

07 June 2026 – Discipleship 101 – Part 2

Introduction

Knowing God controls everything and that God cares and makes all the difference in being a disciple in a sin polluted hostile world.

Understanding God's providential care changes your fearful heart into a bold proclaimer confessing and acknowledging Jesus as Lord and proclaiming who He is and what He did.

Historical Background

Our passage is found as part of the instructions Jesus gave His disciples as He prepared them to go out on a short-term mission to the Jews.

These are lessons you and I should ponder and consider as they are crucial for helping you to follow Jesus through the boiling pot of storms in this life.

Passage

Matthew 10:29–33 LSB

Are not two sparrows sold for an assarion? And yet not one of them will fall to the ground apart from your Father.

But the very hairs of your head are all numbered.

So do not fear; you are more valuable than many sparrows.

Therefore, everyone who confesses Me before men, I will also confess him before My Father who is in heaven.

But whoever denies Me before men, I will also deny him before My Father who is in heaven.

Proposition

2 Characteristics of a disciple of Jesus that should guide you as you follow Jesus:

1. [The providential master of a disciple vs 29-30](#)
2. [The acknowledgement of a disciple vs 32-33](#)

1. The Providential master of a disciple vs 29-30

Matthew 10:29–31 LSB

Are not two sparrows sold for an assarion? And yet not one of them will fall to the ground apart from your Father.

But the very hairs of your head are all numbered.

So do not fear; you are more valuable than many sparrows.

29 “Are not two sparrows sold for an assarion?”

Slide This was the coin, which was talked about. Its Greek name was the assarion or as. This coin is kept in the trinity evangelical divinity school’s biblical coin collection.



Matthew asked a question.

The sparrow was used for food by many poor people and one of the cheapest items sold in the market.

The grammar reveals an event that repeatedly happens.

Continuedly sparrows are sold for an assarion.

The assarion was a small Roman copper coin, 1/16 of a denarius, less than half an hour’s average wage.

It’s like ten cents you pick up lying on the pavement- the most financially insignificant thing.

Matthew was using a fortiori argument (Latin stronger reason) if a less likely premise is true, then a more extreme premise must be true.

“And...”

Connects adding a point of focus.

“...yet not one of them will fall to the ground.”

The sparrow was of little importance, yet God directs your and my attention to them.

God sees them and even what happens to the sparrow God controls.

Without the involvement of God not even a sparrow will fall to the ground.

The grammar reveals this is a predictive statement.

“...apart from your Father.”

Apart = without knowledge and consent

Without the knowledge and consent of the Father none will die.

What we see is God's providential care even for the least valuable sparrows sold in a market.

The Point Matthew is arguing for is that The God of all providence is the disciples, Father.

Matthew arguing for the lesser to the greater.

The God you serve is a God who controls even the life and death of something as insignificant as a sparrow.

That's your God.

To strengthen His argument for the providential care of God Mathew highlights the omniscience of God.

God sovereignty and providential care is not limited to just life and death issues of His creatures, but God even cares how many hairs you have on your head, something you and I tend not to bother with unless we see ourselves losing great amounts of it.

We serve a hair caring God.

God does not only care for the big things like nations and history, we serve a God who also cares about the little things of Life.

30 “But the very hairs of your head are all numbered.”

The grammar reveals that your hairs have been numbered in the past with ongoing effect.

Secondly the grammar affirms that your hair continues to be numbered as a timeless fact.

Every time a hair on your head falls out, God knows about it.

If God so cares about even the smallest details of life, you can be confident that He cares for the major things of life.

If God tells the sluggard to learn from even an ant, it shows He cares even for a small creature like an ant.

You can know He cares about the major events in your life.

Blessed is the man who sees God in trifles! It is there that it is the hardest to see him; but he who believes that God is there, may go from the little providence up to the God of providence.

*Providence, Volume 4, Sermon #187 - Matthew 10:30
Charles Spurgeon*

“31 “So...”

Reveals you as reader are called to make an Inference/deduction a conclusion.

