

The Sovereignty and Providence of God

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[0 : 00] John 11, beginning in verse 45.

Many of the Jews, therefore, who had come with Mary and had seen what he did, believed in him. But some of them went to the Pharisees and told them what Jesus had done.

So the chief priests and the Pharisees gathered the council and said, What are we to do? For this man performs many signs. If we let him go on like this, everyone will believe in him, and the Romans will come and take away both our place and our nation.

But one of them, Caiaphas, who was high priest that year, said to them, You know nothing at all, nor do you understand that it is better for you that one man should die for the people, not that the whole nation should perish.

He did not say this on his own accord, but being high priest that year, he prophesied that Jesus would die for the nation. And not for the nation only, but also to gather into one the children of God who are scattered abroad.

[1 : 18] So from that day on, they made plans to put him to death. Jesus, therefore, no longer walked openly among the Jews, but went from there to the region near the wilderness to a town called Ephraim, and there he stayed with the disciples.

Now the Passover of the Jews was at hand, and many went up from the country to Jerusalem before the Passover to purify themselves. They were looking for Jesus and saying to one another as they stood in the temple, What do you think, that he will come to the feast at all?

Now the chief priests and the Pharisees had given orders that if anyone knew where he was, he should let them know so that they might arrest him.

May God add a blessing to the reading of his word. Would you please be seated? The main idea for this sermon is that God is sovereign and providentially works to accomplish his will.

Change it up on you a little bit. I'm going to hit you with that main idea right out of the gate. But, hey, don't think that that means this sermon is going to be any shorter than it normally is. Because it will not be.

[2 : 29] God is sovereign and providentially works to accomplish his will. I want to define what sovereignty and providence mean and how they are similar but different.

God's sovereignty, when we talk about that, we're talking about God's absolute role. His absolute authority over all things. We talk about God's providence.

We're talking about God's care for his creation. Involving his preserving its existence and meticulously guiding it to his intended ends.

God's sovereignty then refers to his right and power to do all that he wills. His providence refers to his action. His action to purposefully see to it that what he wills is accomplished.

These two attributes of God can be found throughout Scripture, throughout his Word. For example, these can be seen clearly in the life of Joseph.

[3 : 43] Joseph. Remember, when I was in college, our church did a trunk or treat. And for our church's trunk or treat, we had everybody involved dress up as a Bible character.

And this lady in our church was after me for weeks. Weeks and weeks. I want you to be Joseph. I want you to be Joseph. And then finally, I ran out of excuses. And so I said, fine, I will be Joseph. And so you know what prop Joseph was given, right? I'm talking about Old Testament Joseph. You know what prop I was given? A coat of many colors. And each character had a candy to give out that went along with their story.

So like Joshua and the Battle of Jericho, when the walls came tumbling down, they gave out crunch bars. Guess what candy Joseph got to hand out? Guess. This is going to be interactive.

Skittles? Good guess. That went to Noah because of the rainbow. I had Starbursts. Starbursts. So here these kids come along, and they see me in my coat of many colors, and I tell a little bit about the coat, not going into great details, and then giving them the Starbursts.

[5 : 01] But you know, there is so much more to the life of Joseph than the fact that his dad gave him a colorful coat.

If you recall, his brothers were envious of him, plotted to kill him, threw him in a hole instead, pulled him out, sold him into slavery, and then they took that coat, and they covered it in blood, and they presented it back to their father with the lie, your son, whom you love, has been attacked by fierce animals, and he's dead.

Now, could you imagine? Say I show up to that trunk or treat, and I have that coat, and I've covered it in blood, but I would use fake blood, okay?

Or ketchup. And I tell those kids, Kids, let me tell you about the betrayal of my brothers. Look at this coat, covered in blood.

They lied to my dad. They told him I was dead, and they sold me as a slave. Here, have some Starbursts. That would not be PG enough for the trunk or treat.

[6 : 13] And knowing some of those people, I wouldn't dare cross them with such an idea. But to say, though, you've got to be careful about watering down God's Word for our kids.

