

**The 1689 Confession of Faith, Chapter 5 – “Of Divine Providence”, Session # 16 –
“Borne on Eagle’s Wings”, Presented by Pastor Paul Rendall
in the Adult Sunday School Class, on May 26th, 2019.**

Paragraph 7 – As the providence of God doth in general reach to all creatures, so after a more special manner it taketh care of his z)church, and disposes of all things to the good thereof.

z) 1st Timothy 4: 10; Amos 9: 8-9; Isaiah 43: 3-5

Romans 8: 28-30 – “And we know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are the called according to His purpose.” “For whom He foreknew, He also predestined to be conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the firstborn among many brethren.” “Moreover whom He predestined, these He also called; whom He called, these He also justified; and whom He justified, these He also glorified.”

1. How does God work all things together for good for His Church, His people?

Answer: He foreknows and predestines His people to be conformed to the image of His Son. He calls them, He justifies them, and He glorifies them. As a believer in Christ, in this life, He providentially cares for you and helps you with all of your needs, both physical and spiritual, and then brings you to eternal glory.

Deuteronomy 32: 7-14 – “Remember the days of old, consider the years of many generations.” “Ask your father, and he will show you; your elders, and they will tell you: When the Most High divided their inheritance to the nations, when He separated the sons of Adam, He set the boundaries of the peoples according to the number of the children of Israel. For the LORD’s portion is His people; Jacob is the place of His inheritance.” “He found him in a desert land and in the wasteland, a howling wilderness; He encircled him, He instructed him, He kept him as the apple of His eye. As an eagle stirs up its nest, hovers over its young, spreading out its wings, taking them up, carrying them on its wings, so the LORD alone led him, And there was no foreign god with him.” “He made him ride in the heights of the earth, that he might eat the produce of the fields; He made him draw honey from the rock, and oil from the flinty rock; curds from the cattle, and milk of the flock, with fat of lambs; and rams of the breed of Bashan, and goats, with the choicest wheat; And you drank wine, the blood of the grapes.”

a. Salvation – He found Israel in a wilderness.

b. He providentially leads and guides you – He encircled Israel; He led him about.

Verses 10a and 12 – “He encircled him.” “So the Lord alone led him.”

c. He providentially instructs you, the believer. It says here that God instructed Israel; that is, He not only gave them His 10 commandments and His law, but He also so providentially ordered all things on their behalf, that they were being taught His righteous and holy way of doing things; what they should do when they were confronted with problems of hunger and thirst, and needed protection from their enemies. He was in every instance showing them that they needed to trust in Him rather than griping and complaining that things were not like they wanted them to be.

Nehemiah 9: 20, 21 says – “You also gave Your good Spirit to instruct them, And did not withhold Your manna from their mouth, And gave them water for their thirst.” “Forty years You sustained them in the wilderness; they lacked nothing; their clothes did not wear out and their feet did not swell.”

d. He keeps you as the apple of His eye.

If we think of this as a word picture, I believe that it means that God loved them and delighted in them as His people. He guarded them as a man would guard his own eye from being hurt. But it was much more

than that. He always looked upon the elect among them with mercy and tenderness and delight. Even though many among Israel were so false and full of sin in His sight at many points, yet He bore with them at many points in their wilderness wanderings. And more particularly, He looked upon His elect among them, in this holy way of everlasting love; purposing to preserve them, teach them, and help them, in and through all their difficulties, trials, and afflictions in their life to heaven because of the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ which He would purchase for them at the cross, when He came as their redeemer in the fullness of time. He does the same for all New Testament Christians as well. God keeps all Christians as the apple of His eye.

2. God teaches His people like an Eagle does her young.

Verse 11 – “As an eagle stirs up its nest, hovers over its young, spreading out its wings, taking them up, carrying them on its wings, so the Lord alone led him.”

Exodus 19: 4 and 5 – “You have seen what I did to the Egyptians, and how I bore you on eagles’ wings and brought you to Myself.” “Now therefore, if you will indeed obey My voice and keep My covenant, then you shall be a special treasure to Me above all people; for all the earth is Mine.”

An eagle is very unique in the way that she treats her young whom she would teach to fly. I am told that she does not go into her nest suddenly, but first she makes a noise, and awakens them with her wings, striking them against a tree or its branches so that they might be aroused and be more ready to receive what she would have them to do. She flutters over them and hovers over them to stimulate them to get up and out of the nest and to begin to use their wings to fly. And when she perceives that they are too weak to sustain themselves when they are venturing out to fly, she will come up underneath them and carry them on her own wings to keep them from falling. Even so, each and every Christian needs to see God as helping them to learn to live the Christian life to His glory, in this holy way; that even as He bore and carried Israel of old, on eagle’s wings.

How does the Christian learn to fly, spiritually speaking? By being taught and led by the Spirit.

Romans 8: 14 – “For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, these are the sons of God.” “For you did not receive the spirit of bondage again to fear, but you received the Spirit of adoption by who we cry out, ‘Abba, Father.’” “The Spirit bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God, and if children, then heirs – heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ, if indeed we suffer with Him, that we may also be glorified together.”

Christ is the Eagle. We are the eaglets. We are God’s sons and daughters by faith in Him, and we must learn to fly; that is, we must learn to walk in the Spirit and not in the flesh. But the Lord will providentially teach us and order all things which will make for our growth, and for our good. It may seem a fearful thing to learn to fly, but we have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear, but we have received the Spirit of Adoption, who assures us that Christ is with us. He is for us, and He will lead us into all the truth and teach us. For He is the God of our salvation. He teaches us by His Spirit to learn to do His will and to learn His ways. He helps each believer, spiritually speaking, teaching us how to learn to fly; that is how to follow His lead and learn from Him, and how to look to Him and depend on Him to providentially teaching us all that we will need to learn to glorify Him, in terms of keeping His word. So, in terms of the Christian’s persevering in their faith and making progress in sanctification God is like an eagle bearing them on his wings.

The agencies which God employs in this nest stirring. They are sorrow, disappointment, vicissitude (changes), opportunity, voice, vision, inward rest, and other things which cannot be tabulated.

One day God will break up our last earthly nest. Death is a mounting upward. It is a necessary fulfilment of the present life. Here we never reach the sun toward which we soar. We cannot even steadily gaze upon it; it burns and blinds us; but we shall. (J. W. Earnshaw.)