“...do not fear; you are more valuable than many sparrows.”

If God even cares for the life and death of a sparrow and the very hairs on your head conclude the following

Do not fear.

In fact, the grammar tells you it's a command that you are to obey as a lifestyle.

To Fear =phobeo- frightened, terrified- to feel anxious or apprehensive about a situation.

Don't be frightened.

You are more valuable than many sparrows.

The term **More** = diaphero = dia denotes transition, or separation + phero = to carry, Root to be worth more, The Lemma to differ to one's advantage, someone or something be worth more than superior to.

You're more valuable than

Matthew used the same term in

Matthew 6:26 LSB

Look at the birds of the air, that they do not sow, nor reap nor gather into barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not worth much more than they?

You are of much greater quality and value in God's eyes than a sparrow.

Since you are so much more valuable than an insignificant sparrow, know that God really does care for you.

To understand this passage even more we need to unpack a little more the providence of God.

There is as much providence in the creeping of an aphid(aphids) upon a rose leaf as in the marching of an army to ravage a continent.

Charles Spurgeon

There is nothing of which it is more difficult to convince men than that the providence of God governs this world.

John Calvin (French Reformer)

God's providences often seem to contradict his purposes, even when they are serving them.

Matthew Henry (Nonconformist Biblical Exegete)

Providence comes from Latin term (pro-videre/videre= to see beforehand and is used for the ongoing work of God after creation. It's called the general decree of God.

It relates to:

- It's a doctrine expressing God's goodness and that everything that happens in this world relates to His goodness.
- It incorporates the idea of God's infinite power and infinite wisdom.
- It relates to God's continual care of the world.
- He does not abandon it which some call deism.
- He sustains it every moment.
- It's a continuous testimony that of the reality of God.

The basis for providence is God's infallible knowledge and unchanging will.

God preserves all things, supports their actions, governs them according to His established order and directs them to their ordained ends.

God remains distinct from His creation which is contrary to Pantheism saying God is creation like a tree or a plant or nature.

God relates to creation in an ongoing manner through providence.

The Bible reveals

1. God's power in preserving things.

Hebrews 1:3 LSB

who is the radiance of His glory and the exact representation of His nature, and upholds all things by the word of His power, who, having accomplished cleansing for sins, sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high,

1. Jesus, the creator upholds/sustains (phero=root bring, carry, Lemma= means He causes it to continue in the state or condition-bear, Lou Nida sustain, maintains, or carries along) all of creation by His own Word of power.

God upholds the universe through the normal laws of nature meaning He is sovereign over the laws of nature, even able to suspend it if He so wishes.

God is a God of order, and His universe operates with regularity.

God sustains even a sparrow, it continues until God determines otherwise.

God will sustain you.

Paul tells us:

Colossians 1:17 LSB

And He is before all things, And in Him all things hold together.

Holds together = sunistemi= sun = together with + histemi= to set, place = Bedag = to come to be in a condition of coherence, continue, endure, hold together

The molecules that hold together a sparrow and yourself is kept in this condition by Jesus.

- God providing for His creatures.
- God causes:
 - the weather: rain, ice, lightning, moisture, lightning, even the direction of the weather Job 37:6-13
 - animals to go to their lairs.

God feeds the animals, gives life and takes life away.

Psalm 104:27–29 LSB

They all wait for You To give them their food in due season.

You give to them, they gather it up; You open Your hand, they are satisfied with good.

You hide Your face, they are dismayed; You take away their spirit, they breathe their last And return to their dust.

God is the one that feeds a sparrow and by implication you, his child.

God cares from the greatest to the least.

God causes the growth of grass and the growth of vegetation.

Psalm 104:14 LSB

He causes the grass to grow for the cattle, And vegetation for man's cultivation,

To

bring forth food from the earth,

Paul taught

Acts 17:28 LSB

for in Him we live and move and exist, as even some of your own poets have said, 'For we also are His offspring.'

Things happen in the way they do because God has determined that they would happen in the exact way God determined.