Joseph's life is a story about favoritism, jealousy, hatred, and greed. That amazingly, though, ends in salvation.

The actions of Joseph's brothers, which they intended for evil, set into motion God's plan for their own salvation and deliverance.

And not just for theirs, but for his people, to save them from starvation and death. And so, Joseph spent 13 years, 13 years of his life in a state of perplexed faith.

First a slave, then a prisoner for a crime he did not commit. He was 17 years old. 17 years old when his brothers sold him into slavery, when they betrayed him.

[7 : 28] He turned 30 years old when he was in prison. And so I ask you, how many of you, in a similar situation, would question your faith at that point?

Would question not only if God was good, but you would question if God even exists. How many of you, how many people, would turn to atheism and nihilism having endured so much suffering?

Yet, as we read about Joseph, we know that that is not what he did at all. Why? Well, as you read his story, you see, mixed in through the tragic circumstances of his life, that God was with Joseph and that God loved Joseph.

That is repeatedly in the story of his life. And Joseph knew that. Then an astonishing turn of events takes place in his life when he interprets the dreams of Pharaoh about an upcoming famine.

And if you recall, Pharaoh then sets Joseph up over the land of Egypt. He's his right-hand man. And Joseph would be responsible in that role to gather enough food during those seven years of plenty for the seven years of famine that would proceed it.

[8 : 58] And two years, two years into those seven years of famine, Joseph's brothers come to Egypt because they need aid.

Joseph is now 39 years old. They haven't, and he hasn't, seen his brothers for 22 years.

22 years. And when they come to him, for many reasons, they don't recognize him. They don't realize that who they're speaking to is their brother.

And so, after Joseph tests them to see if they've changed at all, and realizing that they had, he finally reveals himself to them.

And amazingly, instead of seeking revenge, he forgives them. Joseph had taken time, and he had a lot of it, to dwell upon the sovereignty and providence of God in his very own life.

[10 : 13] And though it may have looked from the outside that God had abandoned him, the truth was that he hadn't, not even close, not even at all. Look at what Joseph says to his brothers about his knowledge of God's sovereignty and providence.

Genesis 45, 5. Speaking to them, Joseph says, Look at verses 7 and 8.

Same chapter. And God sent me here to preserve for you a remnant on earth and to keep alive for you many survivors.

Look at this. So it was not you who sent me here, but God. He made me a father to Pharaoh and lord of all his house and ruler over all the land of Egypt.

And then, if that wasn't clear enough, chapter 50, verse 20. Again, addressing his brothers. Joseph says, As for you, you meant evil against me, but God meant it for good to bring about that many people should be kept alive as they are today.

[11 : 41] The sinful actions of Joseph's brothers were intended to harm him, but their intentions accomplished God's divine design to save and to preserve his people.

And so, in this way, Joseph's life foreshadows the life of Jesus Christ, who endured a crueler betrayal, a worse injustice, and a severe suffering, but produced an infinitely greater salvation. God's sovereignty and providence are most clearly displayed in the life, in the death, and the resurrection of his own son.

Just as God used what men meant for evil against Joseph to accomplish what he meant for good, so it was with Jesus.

Listen to Peter's sermon to the Jews on the day of Pentecost when the church was born.

Addressing them, Peter preaches and says in Acts chapter 2, Men of Israel, hear these words.

[13 : 03] Jesus of Nazareth, a man attested to you by God with mighty works and wonders and signs that God did through him in your midst, as you yourselves know, this Jesus delivered up according to the definite plan and foreknowledge of God, you crucified and killed by the hands of lawless men.

God sovereignly and providentially designed and delivered his son to the cross. Those involved in killing him meant it for evil, but God meant it for good.

The crucifixion of our Savior was forged in the fires of God's love and men's hatred. What they meant for evil accomplished what God meant for good.

And so today, we are we are wading into deep theological subject matter. Today's Scripture brings us face to face with the reality and mystery of God's sovereignty and providence to work in ways that are often imperceptible to us.

Think back again to Joseph. From the outside, looking in, if you saw Joseph, it would have appeared to you that Joseph was losing.

