 1:5
- Psalm 145:17

The Bible Rules Over Our Assumptions

Whatever the Bible teaches we are obliged to believe and obey.

we must not explain away God's providence over sinful human choices in order to preserve God's holiness.

We cannot silence the true meaning of one passage with the true meaning of another passage.

We cannot place our perceived logical conclusions above the teaching of Scripture.

John 3:16

We must not read our assumptions into the Bible but allow the Bible to guide our understanding.

We Don't Need to Know How God Works

- We do not need to know how God rules over sin without being sinful.



- 2 Peter 1:3
- Genesis 18:25
- Romans 9:14

Providence Over Evil

Evil Actions

- Genesis 37:4–8
- Genesis 45:5–8
- Psalm 105:16–17
- Genesis 50:15–21
- Joseph's brothers meant evil to do evil, but God meant to do good through the evil.
- Neither the brothers nor Joseph had ultimate self-determination. God's will was ultimately decisive.

Evil Attitudes

- Exodus 1:8–10
- Psalm 105:23–25
- Exodus 4:21
- Exodus 9:16; Romans 9:17
- The hatred of the Egyptians was sin, and the hardness of Pharaoh's heart was sin, but both were brought about by God's providence without him sinning or in any compromising his holiness.

Evil Spirits

- 1 Kings 22:4–8
- 1 Kings 22:10–12
- 1 Kings 22:19–23
- 1 Kings 22:34–35
- God's providence rules over the spirits of the evil realm

Conclusion

- Acts 2:22–23
- Acts 4:27–28
- Romans 8:28
- Romans 8:35
- Our great hope is not in knowing how God rules over evil, but in knowing for sure that he does.