God controls even the random acts and events of life- when you throw the dices in a game, even in that God is involved.

Proverbs 16:33 LSB
The lot is cast into the lap, But its every judgment is from Yahweh.

It's a doctrine that opposes the idea of chance, randomness or fate(determinism)

God therefore ordains everything that will come to pass.

That which He planned is accomplished by His good pleasure.

1689 Baptist confession defines it as follows:

To the Judicious and Impartial Reader: A Contextual-Historical Exposition of the Second London Baptist Confession of Faith Of Divine Providence

1. God the good Creator of all things, in his infinite power, and wisdom, doth (a) uphold, direct, dispose, and govern all Creatures, and things, from the greatest even to the (b) least, by his most wise and holy providence, to the end for the which they were Created; according unto his infallible foreknowledge, and the free and immutable Council of his (c) own will; to the praise of the glory of his wisdom, power, justice, infinite goodness and mercy.

As the infinite, all powerful, all wise creator, God governs everything in His universe.

Biblical Doctrine: A Systematic Summary of Bible Truth Divine Providence

Divine providence is God's preserving his creation, operating in every event in the world, and directing the things in the universe to his appointed end for them.

The Psalmist tells us:

Psalm 103:19 LSB
Yahweh has established His throne in the heavens, And His kingdom rules overall.

Now we have come to a difficult question.

If God controls everything why do bad things happen to people, tragedies, disasters?

Sometimes it's due:

- to the fall- with the curse came in thorns and thistles, a creation that groans (Rom 8:18-22)
- you reap what you sow Gal 6:7-8
- sometimes God disciplines you as his Child Heb 12:6-17
- But in all cases God is busy accomplishing His purposes and plans. We see some examples in Scripture.

Genesis 50:20 LSB

As for you, you meant evil against me, but God meant it for good in order to do what has happened on this day, to keep many people alive.

- Secondary cause: Joseph's brothers sinned because of their own sinful desires: They hated Joseph intended to kill Him and eventually sold Him into slavery.
- Joseph's brothers are held accountable for their own sin.
- Yet the hidden first cause was God who in His infinite wisdom and unchanging will providentially saved Israel from certain physical death due to famine.

a second example

Jesus

Secondary cause: Evil men made decisions according to their own sinful nature and driven by their sinful desires killed Jesus.

They will be held accountable for their actions.

Yet the hidden first cause is God this was part of God's will and God's plan all along to bring about salvation for His elect.

Acts 2:23 LSB

this Man, delivered over by the predetermined plan and foreknowledge of God, you nailed to a cross by the hands of lawless men and put Him to death.

What we learn from this is:

1. Things happen by the foreknowledge and decrees of God.
2. He is the hidden first cause of everything happening.
3. He acts as Sovereign God, and his decree refers to everything that has come to pass.
4. What seems casual to you and me is ordained by God
5. They are the acts of His counsel and wisdom.
6. They are unchanging and without error.

What you and I see is normally the visible second causes.

The second cause is the natural process of the created order rooted in God's decrees.

Natural events happening by natural reasons while not denying it happened by God's decree.

The earthquakes, tornadoes, catastrophes can naturally be explained by natural explanations yet happened by the decrees of God.

The death of a sparrow because of old age, sickness

Yet the hidden first Cause is there:

The earthly catastrophe because part of God's plan, timing, decree

The same with the sparrow: God's timing for its death.

Every time you thank God for food, you're actually articulating the doctrine of providence.

You thank God for your food acknowledging the good things you enjoy comes from God, (primary cause) and yet you know that the food also came because you bought it, cooked it, and prepared it. (natural secondary causes)

1689 Baptist confession states

To the Judicious and Impartial Reader: A Contextual-Historical Exposition of the Second London Baptist Confession of Faith Of Divine Providence

2. Although in relation to the foreknowledge and Decree of God, the first cause, all things come to pass
 - (d) immutably and infallibly; so that there is not anything, befalls any
 - (e) by chance, or without his Providence; yet by the same Providence he ordered them to fall out, according to the nature of second causes, either
 - (f) necessarily, freely, or contingently

So why is this doctrine important for the disciple of Jesus.

