

Our studies in the Providence of God and our lives thereby have been in the area of the fact of God' grace and its application in the call of God. We are debtors to grace in every way and we come now to the part in our text that reads "after that ye have suffered a while....."indicating to us the control of God. He knows the times and seasons and the periods of life. We are prone to see every day as if it were almost an end in itself but God, seeing the total picture, says "after you have suffered awhile" and the meaning is fairly plain...nothing is out of control, nothing is interminable, all things are under His care and we read it here as well as in Romans 8:28. Psalm 138:8, etc. With regard to His control there are two extremes and we need to avoid both of them: 1) lawlessness, where we think that we are free to do whatever without regard to the order of God and 2) fatalism where we assume we have no responsibility to act or be responsible for our own actions before God. God, in His grace, controls but it that control allows us to live responsibly and accountable to His expressed will.

II. Discussion: In approaching this subject I am concerned with mentioning the character of His control and not the dimensions

- A. His control is purposeful....."after you have suffered awhile"
God will order a settlement of life that will strengthen and secure you. This is not a world left spinning in a wild and undisciplined way and even the contrary things that occur will do so to the end of God's working. We do not have a god of the chicanery of the pagan deities...He is working all things to an end which we cannot see now but know that it will be accomplished in His time.
- B. His control is merciful..."after---awhile"--the indication is that there is a time adjustment even to the most painful moments. But these moments prepare us for the work that God will do in us. Without these problems we could not appreciate the work that God will do in establishing His own. Sometimes the trials are teaching lessons, sometimes they are rebukes. But they are never beyond our endurance (1 Cor. 10) and never out of the character of God as a great Father and Master.
- C. His control is observable but also inscrutable....in other words, you can see it although you may not be able to understand it to the extent you desire. The questions are often asked as to "why" God does this or that. Sometimes the answers become