

God's Providence (1 Samuel 19 & Colossians 1:15-17 & John 15:1-5)

21-Jul-19

Begin Service with:

Psalm 103:13-14

Just as a father has compassion on his children, so the LORD has compassion on those who fear Him. For He Himself knows our frame; He is mindful that we are but dust.

Intro

There are Bibles in front of you

If you could turn to 1 Samuel 19

There's an outline for you to take notes - if you wish

Let me ask God for His help and understanding

Let's pray...

[PowerPoint 1-Case for Christ]

*You may have seen the Movie - **Case for Christ***

*It's a true story of **Lee Strobel** an investigative journalist and self-professed **Atheist**, who sets out to disprove the evidence of Jesus and to disprove his wife, **Leslie's**, recently found Christian faith*

I'm just going to show a short video clip from the movie,

At this stage Lee's wife, Leslie, is not a Christian - and Lee and Leslie - are out for dinner with their young daughter Alison - when this happens...

[PowerPoint 2-Video Clip]

Some would put this down to coincidence or good luck

The nurse in the *Movie* says it's down to Jesus - and the nurse says that she and her husband were going to go to another restaurant that night - but "something" told them to go to that particular restaurant...

(pause)

But it begs the question...

Who's taking care of you?

Your husband?

Your wife?

Your Children?

Your family?

Your friends?

Your church?

Yourself?

Or is it God's Providence

Providence is the topic today...

So, we'd better define providence

[PowerPoint 3a-Defintion]

Definition - **the protective care of God** [the word providence comes from the Latin word providentia - where we get our English word - foresight - providence is foresight God has - because he knows the beginning from the end - and so He is able to care for us - in whatever way He sees fit]

So, God's Providence is:

[PowerPoint 3b-providence]

NOT COINCIDENCE

NOT GOOD LUCK

Instead, God sends people and circumstances to protect us

In our passage from 1 Samuel 19 - we see God's Providence - God's protective care of David

[PowerPoint 4-Heading]

God's Providence of David (1 Samuel 19:1-24)

First off in verses 1 to 3

Jonathan warns David that Saul is out to kill him

[PowerPoint 4a-Jonathan]

a. Jonathan warns David that Saul is out to kill him (vv1-3)

Saul is unaware of the covenant friendship Jonathan has with David - made in 1 Sam 18.

So, when Saul tells his son Jonathan and all his attendants to kill David

Jonathan, because of his great friendship with David, warns David of this plot

Jonathan tells David to go into hiding and Jonathan says he will talk to his

father about David

Jonathan's friendship with David - is God's Providence - or is it just coincidence or good luck?

[PowerPoint 4b-Jonathan speaks]

Next, Jonathan speaks to his Father, Saul, asking him not to harm David -

that's in verses 4 to 8

b. Jonathan tells Saul not to harm David (vv4-8)

Jonathan speaks to Saul and reminds him how David, with the help of God, won a great battle against the Philistines, defeating the giant Goliath

Jonathan asks Saul why would you want to kill an innocent man like David - killing him for no reason

So, Saul makes an oath - in v6 - As surely as the Lord lives, David will not be put to death

[Saul hasn't got the best track record with oaths]

But with that promise - David is brought back to Saul's palace

God's providence has kept David safe - or is it just coincidence or good luck?

Unfortunately, Saul's promise is short lived - in verses 9 and 10...

David escapes from the spear of Saul by elusion

[PowerPoint 4c-elusion]

c. David escapes from the spear of Saul by elusion (vv9-10)

Elusion is the action of escaping from or avoiding danger - usually in a cunning or skillful way

Whilst David is playing the lyre - Saul tried to pin David to the wall with a spear but David eluded him and escaped at night

God's providence gave David the skill to elude the spear - or was it just a coincidence or good luck?

Next, Saul's daughter, Michal - who is also David's wife, helps David escape - that's in verses 11 to 17

[PowerPoint 4d-Michal]

d. Michal helps David escape (vv11-17)

See v11, Saul sends men to watch David's house and kill him the next morning

Michal warns David to escape now - otherwise he will be dead by the morning

Was that Michal's idea or did God give it to her?

So, Michal lets David escape out the window and places an idol in his bed to pretend David is still asleep

When Saul's men come - Michal says David is ill?

When Saul finds out he tells his men to bring David back to him - but they discover his empty bed

And Saul asks Michal why did you deceive me?

Is it okay for Michal to lie to her father?

Certainly not - the 9th commandment says - do not bear false witness

Are there such things as white lies?

If Michal had not lied - God would still have achieved His purposes in a different way

God can use our good, our bad and our ugly - to still achieve His purposes

God's providence again saves David - or is it just coincidence or good luck?

[PowerPoint 4e-Spirit]

Next, David is protected by the Spirit of God - that's in verses 18 to 24

e. David is protected by the Spirit of God (vv18-24)

Understandably, when David escapes, he goes to Samuel the prophet's place at Ramah

It's always, good for us to get Godly help and advice in a crisis

Samuel and David travel to Naioth - but Saul hears they are there and sends a group of men to capture David

But Saul's men - see a group of prophets - prophesying with Samuel as the leader - and the Spirit of God comes upon Saul's men - and they start prophesying too - completely forgetting their mission to capture David.

When it says that they were all prophesying it isn't that they were all predicting the future. The Hebrew word simply has the idea of speaking under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit. More likely they gave spontaneous and inspired praise to God.

This was an unusual work of the Holy Spirit - to come upon men who did not seek after God, who did not long to be filled with the Spirit. God did this to protect David, and this was His way of "disarming" those who came to capture David.