Application

As a disciple of Jesus, ponder that God is in controls everything you face. That

- problem at work
- difficult college
- health problem
- conflict with your wife
- That massive trial
- The hostility- persecution
- whatever you may face:
- Understand there are natural reasons for this like:
 - Secondary causes:
 - people sinning against you because of sinful desires.
 - A sin-stained world
 - Reaping what you have sown.

But there is always a hidden 1st cause: part of God's plan, decree, timing ultimately.

for His glory.

Isaiah 45:7 LSB

The One forming light and creating darkness, Producing peace and creating calamity; I am Yahweh who does all these.

Yet like a conductor of life and history, God is working His plans and purposes.

Romans 8:28 LSB

And we know that for those who love God all things work together for good, for those who are called according to His purpose.

Think long over this and then decide how to respond: The choice.

Either sinfully: Sinfully angry, swearing, or running to drink, drugs etc., trying to escape.

Or

Godly: Ask His wisdom, choose to submit to Him, think, what would be a biblical response that would honor God, if need be, consult with Godly Christians and then act.

John wrote how perfect love casts out fear - context the fear of judgment passage encourages you not to fear. (Not on the power point)

1 John 4:17–18 LSB

By this, love has been perfected with us, so that we may have confidence in the day of judgment, because as He is, so also are we in this world.

There is no fear in love; but perfect love casts out fear, because fear involves punishment, and the one who fears is not perfected in love.

Love looks at opportunities to give, act and serve others. (Other focused) Fear is self-preserving and thinks what may happen to me. (Self-focused)

In Johns context would mean that if I have trusted Christ and loved him becoming like Him, it will cast out fear of judgment.

When you consider God's providential and loving care and respond in love to him, there is no space for fear in your life.

- Don't fear.
- Trust Him
- Love Him
- Worship Him

He can change a tragedy into a triumph,

He turned the persecutor like Paul into a proclaimer.

He turned the murderer Moses into a leader for Israel.

Systematic Theology: An Introduction to Bible Doctrine a. God Uses All Things to Fulfill His

Purposes and Even Uses Evil for His Glory and for Our Good

God Uses All Things to Fulfill His Purposes and Even Uses Evil for His Glory and for Our Good:

However

God Never Does Evil, and Is Never to Be Blamed for Evil:

God Rightfully Blames and Judges Moral Creatures for the Evil They Do:

Evil Is Real, Not an Illusion, and We Should Never Do Evil, for It Will Always Harm Us and Others.

In Spite of All of the Foregoing Statements, We Have to Come to the Point Where We Confess That We Do Not Understand How It Is That God Can Ordain That We Carry Out Evil Deeds and Yet Hold Us Accountable for Them and Not be Blamed Himself:

The mystery of providence defies our attempt to tame it by reason. I do not mean it is illogical; I mean that we do not know enough about it to be able to unpack it.

D. A. Carson

This brings us to the second characteristics of a disciple of Jesus that should guide you as you follow Jesus.

2. The acknowledgment of a disciple vs 32-33

Matthew 10:32–33 LSB

Therefore, everyone who confesses Me before men, I will also confess him before My Father who is in heaven.

But whoever denies Me before men, I will also deny him before My Father who is in heaven.

32 “Therefore...”

Matthew then made a deductive statement.

Since God knows everything about you and controls everything that happens you should not fear.

Understanding god’s loving providential care, removes the reasons for fear and frees you to boldly acknowledge and proclaim Christ and His word.

“...everyone who confesses Me before men, I will also confess him before My Father who is in heaven.”

The term everyone would refer to the apostles then and by implication the disciples at large.

The term confesses =homologo = homou = together with + lego = to say = to say together, to agree, to profess to acknowledge Jesus- BEDAG = to acknowledge in public, to profess

You identify yourself with the Jesus and proclaim Him.