[14 : 46] Only he wasn't. And you could say the same thing about our Lord as he was stripped, as he was beaten, as he was nailed to the cross.

From the outside, looking in, it appeared as if he was losing, but he wasn't. When he died, it would seem from the outside, looking in, that he had lost, but he hadn't.

You and I have the benefit today of looking back in God's Word and seeing how God sovereignly and providentially worked in ways that so many could not perceive at the time back then.

But I ask you, is that knowledge producing within you the kind of boldness, fearlessness, and faithfulness that it should?

That you know that the God who you serve, the God who you worship is a God who is absolutely sovereign and works providentially in every moment to bring about his intended ends?

[15 : 52] when I was a kid, I used to watch wrestling with my dad every Monday night on the couch watching wrestling.

And the show that followed wrestling was Star Trek. I'm going to offend some people.

I'm sorry about that in advance. one time he asked if I wanted to stay. Would you want to stay with me and watch Star Trek? And I misunderstood him because I thought he said Star Wars.

And let me tell you, there's a big difference between Star Trek and Star Wars. And so I remember sitting down thinking, you know, we're about to go to a galaxy far, far away.

But apparently this was a galaxy in a much different place with much different people. And, you know, no offense again to you who are Trekkies, but what a lame show.

[17 : 04] What a lame show. Maybe, maybe my dad, there's going to be some people wanting to speak to me afterward. You know, I think maybe my dad was just trying to put me to sleep early by having me watch this show.

How could something about so interesting be so boring? But there was one scene. There was one scene that had some excitement.

I don't remember it exactly, but I remember Captain Picard sits in his captain's chair and the ship is under attack. He's barking out orders to everyone to save them from the impending doom.

Still not as cool as Star Wars, but somewhat captivating to figure out how this was going to end.

And I used that illustration to say that I think a lot of Christians view God in a similar way.

Yeah, he's behind, he's behind the wheel. He's the captain of the ship. He's at the helm. Just though, trying to keep everything on course.

[18 : 18] All these unexpected things happen, these crises happen that he wasn't expecting. All of a sudden there's attack or something happens that he wasn't planning for and he's up there panicking, you know, forehead starting to get sweaty, biting his lip, hoping that things are going to stay on course.

The God of the Bible, the God whom we know and serve, who has saved us, is nothing at all like that whatsoever.

Look at what he says of himself in Isaiah 46, 9 and 10. Remember the former things of old, for I am God, there is no other.

I am God and there is none like me, declaring the end from the beginning. Ancient times, things not yet done, saying, my counsel, not might, shall stand.

And I not might, but will accomplish all my purpose. God's sovereignty and providence are the attributes of his that give me the greatest comfort.

[19 : 36] They are attributes that give me the greatest resolve in times that are hard and the greatest joy in realizing that God is always on his throne.

Always. And so whenever I feel like I'm losing, whenever I feel like the church is losing, I remember that God is never in panic mode.

he rules, he reigns, and in Christ there is absolute victory. And so I'm thankful for this passage this week, to be able to study it once again and to reflect upon these great attributes of God.

And I feel encouraged. And I hope that as we go through this message that you will feel encouraged by God too. that the Holy Spirit will use his word today to extinguish whatever fearful, anxious, or worried thoughts that you might have.

That instead of having those thoughts, he would replace them with wonder, with worship, and with gratitude in your God who is sovereign and providentially works to accomplish his will.

[20 : 54] So I'm going to focus my attention primarily on verses 47 through 54 this morning with the time that I have. But I want to take a moment to look at verses 45 through 46 and verses 55 through 57.

Because these verses address God's sovereignty in salvation and also the division that Christ creates between people.

Both of which are subjects that I've recently preached on as we've gone through John 6 and John 10. So I encourage you to go back and listen to those sermons. But look at verse 45 and 46.

Many of the Jews, therefore, who had come with Mary and had seen what he did, believed in him, but some of them went to the Pharisees and told them what Jesus had done.

