

WHAT WE BELIEVE

God the Father

ARTICLE 2

II A. God the Father

God as Father reigns with providential care over His universe, His creatures, and the flow of the stream of human history according to the purposes of His grace. He is all powerful, all knowing, all loving, and all wise. God is Father in truth to those who become children of God through faith in Jesus Christ. He is fatherly in His attitude toward all men.

Genesis 1:1; 2:7; Exodus 3:14; 6:2-3; 15:11ff.; 20:1ff.; Leviticus 22:2; Deuteronomy 6:4; 32:6; 1 Chronicles 29:10; Psalm 19:1-3; Isaiah 43:3,15; 64:8; Jeremiah 10:10; 17:13; Matthew 6:9ff.; 7:11; 23:9; 28:19; Mark 1:9-11; John 4:24; 5:26; 14:6-13; 17:1-8; Acts 1:7; Romans 8:14-15; 1 Corinthians 8:6; Galatians 4:6; Ephesians 4:6; Colossians 1:15; 1 Timothy 1:17; Hebrews 11:6; 12:9; 1 Peter 1:17; 1 John 5:7.

OUR BELIEFS

God the Father

We believe that God is the Eternal Father, creator of the universe, and the author and finisher of our salvation. In his gracious providence, he lovingly directs all things according to his good purposes. He is all-knowing, all-wise, and all-loving.

FATHER OF ALL

- God is Father of all people in the sense that he created all people
- Acts 17:28 - for in Him we live and move and exist, as even some of your own poets have said, 'For we also are His children.'
- Ephesians 4:6 - one God and Father of all who is over all and through all and in all.

FATHER OF BELIEVERS

- God is the Father of believers specifically because we are part of the family of God in Christ
- John 14:6 - Jesus said to him, “I am the way, and the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father but through Me.
- Matthew 6:9 - “Pray, then, in this way: ‘Our Father who is in heaven, Hallowed be Your name.

FATHER OF BELIEVERS

- John 1:12-13 - But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, even to those who believe in His name, who were born, not of blood nor of the will of the flesh nor of the will of man, but of God.
- Galatians 4:4-5 - But when the fullness of the time came, God sent forth His Son, born of a woman, born under the Law, so that He might redeem those who were under the Law, that we might receive the adoption as sons.

GOD'S OMNISCIENCE (KNOWLEDGE)

- God fully knows himself and all things actual and possible in one simple and eternal act (1 Samuel 23:11-13; Job 37:16; Psalm 139:1-2, 4, 16; Isaiah 46:9-10; Matthew 6:8; 11:21; 1 Corinthians 2:10-11; Hebrews 4:13; 1 John 3:20).
- Isaiah 46:9-10 - “Remember the former things long past, For I am God, and there is no other; I am God, and there is no one like Me, Declaring the end from the beginning, And from ancient times things which have not been done, Saying, ‘My purpose will be established, And I will accomplish all My good pleasure’; (cf. Isaiah 42:8-9)

GOD'S OMNISAPIENCE (WISDOM)

- God always chooses the best goals and the best means to those goals (Job 9:4; 12:13; Psalm 104:24; Romans 11:33; 16:27; 1 Corinthians 1:24, 30).

GOD'S OMNIPRESENCE (SPACE)

- God does not have size or spatial dimensions and is present at every point of space with his whole being, yet God acts differently in different places (1 Kings 8:27; Psalm 115:3; Psalm 139:7-10; Proverbs 21:1; Jeremiah 23:23-24; Daniel 4:35; Amos 9:1-4; Acts 17:28; Colossians 1:17; Hebrews 1:3)
- Jeremiah 23:23-24 - “Am I a God who is near,” declares the LORD, “And not a God far off? Can a man hide himself in hiding places, So I do not see him?” declares the LORD. “Do I not fill the heavens and the earth?” declares the LORD.

GOD'S OMNIPOTENCE (POWER)

- God is able to do all his holy will, whatever he pleases (Psalm 24:8; Jeremiah 32:17; Matthew 19:26; Luke 1:37; Ephesians 3:20-21)
- Ephesians 3:20-21 - Now to Him who is able to do far more abundantly beyond all that we ask or think, according to the power that works within us, to Him be the glory in the church and in Christ Jesus to all generations forever and ever. Amen.

GOD IS ALL LOVING

- God eternally gives of himself to others (Romans 5:8; John 3:16; Galatians 2:20; 1 John 4:8, 10, 11).
- 1 John 4:8, 10 - The one who does not love does not know God, for God is love... In this is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins.

GOD'S PROVIDENCE

- God's superintending activity over human actions and human history in which God brings his creation to its divinely determined goal. The term providence describes God's ongoing relationship with creation. God is actively related to and involved in creation at each moment. Events are not determined by chance (randomness) or by fate (determinism), but by God.

