

Whole World - cont.

dential control over it proclaims his wisdom, power, glory, and goodness so that mankind is without excuse in knowing God (Romans 1:19-20). It is God's providential control over his creation that is a guarantee to us that God will fulfill his gracious promises to mankind also (Jeremiah 33:19-22). Indeed, "This is my Father's world," as we sing in our song book, and "He's got the whole world in his hands."

So then, what should our response be to God's providential care over his physical creation? We should have a sense of awe, reverence, and humility before the Lord. The Psalmist wrote: *When I consider thy heavens, the work of thy fingers, The moon and the stars, which thou hast ordained; What is man, that thou art mindful of him? And the son of man, that thou visitest him?* (Psalm 8:3-4). Elihu advised Job: "Stand still, and consider the wondrous works of God" (Job 37:14).

Our response should be like that of Job, who, after hearing from God directly about his control over the world, said, "Behold, I am of small account; what shall I answer thee?" (Job 40:3) and "I know that you can do all things and that no purpose of thine can be restrained" (Job 42:2). Knowing that one day God will destroy his world with his word, we must repent, obey the gospel, and live righteously (2 Peter 3:9, 12-14).

- Chris Reeves -

Sentence Sermons

- Hell is for two kinds of people; those who will do anything and those who won't do anything.
- If you want to know where the "younger generation" is headed, find out from where they came.
- God's way is found in God's word.
- Eternity is something you definitely want to prepare for; you'll be there along time.
- Love one another for love is of God.

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For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war according to the flesh, for the weapons of our warfare are not of the flesh, but divinely powerful for the destruction of fortresses.
- 2 Corinthians 10:3-4 -

He's Got the Whole World in His Hands - Part I

There are many activities of God that are performed by him outside (beyond) his revealed word. We call this providence. "Providence," from the Latin *providentia*, means "foresight" (literally, to look ahead, to see before, to foresee). God's providence is God's active foresight, sovereign rule, support, supervision, and timely care of *all* his creation and in *all* areas of life. God plans ahead of time with a definite purpose in mind to care for someone or something in his creation.

God's foresight can be seen especially in those things that he has planned even *before* the creation of the world (Ephesians 2:4; 3:11). God supports, cares for, and supervises *all* his creation.

A good summary of God's providence is found in Nehemiah 9:6-8 where God is described as one who creates, preserves, promises, and fulfills. Each characteristic of God complements the other. What God creates, he preserves, and what God promises, he fulfills. Because God is omniscient, omnipresent, and omnipotent (Psalm 139), he acts providentially over all his creation. Because God is also able and willing (Ephesians 3:20), he acts providentially.

The providence of God is a function of God's sovereignty. God is King over all; thus, he controls all and cares for all. The Psalmist wrote: "*The earth is Jehovah's and the fullness thereof; the world, and they that dwell therein*" (Psalm 24:1). We must re-

member that there is "*one God and Father of all, who is over all, and through all, and in all*" (Ephesians 4:6).

God works in his providence behind the scenes. Like Joseph's brothers, we are acting out our lives, but God is acting as well behind the scenes with other purposes in mind (Genesis 45:4). Cyrus acted for Israel's good though he did not know what God was doing



for them (Isaiah 45:5). Mordecai remarked to Esther: "*who knoweth whether thou art come to the kingdom for such a time as this?*" (Esther 4:14). Paul wrote to Philemon: "*For perhaps he was therefore parted from thee for a season, that thou shouldest have him forever...*" (Philemon 15).

1. God's Control Over His Physical Crea-

tion. God has control over his animate creation such as the animals (Matthew 6:26; 10:29; Luke 12:6). God's providential preservation is seen in that if he were to take away the breath of animals, they would die and return to the dust (Psalm 104:29).

God also has control over his inanimate creation. He controls the seasons (Genesis 8:22; Psalm 104:19), the rain (Psalm 147:8), the sun and stars (Job 9:7), the ice (Job 37:10), and the snow (Psalm 147:16-18).

God controls the casting of lots (Proverbs 16:33) and the physical development of the human body (Psalm 139:13-16). God makes "*his sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sendeth rain on the just and the unjust*" (Matthew 5:45). God does "*clothe the grass of the field*" (Matthew 6:30). Paul said to the citizens of Lystra: "*And yet he left not himself without witness, in that he did good and gave you from heaven rains and fruitful seasons...*" (Acts 14:17).

In Jesus, as God's Son, "*all things consist*" (Colossians 1:17; that is, hold together). Jesus, as the very image of God, is "*upholding all things by the word of his power*" (Hebrews 1:3). God is the "glue" that holds the universe together. However, one day, God through his providence, will bring this world to an end with his word (2 Peter 3:7,10,12). - *continued*

God's creation and continued provi-