So here again, John presents us with two reactions to Jesus. And these are two reactions that come as a result of his raising Lazarus. some believed, others didn't, as evidenced by the fact that they went to the Pharisees whom they knew were hostile to Jesus.

[22 : 09] And so we ask here, why did some believe, but others didn't? They were all there from what we read.

they all had equal access to see this miracle. They heard Jesus pray. They heard him speak. They saw what he did. And so I think when we read this text, we wonder why didn't they all believe?

A dead man, dead for four days, came back to life. What more would you need to see than that to believe that this man who's speaking to you is someone incredibly different?

It may shock us, but it didn't shock Jesus. He'd already explained that he's the good shepherd, and that his sheep hear his voice, and his sheep follow him.

And he also said that others will not follow him they will not hear his voice because they are not a part of his flock. And at the end of his parable about Lazarus, a different Lazarus, and a rich man, if you remember that parable Jesus tells, the rich man begs from hell for Abraham to send Lazarus back to his brothers so that they don't suffer the same fate.

[23 : 45] Look at how that parable closes. Luke 16 31. He said to him, if they do not hear Moses and the prophets, the scriptures, neither will they be convinced if someone should rise from the dead or rise from the dead.

You see, the Bible tells us that sin affects every aspect of our being. Unbelief is not merely an intellectual problem.

It's a spiritual condition that only God can overcome. We can't think differently until God first calls us and causes us to be born again by his spirit.

Jesus said in John 6, 63, it is the spirit who gives life. The flesh is no help at all.

Verses 55 through 57 record the indifference of many people towards Jesus. They were interested, they were interested, perhaps they were even entertained by the Pharisees' attempts to apprehend Jesus.

[25 : 06] and so now the Passover had come, I think they're anticipating some kind of showdown between Jesus and the Pharisees.

Some fireworks to go along with their Passover celebration. And so they appear to make up a third group. Those who believe, those who don't believe, and those who are indifferent.

They appear to make up a third group, but Jesus said, there are no third groups. Remember? He said, there are two gates, there are two paths, there are two destinations, and there are two groups that will appear before him on the final day of judgment.

Those who aren't with me, Jesus said, are against me, and we know that those people, while they may seem indifferent at this point, they really aren't.

Because in a short time, they will go from shouting, Hosanna to Jesus, to crucify him, crucify him, crucify him.

[26 : 16] You're either in Christ, or you're not. And while we are called to share the gospel, and while we are called to make disciples, we understand that the results do not lie with us, but with the Holy Spirit.

Some will believe, others will not. And so we understand that as followers of Christ, we scatter seeds. We scatter gospel seeds. And Jesus tells us they're going to land in different places on different kinds of soils.

But we scatter the seeds, like the farmer, we go home, we go to sleep, and God is the one who takes care of the rest. So now I want to look at verses 47 through 54.

And we're going to look at them first from the outside. We're going to look at them first from the outside. As the plot to kill Jesus begins to take form, and then we'll move to the inside and see how God was sovereignly and providentially at work to bring about good things through their evil intentions.

And so first of all from the outside looking in, we see a national crisis. A national crisis. Verse 47 and 48.

[27 : 40] So the chief priests and the Pharisees gathered the council and said, what are we to do? For this man performs many signs. If we let him go on like this, everyone will believe in him, and the Romans will come and take away both our place and our nation.

And so this council here is referring to the Sanhedrin. The Sanhedrin was the supreme court of the nation of Israel.

And it was made up of Pharisees and Sadducees. You've got to understand that these two groups differed in many ways from one another.

They differed from one another doctrinally. The Sadducees believed that only the first five books of the Bible were scripture. The Pharisees disagreed.

The Sadducees didn't believe in angels. They didn't believe in the resurrection. The Pharisees did. So those are some major divisions doctrinally that they had. They also had divisions politically.

[28 : 48] The Pharisees were ultra nationalists. They were Jewish patriots. They hated Roman occupation. On the other hand, the Sadducees were Roman sympathizers.

They enjoyed the political kickbacks that they received by maintaining the status quo for the Romans. They also differed socially.