GOD'S PROVIDENCE

- **Preservation** - Jesus Christ actively and purposefully carries along the universe by the word of his power, and all things are continuously sustained by him – he does not simply sustain, but actively upholds the universe.
- Hebrews 1:3 - And He is the radiance of His glory and the exact representation of His nature, and upholds all things by the word of His power. When He had made purification of sins, He sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high,
- Colossians 1:17 - He is before all things, and in Him all things hold together. (cf. Acts 17:28; Nehemiah 9:6; 2 Peter 3:7)

GOD'S PROVIDENCE

- **Government** – God has a purpose in all that he does in the world and he providentially governs or directs all things in order to accomplish his purposes (Psalm 103:19; Daniel 4:35; Romans 8:28; 11:36; 1 Corinthians 15:27; Philippians 2:10-11; Ephesians 1:11).
- Daniel 4:35 – “All the inhabitants of the earth are accounted as nothing, But He does according to His will in the host of heaven And among the inhabitants of earth; And no one can ward off His hand Or say to Him, ‘What have You done?’”
- Philippians 2:10-11 - so that at the name of Jesus EVERY KNEE WILL BOW, of those who are in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and that every tongue will confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

GOD'S PROVIDENCE

- **Will** - God's will approves and determines to bring about every action necessary for the existence and activity of himself and all creation (Daniel 4:32; Matthew 11:25-26; Acts 4:27-28; Romans 9:18; 13:1; Ephesians 1:11; James 4:13-15; Revelation 4:11).
- Ephesians 1:11 - also we have obtained an inheritance, having been predestined according to His purpose who works all things after the counsel of His will,
- James 4:15 - Instead, you ought to say, "If the Lord wills, we will live and also do this or that."
- Matthew 6:10 - "Your kingdom come. Your will be done, On earth as it is in heaven."

GOD'S PROVIDENCE

- **Concurrence** - God operates with created things in every action, directing their distinctive properties to cause them to act as they do. This is an expansion of God's work of preservation; a general principle applied specifically.
- God directs inanimate creation (Job 37:6-13; 38:22-30; Psalm 104:14; 135:6; 148:8; Matthew 5:45), animals (Job 38:39-41; Psalm 104:27-29; Matthew 6:26; 10:29), and seemingly random or chance events (Proverbs 16:33). God directs and works through his creation, meaning that even if there are natural causes for things, God is still working through them and is the primary cause of them.

GOD'S PROVIDENCE

- God directs the affairs of nations (Job 12:23; Psalm 22:28; Acts 14:16; 17:26)
- God directs all aspects of our lives.
- Psalm 139:16 - Your eyes have seen my unformed substance; And in Your book were all written The days that were ordained for me, When as yet there was not one of them. (cf. Job 14:5; Galatians 1:15; Jerermiah 1:5)
- Proverbs 16:9 - The mind of man plans his way, But the LORD directs his steps. (cf. Proverbs 20:24)

GOD'S PROVIDENCE

- God's providence includes evil actions, though God never does evil or should be blamed for evil (Matthew 18:7; 26:24; Mark 14:21; Luke 22:22; James 1:13-14).
- Gen 50:20 - As for you, you meant evil against me, but God meant it for good in order to bring about [a]this present result, to preserve many people alive.
- Isaiah 45:7 - The One forming light and creating darkness, Causing well-being and creating calamity; I am the LORD who does all these.
- Acts 4:27-28 - For truly in this city there were gathered together against Your holy servant Jesus, whom You anointed, both Herod and Pontius Pilate, along with the Gentiles and the peoples of Israel, to do whatever Your hand and Your purpose predestined to occur.

GOD'S PROVIDENCE

- God's providence includes our free will and choices
- Philippians 2:12-13 - So then, my beloved, just as you have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your salvation with fear and trembling; for it is God who is at work in you, both to will and to work for His good pleasure.
- God incited David to take a census (2 Samuel 24:1; 1 Chronicles 21:1), which David recognized as sin (2 Samuel 24:10), and which God punished (2 Samuel 24:12-17).

GOD'S PROVIDENCE

- We are responsible for our actions. We should do good and not evil, our actions have real results and do change the course of events. The doctrine of God's providence should always lead to activity, not passivity (cf. James 4:17).
- We should have confidence in all our circumstances that God is in control and that God is good. We should not live our lives in fear or worry, but trust God (Matthew 6:26, 31, 33; 1 Peter 1:6-7).
- God is personally concerned about his children (Luke 15:3-7; John 10:3-6, 14, 27).

GOD'S PROVIDENCE

- We should be thankful for all good things that happen in our lives (Psalm 103:2; 1 Thessalonians 5:18). There is no such thing as luck or chance or fate; nothing just happens.
- We must be careful about what we call God's will, or how we interpret God's providence.
- We should pray because God has designed prayer as way for us to participate in the work he has ordained. Prayer is a work of the kingdom, and just like any other kind of ministry, it allows us to participate in what God is doing in his creation. Whether we pray or not makes a difference. God has no need of us, yet he allows us in his grace to participate with him in his eternal work.