You acknowledge you know Jesus and say what He says.

Note the content of the confession.

Me

Me refers to Jesus.

The Greek actually read in me.

The In implies a marker of close association, within a limit- meaning you have a close personal relationship in which “ev” is viewed as the controlling influence.

You confess then that you identify with Jesus and have a close relationship with Jesus and that He is the controlling influence in your life.

A disciple of Jesus is willing to professes that publicly to men.

The Disciples confession and actions match up.

What you say you do and when you don't, you confess that as sin and repent of that.

The disciple of Jesus does not fear Man- because they are driven by love.

The grammar reveals firstly that these confession to men and the confession to God are true statements, predictive and both cases the subject does the action.

The one who will confess in Jesus to men.

Jesus will confess in front of the Father who is in heaven.

The Term before = emprosthen = in front of, before, in the presence of

Term used

Matthew 5:16 LSB

Let your light shine before men in such a way that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father who is in heaven.

In the Throne room before the Father Jesus will acknowledge having a close relationship with you and that you are under His rule.

If you will be acknowledging in Jesus to men

Jesus will acknowledge you to the Father.

If you think about it.

Salvation happens when you:

- realize how sinful you are.
- you then repent and turn to Jesus.
- You trust in His death and resurrection for the forgiveness of sins.
- You yield to His lordship.
- This is all the work of God- by His Grace/HS

Paul, however, describes it's as a confession.

A confession which is the outward expression of the inward faith of the heart.

Inwardly you believe Jesus died and rose again- outwardly you profess yielding to His Lordship.

Romans 10:9 LSB

that if you confess with your mouth Jesus as Lord and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you will be saved.

The next thing a true disciple of Jesus does:

2nd is confession through Baptism.

The great commission involves baptizing disciples as a public confession to the church that you are in fact a believer.

It's an outward testimony of what has taken place inwardly.

Matthew 28:19 LSB

Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit,

As a believer continues in their walk, in the church you may practice communion.

Communion continues to be a public confession, a public acknowledgement that you publicly proclaim the death of Christ.

1 Corinthians 11:26 LSB

For as often as you eat this bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the death of the Lord until He comes.

The true disciple's confession of Jesus as the son of God also serves to authenticate that you abide in Christ.

1 John 4:15 LSB

Whoever confesses that Jesus is the Son of God, God abides in him, and he in God.

a True disciples confesses Christ to a hostile world - evangelism & proclamation.

1 Peter 2:9 LSB

But you are a chosen family, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for God's own possession, so that you may proclaim the excellencies of Him who has called you out of darkness into His marvelous light.

a True disciples may even confess or proclaim Christ at the expense of martyrdom.

Revelation 2:13 LSB

'I know where you dwell, where Satan's throne is; and you hold fast My name and did not deny My faith even in the days of Antipas, My witness, My faithful one, who was killed among you, where Satan dwells.

In contrast Jesus stated

33 "But..."

shows the contrast.

"...whoever denies Me before men,..."

Here the Grammar reveals a degree of doubt.

Whoever might deny Me in front of men.

The term denies = arneomai = deny, to refuse comes from a root to repudiate, disown

They disown or deny God.

The reality is that your words and actions reveal your heart.

Demas who feared men and due to persecution deserted Paul and embraced the world.

2 Timothy 4:10 LSB

for Demas, having loved this present age, has deserted me and gone to Thessalonica; Crescens has gone to Galatia, Titus to Dalmatia.

I believe that this denial may include more than words.

You may verbally claim you are a Christian, but when your actions proclaim something differently.

When you profess to be a Christian, yet you live in sin: as a drunkard, addict to drugs, swearing, sexually immoral etc.

1 Corinthians 6:9–11 LSB

Or do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived; neither the sexually immoral, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor homosexuals,

nor thieves, nor the greedy, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor swindlers, will inherit the kingdom of God.

And such were some of you; but you were washed, but you were sanctified, but you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and in the Spirit of our God.

