



Today's Bible Study Lesson

The Dark Side of Creation
(The Doctrine of Providence)



Defining the word: providence

- ◆ the foreseeing care and guidance of God or nature over the creatures of the earth.
- ◆ God, esp. when conceived as omnisciently directing the universe and the affairs of humankind with wise benevolence.



The Reality of Evil

- ◆ People try to explain “away” evil. They minimize it or even act as if it is no big deal. They practice the “power of positive thinking”.
- ◆ They think that evil contributes to good and is not really evil at all. They consider it the law of progress toward fight.
 - Christian faith is not an escape from the problem of evil; it raises the problem to the nth degree.



The Dark Side

- ◆ We must talk about “natural” and “Moral” behavior in order to cover the subject sufficiently.
 - How do you explain certain tragedies?
 - A young woman dies of ovarian cancer.
 - A storm demolishes an entire city.
 - Parents’ first child is deformed physically.
 - Millions of children live and die of of malnutrition.



Four Explanations (Natural Evil)



1- Humans are Finite

- ◆ It is part of our existence to decay, age, lose, gain, experience pain and pleasure, sickness, death as well as birth. Evil enters in when we try to play God. The dark side to God's good creation is that we are vulnerable, exposed, naked, and aging. To invent stuff to prolong life is sinful (if it leads to more pain and abnormality).



#2- Natural Law

- ◆ The laws of nature are not mechanical and absolute. It is relatively ordered, interrelated, and dependable.
- ◆ Mother Nature has her own rules.

Is God responsible for the suffering that results from natural causes?

Early Christians vs. Modern Christians



#3- Human Responsibility and Negligence

- ◆ Sometimes misfortune and suffering are clearly the consequence of our neglect or refusal to provide for our own or others' welfare, and it does not help to ignore or deny it.
 - Homelessness, hungry, poor, deaths due to inclement weather, car accidents.



#4- Unanswered Questions

- ◆ Why do some people suffer more than others? Why do some have more tragedy than anyone should have to bear? Why the debilitating disease, tragic accident, or death of an innocent child? Why me? Why my child?



Moral Evil

- ◆ It is manifest in three forms

1. Rebellion against God and His order in creation.

2. Hatred toward fellow human beings.

3. Self-destructive contradiction of what we were created to be.

- We fight evil and discover that we are its instruments. The source is Satan.

- *Literal and Symbolic Interpretation of Satan*