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LESSON 1

Embracing God's Providence

For from him [God] and through him and to him are all things. To him be glory forever. Amen. (Romans 11:36)

Texts

Genesis 1:1; Psalms 104:24–30; 139:16; Proverbs 21:1; and others related to God's providence.

Truth

God infallibly and sovereignly works to accomplish his plan.

Hymn: "Immortal, Invisible, God Only Wise"

Immortal, invisible, God only wise,
In light inaccessible hid from our eyes,
Most blessed, most glorious, the Ancient of Days,
Almighty, victorious, thy great name we praise.

Unresting, unhasting and silent as light,
Nor wanting, nor wasting, thou rulest in might;
Thy justice like mountains high soaring above
Thy clouds which are fountains of goodness and love.

To all, life thou givest, to both great and small,
In all life thou livest, the true life of all;
We blossom and flourish as leaves on the tree,
And wither and perish, but naught changeth thee.

Great Father of glory, pure Father of light,
Thine angels adore thee, all veiling their sight;
All praise we would render; O help us to see
'Tis only the splendor of light hideth thee!

—WALTER CHALMERS SMITH, 1867

Opening Prayer

O God, the immortal, invisible, and only wise God. You are hidden from my eyes and yet you have opened them to see your hand in providing for my practical needs, my longing for meaning, and my hope for the future, both temporal and eternal. You turn darkness into light and make rough places smooth. Please open my eyes to see your providence in my life. Teach me what your providence is, and enable me to embrace it in my life, my family and friends, my church, my nation, and the world. Great Father of glory, pure Father of light, help me see that only the splendor of light hides you from me. For your glory. Amen.

Questions for Study and Discussion

Question 11 of the *The Westminster Shorter Catechism* asks, "What are God's works of providence?" The answer states, "God's works of providence are, his most holy, wise, and powerful preserving and governing all his creatures, and all their actions."

God's Providence in Creation

▶ READ GENESIS 1:1

1. Describe God's relation to creation.
2. How would you explain God's purposes in creating the heavens and earth?

3. What is the definition of "providence"?

God's Providential Care of His Creation

▶ READ PSALM 104:24–30

4. How are creation and providence related?

God's Providence over All of Life

► READ PSALM 139:16 AND PROVERBS 21:1

5. What do these verses reveal about God's providence in life and death?

6. What part does faith play in embracing God's providence?

EMBRACING GOD'S PROVIDENCE

7. How does God's providence show his personal care for his people? Give an example from your own life, if possible.

8. Does God providentially ordain evil? Explain your answer using any portion of Scripture.