

# Cornerstone Bible Church

## Systematic Theology

<http://cornerstonebiblechurch.com/resources/downloads.dot?folderPath=/global/downloads/SystematicTheology/>

Acknowledgment & Credits:

LECTURES ON INTRODUCTION TO  
**SYSTEMATIC THEOLOGY** TAUGHT BY  
**RAFAEL ALCANTARA** IN 2009 DURING THE  
SUNDAY SCHOOL AT IGLESIA BIBLICA DEL  
SEÑOR JESUCRISTO.

Edwin Gonzalez

August 28, 2011

# THEOLOGY PROPER

## General Contents:

1. The Existence of God
2. The Attributes of God
3. The Trinity
4. Creation
5. Providence
6. The Names of God

# Providence

# Providence

## The Works of God: Providence

### Introduction:

The term Providence it's not in the Bible, but it highlights a Scriptural truth - **the ongoing relationship between God and His creation.**

**Definition:** *“the continued exercise of Divine Power through which the Creator preserves all of His creatures, operates in whatever must take place in the world and directs all things to their predetermined end”* (Systematic Theology, Louis Berkhoff).

God not only created the universe but He also preserves it, and He governs it continuously

# Providence

## I - Elements of Providence

**1. Preservation:** (Ps 104:29-30; Col. 1:17; Heb. 1:3).

*καὶ τὰ πάντα ἐν αὐτῷ συνέστηκεν*

And

all things in Him **subsist**

2. God sustains all things so that they may exist and operate according to His design. Col. 1:17b *“all things hold together in Him”*; *“All things have their subsistence in Him”*... *“all things find their cohesion in Him”* (Hendricksen);

3. Heb 1:3 “upholds” - *to carry* or *to bear*. Illust: the paralytic who was **carried** on a stretcher to Jesus (Lk. 5:18). *Jesus is always sustaining the universe*

# Providence

## I - Elements of Providence

### **1. Preservation:** (Ps 104:29-30; Col. 1:17; Heb. 1:3).

“The creative voice that made the universe requires as its complement the sustaining voice through which He maintains its existence” (The Epistle to the Hebrews, F. F. Bruce)

**2. Concurrence:** “God cooperates with all things created in all of their actions, directing their inherent properties in order to cause them to act in the way they do” (Biblical Doctrine, Wayne Grudem). That’s why Joseph could say to his brothers that it was God, not them, who had sent him to Egypt (Gn. 45:5)

# Providence

## Elements of Providence

**2. Concurrence:** “God cooperates with all things created in all of their actions, directing their inherent properties in order to cause them to act in the way they do” (Biblical Doctrine, Wayne Grudem).

God said to Job that He controls the climate and directs the stars of heaven (Job 38:22-32)

Proverbs 21:1 “The king's heart is like channels of water in the hand of the LORD; He turns it wherever He wishes.”

# Providence

## I - Elements of Providence

1. Preservation

2. Concurrence

3. **Government:** (Gn. 45:5-8; Prov. 16:9; Dn. 4:34-35; Rom. 8:28). All that exists is under God's control, and any of its changes and operations occur according to His purpose, God controls even the smallest and most trivial events (1 Ki. 22:34-37; Mt. 10:29-30).

## II - The Reach of Providence

1. **Inanimate Creation** (Job 38:12, 22-32; Acts. 14:15-17). *"The laws of nature may be considered as the ways in which providence operates"* (Manual of Theology, John L. Dagg)



# Providence

## I - Elements of Providence

1. Preservation
2. Concurrence
3. Government

## II - The Reach of Providence

- 1. Inanimate Creation** (Job 38:12, 22-32; Acts. 14:15-17).

Jesus referred to the Father as He *“who causes His sun to rise over good and evil and causes His rain to fall over righteous and unrighteous”* (Mt. 5:45).

The order and stability of the universe are an exhibition of Divine Providence. This provides the basis for science, because the universe operates in a predictable manner.

