

Colossians 3:16

*Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly,
teaching and admonishing one another
in all wisdom,
singing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs,
with thankfulness in your hearts to God.*



This week and next are two occasions for prayer. This week leads up to our annual elections of elders and deacons. Next week is the National Day of Prayer. Our devotions this week and next will reflect on the sovereignty of God and prayer. God's sovereignty is a huge incentive to our prayers. The sovereign creator of all things ordains prayer for His glory and our benefit.

Reflections from Scripture on The Sovereignty of God, part II

God's providence extends over man's birth and lot in life:

Psalm 139:16 Your eyes saw my unformed substance; in your book were written, every one of them, the days that were formed for me, when as yet there was none of them.

Acts 17:25 He himself gives to all mankind life and breath and everything.

God's providence extends over life and death:

Deuteronomy 32:39 See now that I, even I, am he, and there is no god beside me; I kill and I make alive; I wound and I heal; and there is none that can deliver out of my hand.

James 4:14-15 You do not know what tomorrow will bring. What is your life? For you are a mist that appears for a little time and then vanishes. Instead you ought to say, "If the Lord wills, we will live and do this or that."

God's providence extends over disease, disability and disaster:

Exodus 4:11 Then the Lord said to him, "Who has made man's mouth? Who makes him mute, or deaf, or seeing, or blind? Is it not I, the Lord?"

Isaiah 45:7 God declares, "I form the light and create darkness, I bring prosperity and create disaster; I, the LORD, do all these things.

Amos 3:6 When a trumpet sounds in a city, do not the people tremble? When disaster comes to a city, has not the LORD caused it?

God's providence extends over all outward successes and failures of men's lives:

Psalm 75:6 For not from the east or from the west and not from the wilderness comes lifting up, but it is God who executes judgment, putting down one and lifting up another.

Luke 1:51-53 He has shown strength with his arm; he has scattered the proud in the thoughts of their hearts; he has brought down the mighty from their thrones and exalted those of humble estate; he has filled the hungry with good things, and the rich he has sent away empty.

God's providence extends over all things seemingly accidental or insignificant:

Proverbs 16:9 In his heart a man plans his course, but the LORD determines his steps.

Proverbs 16:33 The lot is cast into the lap, but its every decision is from the Lord.

Matthew 10:29-30 Are not two sparrows sold for a penny? And not one of them will fall to the ground apart from your Father. But even the hairs of your head are all numbered.

Song

Psalm 59:16 But I will sing of your strength; I will sing aloud of your steadfast love in the morning. For you have been to me a fortress and a refuge in the day of my distress.

Still, My Soul, Be Still

Still, my soul, be still and do not fear
Though winds of change may rage tomorrow.
God is at your side; no longer dread
The fires of unexpected sorrow.

Refrain: God, You are my God, and I will trust in You and not be shaken.
Lord of peace, renew a steadfast spirit within me to rest in You alone.

Still, my soul, be still; do not be moved
By lesser lights and fleeting shadows.
Hold on to His ways, with shield of faith
Against temptation's flaming arrows. *Refrain*

Still, my soul, be still; do not forsake
The truth you learned in the beginning.
Wait upon the Lord, and hope will rise
As stars appear when day is dimming. *Refrain*

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Prayer

II Chronicles 7:14 If my people, who are called by my Name, will humble themselves and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven and will forgive their sin and heal their land.

God, our Father Almighty, Creator of heaven and earth, we praise you and worship you for the staggering manifestation of the glory of your eternal power, wisdom, and goodness in creation. Lord, our confidence is in no created thing, but in you the Creator of everything. Lord, it is almost too much to comprehend that each one of us is uniquely and purposefully and specially created by you for your glory. Our life is from you, our life is sustained by you, our life will return to you. Not a hair falls from our head without your will.

Your Word says with you all things are possible. What controls us doesn't control you, what limits us doesn't limit you, what troubles and fatigues us, doesn't trouble or fatigue you. An eagle is not bothered by an earthquake, he rises above it. A whale is not disturbed by a hurricane, it plunges beneath it. You soar above and plunge beneath all things.

Forgive us when we who are the clay, presume to tell you the Potter what to create or how to make it. Forgive us when we who are like a character in a fiction novel try to dictate to you how the plot should go. Forgive us when we forget we are the subjects before a very great and good and wise King.

Holy Father, we are truly thankful that you do not answer all our prayers according to our finite and foolish will, that you don't give into our whining when we don't realize instead of asking for bread we are asking for a snake.

We humbly ask for your perfect will to be done as you sovereignly rule and over rule in the choosing of new elders and deacons for your church. You know all things, you know the hearts of men, you know the future needs of our church. For you glory set apart those specific men we will best glorify you and serve our flock at this time.

Thank you that you are God and we are not. Thank you that you know the way of all things and you have a perfect plan and purpose for everything. You do all things according to the perfect pleasure of your will, even when your pleasure causes our displeasure.

Thank you that you are the Alpha and Omega, the first and the last, the beginning and the end, from everlasting to everlasting the same. To you alone belongs all the glory, honor and praise, for from you and for you and to you are all things, in the name of Jesus Christ, Amen.