This was also the Holy Spirit's warning to these men and to Saul. It is as if the Spirit said, "I don't want David captured. I am sending these men home empty handed. Instead of seeking to kill David, you should seek to be filled with the Spirit of God"

When these men fail to bring back David, Saul sends two more groups of men - and the same thing happens - the Spirit of God leads them to prophesy too
So, then Saul himself, goes to capture David

But the Spirit of God comes upon Saul too - and Saul begins to prophesy

He even strips off his garments and prophesies in front of Samuel

God's providence is again in action, with God's Spirit protecting David - or is just all coincidence or good luck?

What we see in this story of David

Is God's providence - in **physically protecting** of David from harm

Which is great.

But - something far more important than our physical protection

Is our *Spiritual protection*

Our Spiritual protection is found in none other than our *Lord Jesus*

That's in our NT passage from Colossians 1:15-17

[Please turn there now]

God's Providence in Jesus (Colossians 1:15-17)

In Colossians 1:15-17 - we see exactly who Jesus is and His providence

[PowerPoint 5-Col 1:15]

- We see the Son - Jesus - is the image of the invisible God - in other words Jesus is God
- We see Jesus is the - Firstborn over all creation - the ancient Greek word (prototokos) can describe either priority in time or supremacy in rank. As Paul used it here, he probably had both ideas in mind, with Jesus being before all created things and Jesus being of a supremely different order than all created things.
- We see Jesus, the Son, was there at the time of creation

[PowerPoint 6-Col 1:16-17]

- We see that Jesus created ALL things - in Heaven and Earth, visible and invisible - thrones, powers, rulers and authorities
- In fact, all things were created THROUGH Him (because Jesus is the WORD of God - and that's how things were created in the beginning through God's Word - let there be light etc.)
- And we also see all things were created FOR Jesus (for His glory and His pleasure - and so the Son could glorify the Father)
- We see Jesus existed BEFORE all things

- AND that He didn't walk away from His Creation - because we see He now holds all things together
- That's Providence

But how does Jesus hold all things together?

In 2 ways -

- a. First - He provides **Earthly Providence** - daily providence in our life on Earth - in what we have, in the blessings we receive and how He watches over our lives - and interceding for us
- b. And Second - He provides **Eternal Providence** - which is far far more important. You see our sinfulness - which we all have - separates us from a close & obedient relationship with God - and has all of us on a trajectory that when we die - we will be separated from God forever -

[PowerPoint 7-God's love]

But God FORE-KNEW we would be sinful - so He had a PLAN from the beginning. In His providence - in His protective care - His plan was to send Jesus - the Son to die for our sin - Jesus took our punishment which our sins deserved - and we like King David - escape - we escape from dying and being separated from God forever - and instead we are forgiven of our sins. And because of Jesus' resurrection - we also have the promise of God's protective care where our death, one day, becomes eternal life in Heaven

God's providence in sending Jesus - is not coincidence - it's not good luck - it's a rescue plan - that God had from the beginning - knowing we would all fall short of God's perfect standards

Our Response to God's Providence (John 15:1-5)

[PowerPoint 8-Heading]

As always, we need a response

[PowerPoint 8a-Believe]

But before we respond we need to *believe* in Jesus' death and resurrection - that He does give us forgiveness and eternal life

And then we can respond to Jesus' death and resurrection

To help us with that

In God's providence - He gave us clear instructions how we respond to His Son Jesus

That's in our NT passage from John 15:1-5

Jesus explains how we respond [Please turn to John 15:1-5]

Here in John 15:1-5

Jesus explains

That He is like a vine - and the Father is the gardener

[PowerPoint 8b-Attached]

And we as believers are branches attached to the vine - which is Jesus

Like any good gardener looking after the vine - God prunes branches to make them more fruitful and grow

God prunes us - to make us grow spiritually - and bear fruit for Him - like sharing our faith - so more people believe in Jesus - and fruit like loving others as Jesus loves us

As we are branches though - we must stay attached to the vine

If we're not attached to the vine - we're not branches anymore - we're just dead sticks - and dead sticks can't produce fruit - and the Father gets rid of dead branches

So, as a church family of believers, we're all branches attached to Jesus the vine

Jesus - promises us - if we remain in Him - He will remain in us - and we will bear much fruit

BUT - if we don't remain attached - Jesus warns - in v5 **apart from me you can do nothing**

*[Illustration - 50th anniversary of Apollo 11 - Buzz Aldrin - at that point before His moon walk he knew it was only through God's providence and through God's power that he was able to achieve this mighty feat - and walk on the moon - so, before his moon walk - he took the Lord's Supper and read John 15:5 - **"I am the vine; you are the branches. If you remain in me and I in you, you will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing."**]*

Jesus has given us the vehicle of the Church (not this building, not this denomination) - but the church as a body of believers - in His providence God has given us the Church - as the vehicle to help us stay attached to Jesus the vine - It's our job to make sure all branches - stay attached to Jesus the Vine - by praying and encouraging one another - and to **invite new branches** to be attached to Jesus the Vine.

Conclusion

We began by asking

[PowerPoint 9-Heading]

Who's taking care of you?

Your husband?

Your wife?

Your Children?

Your family?

Your friends?

Your church?

Yourself?

[PowerPoint 9a-answer]

The answer is God the Father is taking care of you, through JESUS - the Son.

To Him be the glory!

Let's pray...

End of Service

Refer to Psalm 59 -

¹⁶ But I will sing of Your power; Yes, I will sing aloud of Your mercy in the morning; For You have been my defense And refuge in the day of my trouble.

¹⁷ To You, O my Strength, I will sing praises; For God *is* my defense, My God of mercy.

Matthew 10:30-31

- ³⁰ And even the very hairs of your head are all numbered. ³¹ So don't be afraid; you are worth more than many sparrows.