# Providence

## II - The Reach of Providence

### 1. Inanimate Creation

God is not bound by the laws He established, when He works outside them, we call that a miracle

### 2. Animate Creation

- a) God feeds the animals (Ps. 104:27-30; Job 38:39-39:1; Mt. 6:26; 10:29) and He establishes the boundaries of their existence
- b) “Casual” events are in His hands. *“The lot is cast into the lap, But its every decision is from the LORD.”* (Prov. 16:33).
- c) The nations stand under His power (Ps. 33:10-19; 47:8; Acts. 17:26-28). He controls what happens to the peoples and kingdoms of this world

# Providence

## II - The Reach of Providence

### 2. Animate Creation

d) All aspects of our lives, from beginning to end, are in His hands (Ps. 4:8; 104:14-15; 121:1-8; 127:1-3; 139:13-16; Prov. 10:24; 16:1, 9; 21:1; Jer. 10:23; Mt. 7:7; 10:30; Rom. 8:28; Phil 2:13; 4:19). *“Because in Him we move, and are and exist”* (Acts 17:28).

Even though we work hard with our hands for a profit, we must pray in trust: *“Give us this day our daily bread”* (Mat. 6:11).

**Dt 30:9** "Then the LORD your God will prosper you abundantly in all the work of your hand, in the offspring of your body and in the offspring of your"

# Providence

## I - Elements of Providence

1. Preservation, 2. Concurrence & 3. Government

## II - The Reach of Providence

1. Animate & Inanimate Creation

## III - Providence & its relationship to Freedom of Choice and Evil

**1. Moral Government.** This is the part of divine government which is particularly adapted to moral agents that is, willing agents who have a sense of good and evil and who are capable of obeying or disobeying. God established a sphere for the exercise of such moral agency and for the exercise of His own justice

God has ultimate control over the actions of men without denying their liberty and responsibility

# Providence

## III - Providence & its relationship to Freedom of Choice and Evil

Even though the moral and revealed will of God is not always obeyed, His sovereign and secret purpose is always fulfilled even by His most avowed enemies (Gn. 45:5-8; 50:20; Is. 10:5-15; Lk. 22:22; Acts 2:23; 4:27-28)

Even the most sinful action cannot occur without His permission and without being aligned with His decrees

There is an obvious difficulty when we consider God's control over sin, because definitely God is not the author of sin nor is He pleased by it (Jam 1:13-14, Hab 1:15).

# Providence

## III - Providence & its relationship to Freedom of Choice and Evil

We should not feel anxious about defending God. The very darkness in which God has left us to explain some of these issues is the source to strengthen our faith

This doctrine does not deny that our decisions are real and that we are the means God established for them to take place. God makes things to happen, but He does it in such a way as to “maintain our ability to make responsible and willing decisions with real and eternal results, for which we are held accountable” (Grudem). The guilt and consequences of sin fall on the creature and never on the Creator

# Providence

## III - Providence & its relationship to Freedom of Choice and Evil

LET THE BIBLE SPEAK FOR ITSELF IN THE MOST CRUCIAL, UNFAIR, AND PIVOTAL EVENT IN THE UNIVERSE. BY INFERENCE, IF IT HAPPENED HERE, THEN IT DOES HAPPEN IN SMALLER THINGS

Acts 2:23 **this *Man***, delivered up by the predetermined plan and foreknowledge of God, you nailed to a cross by the hands of godless men and put *Him* to death.

**What was the primary cause for the death of Christ?**

“God’s predetermined plan”

**What was the responsible agency for the death of Christ?**

“you nailed to a cross by the hands of godless men”

# Providence

## Applications

- a) Let us recognize and delight in God's providence.  
*"How innumerable are your works O Lord! You did all of them in wisdom; the earth is full of your benefits."* (Ps. 104:24).
  
- b) Let us remember our dependence on God's blessings (Ps 127:1-2; Mt. 6:25-34) and at the same time, we must be diligent in all of our actions to succeed. Pr 3:6 *"Recognize [God] in all of our ways and He will strengthen our paths"* (3:6) and 12:27 *"the precious possession of a man is diligence"* (12:27)
  
- c) Persevering prayer is God's special instrument to send blessings (Mt. 7:7-11; Jam. 4:2).



# Providence

## Applications:

- d) Providence provokes gratitude for the innumerable benefits we receive from the Lord (Phil. 4:6; 1 Th. 5:18; 1 Ti. 4:3-5). *... For the LORD is good; His lovingkindness is everlasting, And His faithfulness to all generations.*” (Ps 100:4-5).
  
- e) Providence is the source of joy in tribulations (Ps. 39:8-11; 1 Sam. 3:18; Phil. 4:11). *“The Lord gave and the Lord took away, let the Name of the Lord be blessed”* (Job 1:21)

God uses tribulations to mold us into the image of His Son (Ro. 8:28).