(vs 11 not there)

You can deny Jesus by actions or because of the fear of man.

vs 28 Jesus had instructed His disciples not to fear those who could kill the body but not the soul.

But now he also warns about the person who due to the fear of man denies God either distancing yourself from God or denying him through your actions which actually reveal the hearts denial of Jesus as Lord.

Jesus's warning rings out like a cannon overhead.

“I will also deny him before My Father who is in heaven.”

The grammar reveals this to be a statement of truth, which is predicted will happen in the future.

Jesus will disown you in the presence of God in the future.

Application

Are you that person whose words mean nothing... who says you will do something and then you totally fail to do that... be careful that you are not deceiving yourself.

Sadly, there are some of you this morning who think, that because you're a member at WBC, you're baptized, you claim publicly to know Jesus, yet you live by denying the Lordship of Jesus in your life.

Be warned.

You might hear these words in the future.

Matthew 7:21–23 LSB

*Not everyone who says to Me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father who is in heaven will enter.
Many will say to Me on that day, 'Lord, Lord, in Your name did we not prophesy, and in Your name cast out demons, and in Your name do many miracles?'
And then I will declare to them, 'I never knew you; depart from Me, you who practice lawlessness.'*

Don't think you can play with matches over pan of fuel and not be burned.

To the husband and the wife- that say they are believers, yet how you relate to each other is proclaiming something different.

To the young adult who thinks they can live their life apart from Jesus

To you that is sitting here this morning, and you know that when you go from here, all that comes out of your mouth is sinful words and from your actions are sinful actions.

If that does not bother, you.... brother or sister, like Jonathan Edwards stated, you may be in fact dangling over the fires of hell on a cobweb and God has a million ways to cut that cobweb.

To you I call upon today, repent.

Acknowledge your sinful heart to God.

Acknowledge your lack of integrity (that you confess and do not act what you say)

Call upon Him to save you and show mercy to you.

To you who believes

If you have left your first love for Christ.

Like Jesus told the church at Ephesus.

Hear the words of Jesus!

Revelation 2:4–5 LSB

*But I have this against you, that you have left your first love.
Therefore, remember from where you have fallen, and repent and do the deeds you did at first. But if not, I am coming to you and will remove your lampstand out of its place, unless you repent.*

Repent

If your devotions have grown cold, start again.

If you are not reading the bible, dust it off and open it again.

If you have been sinning confess it and repent of your sins

1 John 1:9 LSB

If we confess our sins, He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

Return to Jesus

Do the deeds you did before!

remember the words of Samuel.

1 Samuel 12:20–22 LSB

And Samuel said to the people, "Do not fear. You have committed all this evil, yet do not turn aside from following Yahweh, but serve Yahweh with all your heart.

And you must not turn aside, for then you would go after meaningless things which cannot profit and cannot deliver, because they are meaningless.

For Yahweh will not abandon His people on account of His great name, because Yahweh has been pleased to make you a people for Himself.

The great Christian duty is self-denial, which consists in two things: first, in denying worldly inclinations and its enjoyments, and second, in denying self-exultation and renouncing one's self-significance by being empty of self.
Jonathan Edwards (American Evangelical Preacher)

I close off with some quotes of great men concerning God's providence.

Conclusion

Nelson's Complete Book of Stories, Illustrations & Quotes Someone Once Said ...

- Despots may plan and armies may march, and the congresses of the nations may seem to think they are adjusting all the affairs of the world, but the mighty men of the earth are only the dust of the chariot wheels of God's providence. —T. Dewitt Talmage

Nelson's Complete Book of Stories, Illustrations & Quotes Someone Once Said ...

The longer I live, the more convincing proofs I see of this truth, that God governs in the affairs of man. —Benjamin Franklin, quoted by Ronald Reagan in his address to the National Association of Evangelicals, March, 1983.

Nelson's Complete Book of Stories, Illustrations & Quotes Someone Once Said ...

- The more we trust the sovereignty of heaven, the less we fear the calamities of earth. —Anonymous