

I. The Providence of God (vv 1-8).

- A.** Definition, or, The Doctrine Stated (WCF 5.1)
- B.** It's seasonableness (v 1a; Gen 8:22; Psa 1:3)
- C.** It's purposefulness (v 1b; Eph 1:7-11)
- D.** It's breadth (vv 2-8)
 - 1) What is meant by a *time*?
 - 2) Who is it that decides this *time*?
 - 3) How should I understand these fourteen couplets?
 - 4) What are these *times* and their applications?
 - a) *A time to be born, And a time to die; A time to plant, And a time to pluck what is planted* (v 2; Heb 9:27)
 - b) *A time to kill, And a time to heal; A time to break down, And a time to build up* (v 3)
 - c) *A time to weep, And a time to laugh; A time to mourn, And a time to dance* (v 4)
 - d) *A time to cast away stones, And a time to gather stones; A time to embrace, And a time to refrain from embracing* (v 5)
 - e) *A time to gain, And a time to lose; A time to keep, And a time to throw away* (v 6; Mt 6:19-21)
 - f) *A time to tear, And a time to sew; A time to keep silence, And a time to speak* (v 7)
 - g) *A time to love, And a time to hate; A time of war, And a time of peace* (v 8)
- E.** Uses from the Point
 - 1) We must learn this now, in a normal season, rather than in the moment of either great affliction or great prosperity.
 - 2) We must take what we have learned in the Scriptures and apply it in the moment.
 - 3) Consider how to minister to one another in a manner proper to the times and seasons of God's providence (Rom 12:15)

II. The Nature of God and of Mankind (vv 11, 14-15).

- A.** The nature of God's providence (v 11a)
 - 1) The fittingness of God's providence
 - 2) The beauty of God's providence
 - 3) Three illustrations to prove and emphasize this point
 - a) The history of the saints
 - b) The history of redemption (Gal 4:4-5)
 - c) Creation itself (Gen 1:2)
- B.** The nature of mankind (v 11b)
 - 1) Our eternal desire
 - 2) Our temporal limitation (Pr 25:2)
- C.** The nature of God's will (vv 14-15)
 - 1) It is everlasting as is God's nature (v 14; Isa 14:27)
 - 2) It is enduring as is God's nature
 - 3) It is intentional for God's glory
 - 4) It is repetitive as with the fall of creation
 - 5) It is ensured by God's pursuit

III. The Response of Man to God's Providence (vv 9-10, 12-13).

- A.** Restating the question of 1:3 and 2:22, but putting it into a new context (v 9; c.f. 2:22)
- B.** The answer to this question is the same as before; but, being rooted in the God of heaven and not the vanity of life under the sun, the answer holds far more weight and joy (v 10; c.f. 1:13)
- C.** The fitting response of man (vv 12-13)
- D.** The fitting response of man is the fruit of faith (v 13b; Eph 2:8)
- E.** Uses from the Text
 - 1) Christians are to train themselves to rejoice (Jms 1:2-4).
 - 2) Making good use of the Lord's Day, and particularly the Lord's Table (Mt 9:14-15)