Pharisees were of the middle class. Sadducees were of the highest class. Pharisees there weren't many things that these two groups agreed on.

You have to understand. It would take a major thing for them to come together in full agreement. And so what they did agree on was that Jesus was a problem.

Jesus was a problem and so they met with one item on their agenda. what are we going to do about Jesus? They knew they hadn't done enough and they feared that Jesus would continue to draw so many followers to himself that they would revolt against Rome and that Rome would then come put that revolution down and then with that take away their power in their place.

[30 : 20] And so now you've got to understand now that was really misguided. They clearly were not listening what Jesus was saying nor his followers. Sin blinds. But they understand for them here they decide that Jesus is no longer just a minor concern.

He's no longer some would-be rabbi from out in the boonies of Nazareth. He's presenting they believe a national threat to them.

They believe that he is a threat to the very existence of Israel. But again their primary concern was for their own survival.

And so we can't help here. We can't help here but see the irony. These men are conspiring to kill Jesus to save themselves.

They are conspiring to kill the Savior who saves men from their sins. On the outside looking in we see this proposed solution in verses 49 and 50.

[31 : 33] A proposed solution. Caiaphas speaks up. He was the high priest and he tells them they don't know anything and then he suggests he proposes that it's better that one man die for the people than that the whole nation should perish.

And so Caiaphas is a deceptively clever politician. he's hiding his intense hatred for Jesus by pretending to be a man who puts his country first.

His statement ends the debate and they agree with his solution to kill Jesus so that the Romans don't kill them.

And then from the outside looking again we see thirdly an appropriate action in verse 54. Jesus therefore no longer walked openly among the Jews but went from there to the regions near the wilderness to a town called Ephraim and there he stayed with his disciples.

So here whether or not Jesus exercised his omniscience or maybe he was informed by one of his followers of the Sanhedrin decisions it doesn't really matter!

[33 : 00] He took appropriate action but while remaining in absolute control of his circumstances not allowing himself to be taken before the appointed time established by God no mob or human court could force him to the cross on the outside looking in it appears that Jesus is losing doesn't it it appears that his enemies are winning but closer examination reveals that the opposite is true Jesus wasn't losing God was in control and so the rest of these verses contain five truths and five applications that I hope and pray you will treasure and delight in this morning first

God planned these events from the beginning for good God planned these events from the beginning for good don't misunderstand God was not taking a bad situation and making it a good one he was in the start from the beginning planning all of this for good and so look again what John says about Caiaphas words in verse 50 and 51 it is better for you that one man should die for the people not that the whole nation should perish he did not say this of his own accord but being high priest that year he prophesied that Jesus would die for the nation he prophesied in other words God brought these words to his mind God put them there at one level these words are indeed Caiaphas words with his meaning but at another level these are God's words with his meaning and these words sealed the death warrant his son Caiaphas meant to get Jesus out of the way to save himself to preserve his life but God wanted Jesus crucified then risen and reigning forever to save our lives to rescue us from his wrath life to

Caiaphas it was better that Jesus die so that the Sanhedrin could survive but to God the father it was better that Jesus die to atone and save his people from their sins and so this was not merely a tragic set of events that took place outside of the sovereign will and providential control of God God set into motion these things for our good he did not predict Jesus death he planned it and he's the one he's the one who served the death warrant himself for his son but again don't misunderstand that didn't take

Jesus off guard at all their their wills the fathers and the sons were never in conflict with one another but in concert together our Lord shared his father's will and he knew about this plan and it was his will to see it through John 10 17 through 18 Jesus says for this reason the father loves me because I lay down my life that I may take it up again no one takes it from me but I lay it down on my own accord I have authority to lay it down and I have authority to take it up again now listen this charge I have received from my father Caiaphas' plan on the outside looked like a victory for Jesus' enemies but from the inside

[38 : 19] John reveals to us that God had a totally different plan that at that time no one outside of the Trinity Father, Son, and Holy Spirit could see and so brother and sister in Christ so it will be for you in your life you will be faced with hardship and I know looking out at you that there are many of

you right now who are facing hardship and you will feel at times in life like you are losing and you will be tempted at times in your life to feel like you're losing so much that you might as well just quit but from the inside don't forget no matter what things might look like from the outside that God is at work for your good

