

# 1 • Someone Sees, Knows & Cares About Us

Maybe you've heard someone use the word "**providence**" before in a Bible study or sermon. It sounds like an important word describing a big idea, but **what is providence?**



We can make a really good guess if we drop the last three letters from that big word. When we do, we're left with \_\_\_\_\_. When someone **provides** something, they're giving it or making it available to someone else.

But if anyone does \_\_\_\_\_ provide for his relatives, and especially for members of his household, he has denied the faith and is worse than an unbeliever. (1 Tim 5:8)

"So do not fear; I \_\_\_\_\_ provide for you and your little ones." Thus he comforted them and spoke kindly to them. (Gen 50:21)

When we **provide** for someone, we're taking care of them by giving them what they need. With that in mind, all that the big word **providence** means is "to \_\_\_\_\_." Hopefully, the basic idea begins to become clear when we add a couple of New Testament passages to our discussion:

Repay no one evil for evil, but **give** \_\_\_\_\_ to do what is honorable in the sight of all. (Rom 12:17)

...for **we** \_\_\_\_\_ at what is honorable not only in the Lord's sight but also in the sight of man. (2 Cor 8:21)

"Since **through you** we enjoy much peace, and since by **your** \_\_\_\_\_, most excellent Felix, reforms are being made for this nation, in every way and everywhere we accept this with all gratitude." (Acts 24:2-3)



But here's a really important thing to realize: all men and women—fathers and mothers, governors and presidents, kings and queens—all of us as human beings can only see a little bit at a time. There's billions and billions of things going on in the world and we're only aware of just small fraction of them. And even when we know about the needs or wants of others, we don't always care about them the way we should. But Someone sees and knows everything, and that Someone perfectly, steadfastly cares about and **provides** for all of us. Just listen to how Jesus put it when he talked about our Father who is in heaven:

"For he \_\_\_\_\_ his sun rise on the evil and on the good, and \_\_\_\_\_ rain on the just and on the unjust." (Matt 5:45)

We may not think about God's providence very often, but we depend on it every single day of our lives. **So let's talk about it...**

## For Class & Family Discussion:

- Can you think of some ways you've been **provided** for by other people today? Why do you think they provided for you?
- As kind and selfless as the people in our lives may be at times, we **need** more than our fellow human beings. Why?
- Let's go back in our Bibles to **Acts 17:22-28** and listen to part of what the apostle Paul preached in the city of Athens. How does his message to them help us understand a little bit more about God's **providence**?
- **Psalm 65**, a song of David, is another helpful resource. Let's read **65:9-13** together. What verbs do you notice? What sort of things is God continuing to do, each and every day, all around the world?
- Okay, but why should we care? If he's already doing those things, why should we even bother to think about them or thank him for doing those things, day after day after day? **Romans 1:18-21** and **2:4** might be really helpful here...
- We briefly listened to Jesus in **Matthew 5:45**, but let's go back together and read his larger point being made in the sentences around that verse. What does he want us to see, understand, and apply in **5:43-48**?
- As we think about **how** to apply what Jesus is calling us to do and be, maybe **Romans 12** is a good place to camp for the rest of our discussion. If God *has* provided and continues to provide so much to us, what sort of people ought we to be? Let's read **Romans 12:9-21** together. What can we learn? What's going to be challenging? How are we going to have to "**give thought**" (**12:17** - our key idea for today's study) to the people around us in order to be the lights of the world Jesus is calling us to be?