

Oak Grove Church of Christ Newsletter - 2025.08.10

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Sermon recordings

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Speaker-AM: Patrick Hite

Title: Calvinism: Perseverance of the Saints

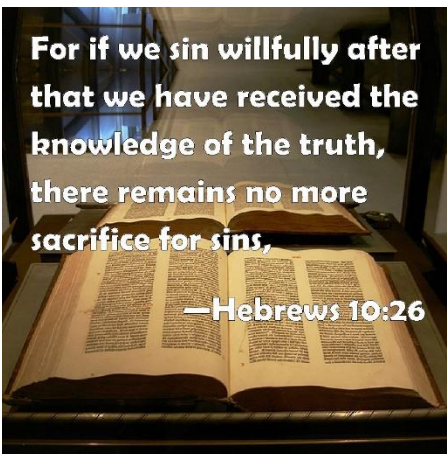
Recording:



Speaker-PM: Tyler Glidden

Title: Providence

Recording:



GOD'S PROVIDENCE

The Lord is at hand. Be careful for nothing; but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be known to God.

Philippians 4:5-6

The Bible In Context: Romans 8:28, 8/10/2025 By Patrick Hite

In Romans 8:28, the apostle Paul makes the statement, “all things work together for good to those who love God”. This verse has been greatly misunderstood by the religious world, with many believing it is evidence that God will physically bless the righteous and punish the wicked. While this is not the true meaning of Paul’s statement, what is he saying? In the proceeding ten verses of this chapter, Paul writes about the suffering of the present time, and about how much greater the glory that is to be revealed will be than the things which afflict us in this life. That we eagerly await the revelation of this glory and the redemption of our body. It is in this context of suffering and looking forward to what is ahead that Paul makes this statement, “all things work together for good”. The point that Paul is trying to make is not that if we are faithful to the Lord good things are always going to be happening to us, but that all things, including the suffering of this present time, work together for our ultimate good. They work together for our ultimate spiritual benefit.

Consider the example of Joseph in Genesis 37-50. As we read about his life, we can clearly see that he had both good and bad come upon him. He was loved greatly by his father (37:3), but his brothers despised him for being the favorite (37:4). They hated him so much in fact that they conspired to kill him at one time (37:18-20), and eventually decided to sell him into slavery (37:28). Joseph ended up in the house of Potiphar in Egypt and he did well in his master’s house (39:2-6), but his master’s wife attempted and failed to seduce him and in her lies about Joseph he ended up thrown into prison (39:6-20). While in prison, we read again that Joseph did well in his service and was even able to help the chief butler restore his position (39:7-40:21). But the chief butler failed to remember Joseph, and he lingered on in prison for two more years (40:22-41:1). Eventually, when Pharaoh had his dreams of the coming famine, the chief butler remembers Joseph and tells Pharaoh of how he interpreted his dream. Joseph then intercepts Pharaoh’s dream and Pharaoh makes him second over Egypt (41:1-57). At the end of the book of Genesis, after Jacob died Joseph’s brothers became fearful that he would now take vengeance against them for what they did to him (50:15-18), but when they came to Joseph, he told them, “Do not be afraid, for am I in the place of God? But as for you, you meant evil against me; but God meant it for good, in order to bring it about as it is this day, to save many people alive” (50:19-20).

Joseph suffered greatly throughout this time of his life, but it ultimately enabled him to save his house in the famine. Both the good and the evil that he experienced worked together for this ultimate good. This is true for us as well. All things that we endure, including the evil things, work to strengthen our faith (James 1:2) and help us to remember that there is something greater that we are looking towards (Romans 8:18). These things better prepare us for the Day of Judgment so we are ready to receive a crown of life. But the second part of what Paul says is important too: for those who love God. This ultimate, spiritual good is assured only to those who have a love for God. All throughout Genesis 37-50, we read that the Lord was with Joseph, and that because of his love for God, God took care of Him. Only if we love and follow after God, He will be with us, and make all things work together for our good. A good that we may not experience in this life, but we most certainly will in the next.