Romans 8 28 I feel like I I feel like I've shared this verse more so than any other verse when I preach and for reason because it means so much to me and we know that for those who love God it's all things everything no matter how you perceive it good or bad all things work together for good for those who are called according to his purpose the next truth for us to rejoice in is that God substituted his son for us God substituted his son for us Caiaphas presented Jesus as a substitute to save the Sanhedrin from the wrath of the Romans but in reality

God ordained the substitution of Christ on the cross to save you from his wrath Isaiah 53 10 yet it was the will of the Lord to crush him speaking of Christ he has put him to grief when his soul makes an offering for guilt see this truth is central to our Christian faith to your faith when Satan and your conscience condemn you nothing will comfort you more than to know that your sin has been condemned in Christ Jesus your Lord he has removed your sin and he has clothed you in his righteousness nothing can undo that nothing can take that away no matter what the external or internal turmoil might be that you face take heart again brothers and sisters in

Christ you have an everlasting life and eternal peace with God and that will never change because your substitute has come the third truth the third promise mentioned here that we see from the inside is that God will redeem Israel God will redeem Israel in verse 51 Caiaphas prophesied that Jesus would die for the nation the ethnos not just individual Jews but the nation itself the death of Jesus will one day we know from scripture result in a collective turning of the Jewish nation to Christ and becoming a part of his church and so the truth that we can rejoice in this morning is the fact that the Jewish people this ancient people are still with us today they are still the nation of Israel and that reminds us that God keeps his covenant God keeps his promises and about this turning Paul speaks about it in Romans 11 verse 25 through 27 lest you be wise in your own sight I do not want you to be aware of this mystery brothers a partial hardening has come upon Israel until the fullness of the Gentiles has come in and in this way all Israel will be saved as it is written the deliverer will come from Zion he will banish ungodliness from Jacob and this will be my covenant with them when I take away their sins all throughout history God has worked God has worked to preserve a believing remnant and once the complete number of elect Gentiles have come to salvation Israel will be redeemed

[43 : 44] God keeps his promises God keeps his promises and he has the power and the ability to ensure that what he says will come to pass never forget that the fourth truth promise that we see from the inside is that the blood of Jesus purchases a diverse church the blood of Jesus purchases a diverse church see Caiaphas prophesied that Jesus would die for the nation but not for the nation only in verse 52 but also to gather into one the children of God who are scattered abroad the meaning here is that God is sovereign and providentially at work to spread the gospel around the world and that as he does so he is bringing to himself a people of all tribes and nations and languages to salvation in

Jesus Christ you see Christianity doesn't belong to one nation or to one race or to one culture the Holy Spirit is at work presently right now to gather Christ's flock John 10 16 Jesus says I have other sheep that are not of this fold I must bring them also they will listen to my voice so there will be one flock one shepherd the gospel breaks down barriers the gospel upheaves divisions that sinful men like to erect and boy don't we see a lot of those divisions in our own nation right now and so we must obey our Lord's command to go and make disciples to be actively involved in participating in missions on a global worldwide scale because we know that

God is at work and will work providentially through through our efforts to gather together one people under one shepherd and what a beautiful picture we have in revelations 5 verses 9 through 10 of when that gathered church will come together to worship the Lamb of God who lives and reigns eternally let's read that and they sang a new song saying worthy are you to take the scroll and open its seals for you were slain and by your blood you ransomed people for God from every tribe and language and people and nation and you have made them a kingdom and priests to our God and they shall reign on the earth we have so much to look forward to the gospel is for all people everywhere and we should rejoice in the the depth and the wideness of

God's love and mercy to save and to unite people together that no other man made system could ever hope to come close to achieving the fifth truth from the inside looking in that we should rejoice in the divine design of Christ's death to save you should arouse great faith and sincere worship within you the divine design of Christ's death to save you should arouse great faith and sincere worship within you why because you should see and you should know that God's will cannot fail he will achieve his purposes if you have trusted in Christ know that it's because he pursued you he called you he bought you and he brought you to himself through the life the death and the resurrection of his son he doesn't just offer you salvation he makes sure of it and so I ask you is he pursuing you today do you hear him calling has he given you faith to believe come to him come to him one of my heroes of the Christian faith is R.C.

