

# Prayer & Providence or Production? (Part 3)

Today we conclude our short series on the Providence of God. I hope that I've established and encouraged you with two truths:

1. God is active today, along with our free will, to accomplish His will even though we don't know how and when.
2. God is most concerned about your spiritual well-being.

However, the story doesn't end there. Our Father has an important will for the world and uses His creation to accomplish it. Before we dive into it, we're going to spend a few moments in Romans 9 and Jeremiah 18 to impress the power of God and His involvement.

## **Romans 9:14-24.**

- After stating that he "could wish to be cut off from Christ for the sake of my brothers," Paul explained God's promises to Abraham and how He worked His will through whomever He chose. This implies their separation from Christ.
- My purpose for this passage is to make an impression. Let's appreciate God's power, involvement, and determination.
  - Moses (Exodus 33:19). Moses, having found favor with God, asked God to continue with him and the people. God reassured Moses He would not depart from him because he found favor in His sight. Moses then asked to see His glory, which brings us to vs. 19.
  - Pharaoh (Exodus 9:16). This statement comes after the 5th plague on Egypt. Moses had a message from God for Pharaoh. Read the surrounding context. God said this would happen, as recorded in Exodus 3:19-20. God was working with a stubborn man and brethren; he worked him over. Again and again, the text speaks about hardening the heart of Pharaoh. I take this at face value.
  - Potter & Clay (Jeremiah 18:1-12). Jeremiah was a prophet to Judah until their captivity by the Babylonians. The beginning chapters discuss his call as a prophet and set up the rebuke towards Judah. Was God not giving Israel an opportunity?

**2 Timothy 2:20-21** "Now in a great house there are not only vessels of gold and silver but also of wood and clay, some for honorable use, some for dishonorable. Therefore, if anyone cleanses himself from what is dishonorable, he will be a vessel for honorable use, set apart as holy, useful to the master of the house, ready for every good work."

- Here is a general call in Paul's letter. We're in a great house, brethren, but we're not all used as great vessels. Yet, everyone is used by the Lord. What will it be? How do you think God desires to use you?

**1 Peter 2:9-11** "But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for His own possession, that you may proclaim the excellencies of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light. Once you were not a people, but now you are God's people; once you had not received mercy, but now you have received mercy."

- Brethren, this is what we're all supposed to be about. We proclaim His excellencies. We can't control how others will respond, but we can commit to giving glory to God. We know He desires all to be saved, so we're honored to be used as honorable vessels.

**Acts 8:26-31**

- Who spoke to Philip?
- Who spoke to the Eunuch?
- Who will you speak to?

If we're not careful, we'll live as though the last providential gospel spreaders passed long ago. We'll read about Paul's life, like we did last week, but conclude, "that was wonderful for them!" Brethren, that story hasn't ended. Let's not forget the obvious. On Wednesday evening, one of you shared where you're at in your personal Bible study. We looked at Deuteronomy 6:4 and discussed how it was the Jews' "John 3:16." What is John 3:16? For God so loved the world, that He gave His only Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have eternal life." Let's work to remember who we are and what we're about. We're about doing the Lord's will. Use us, Lord, how You see fit!