



Sunday, July 28, 2013

Providence and Hope

Speaker: Joe Boot **Scripture:** Psalm 131; Job 38; 40:1-14

Sermon Notes:

1. Psalm 131 celebrates the blessedness of a person who is meek and lowly in spirit.
2. We need to cultivate a willing self-humbling and submission before the mind and purposes of God.
3. Mental and physical health problems sometimes result from unbelieving desires to control or escape from our circumstances.
4. Even as believers, we sometimes seek to probe questions too high for us and seek to resolve what appear to be human intellectual conundrums i.e. God's sovereignty as it relates to our freedom and the ultimate origin of evil.
5. Trusting the providence of God is first of all a matter of the heart.
6. We need to take time to analyze the condition of our hearts so we are able to bring our heart's condition to God in prayer.
7. The opposite of humility is haughtiness which leads to self-righteousness and an unsubmissive attitude toward God.
8. There are many circumstances outside our control; the proud man thinks that his gifts (money, health, intelligence) give him more control over his circumstances than others, but when he encounters circumstances beyond his control, he experiences anxiety, fear, and dread.
9. The secret things belong to the Lord; in humility we may seek the knowledge God has revealed about Himself (Deut. 29:29).
10. We are not at peace when we are unwilling to think in terms of God's revealed meaning. Man in his rebellion not only wants to determine good and evil but also demands an infallible knowledge of how evil arose in the first place.
11. Man is not called to cooperate with God in the government of the universe, but to acquiesce to God's providential hand.

12. God's implicit answer to Job is that there are two types of being: uncreated being and created being; we cannot speak on being in general. We are not in a position to fathom God's eternal being (Isaiah 55:8-11).
13. God's word always prospers in His hands. We have confidence that God's word cannot fail to accomplish what He intends.
14. There are no hidden recesses of our minds that God does not know.
15. Comprehensive knowledge of God is not possible for us as creatures, but we can have true knowledge of God where He has revealed Himself.
16. We may not be able to know the reason for the sickness and death of a child, but we cannot declare it to be without meaning.
17. It is pride to declare an event without meaning and purpose in a universe governed by God's wise personal care and power.
18. The detail of God's care for His creations extends right down the hairs of our head.
19. All facts have meaning in terms of God's purpose and plan.
20. Pagan cosmic impersonalism and atomic determinism leave modern man without purpose and without hope.
21. Knowing God's providence we are delivered from anxiety in even the most difficult circumstances.
22. The doctrine of God's providence affords unspeakable consolation, confirming God's intimate care and protection.
23. Like a weaned child, we are to receive God's supply, learning to be content with what we receive from God's hand (Phil 4:12-13)

Application Questions:

1. What are the lessons of Psalm 131 for our lives?
2. Why is having a humble spirit linked to a sanctified heart?
3. Why does having a spirit totally subdued to God result in hope?
4. How is humility and contentment a proper response to the doctrine of God's providence?
5. Read and discuss Belgic Confession Article 13.
6. What are the consequences of seeking to control our circumstances? How does submitting our thoughts to God give rest to our souls?
7. What should be the limits of our study of God's being? Why?
8. How does the doctrine of God's providence comfort us in the face of adversity?