[48 : 55] Sproul who died back in 2017 and I've shared with you before about why he meant so much to me when I was in seminary I went to a bookstore Christian bookstore and I had heard his name never heard him preach never read anything that he had written I heard his name dropped in seminary and so I pulled out a book written by him called Saved from what and the Lord used that little book in tremendous ways to open my eyes to realities that I had not seen or known before and ever since then R.C.

Sproul has been one of my guys they told us in seminary find a guy who's alive to to to cling to to learn from to learn from their mistakes and to just see how God has used their lives and so he was very much one of those men for me and recently a biography was put out by Stephen Nichols a close associate of R.C.

Sproul that I just finished reading this past week it's called R.C. Sproul A Life and there's things about him that I didn't know he he wrote hymns you guys know that that he would write hymns and they're great that shouldn't be a surprise but he would collaborate with composers and one in particular I can't remember the guy's name but he had composed music he didn't have the words to go along with it and so he came to R.C.'s house and he played it for R.C.

and R.C. got up went into his office and within less than an hour had written the lyrics to go along with that composition and the title of that hymn is called Highland Hymn and it's beautiful one thing that I love about it is that it has a lot of bagpipes and I love the bagpipe if ever or whenever I die my one request is that bagpipes be played at my funeral to amazing grace and I don't care if it's only just one but also I don't really care if it doesn't even happen at all I'm looking at Danny because I'll be in heaven I'll be satisfied with whatever people would do here but it's a beautiful hymn two years after it as R.C.

Sproul lay dying in the hospital surrounded by his family they played a collection of these songs of these hymns and they played Highland hymn the very last hymn that R.C.

[51 : 53] Sproul ever heard in this life and when it came to the part of the hymn the final refrain which says Lutz will sing Piper's play when we see him face to face on that day and at the final note of that hymn that R.C.

Sproul composed to his Lord whom he loved and whom he served he took his last breath and saw his savior face to face in the next moment R.C.

Sproul also has a radio program renewing your mind many of you still listen to it and it the week after he died the next time renewing of your mind came on renewing your mind came on to broadcast they had planned months in the past you know and they would play different sermons and lectures by R.C.

in months in the past the planned teaching for that show the next time after R.C.

Sproul went to be with the Lord was this entitled The Believer's Final Rest The Believer's Final Rest now you could hear all those things and think well that's just a bunch of coincidences you would be dead wrong God is at work providentially and what a way to bring this wonderful servant of God home to himself the last things he heard were notes that he or lyrics that he had composed himself and worship of the God whom he loved with his everything and then when he went to be with the Lord that the Lord would provide this teaching to remind us all that the believer does have a final rest and that he is sovereign and providentially working in all things brothers and sisters that is beautiful that is beautiful how sweet it is to know how sweet it is to know how wonderful it is to know how peaceful it is to know that God is sovereign and providentially working all things together for the good of those who love him take heart and rejoice

[54 : 56] God is on his throne and nothing will ever change that from the outside looking in things may not seem to make sense things may not be how you would like them to be but take heart and

trust that God is at work in ways that you may not know now you may not even know in this life but one day you will and he is working together for your good if God is for us it doesn't matter who would want to be against us God is for you live your life for his glory knowing that he is sovereign and providentially at work to bring about his ends to accomplish his purposes till that day when we see our Lord and Savior face to face let's pray Lord God we rejoice in you rejoice in who you are rejoice in your power in your providential working and care

God I pray that your spirit would use your word this morning to inspire increased faithfulness from us your people greater worship and knowing Lord God that you have all things under control that you are providentially at work and Lord in the meanwhile may we live our lives in light of his promises making much of the name of Jesus for us wherever you would have us to be in Jesus name we pray Amen