

Tuesday, November 14, 2023 • Read Psalm 104:27-30

Questions from the Scripture text: For whom do all God's creatures wait (v27a)? To do what (v27b)? Who gives, and who gathers (v28a)? How are they filled with good (v28b)? What does He sometimes do (v29a)? With what result? What else does He sometimes do (v29b)? With what result? But what does He continue to do (v30a)? With what immediate result? And what cumulative result (v30b)?

What are we to see in creation and providence? Psalm 104:27-30 prepares us for the opening portion of public worship on the Lord's Day. In these four verses of Holy Scripture, the Holy Spirit teaches us that **providence is carried out personally and powerfully by the Lord Himself**

God fills His creatures with goodness, v27-28. Note the means that God has appointed: seasons and labor. God has established "seasons, days, and years" (cf. Gen 1:14) so that the produce of the ground comes in a cycle and rhythm that testifies to the faithfulness of God. But He also gives to His creatures to labor: "they gather in." So the creature enjoys God's goodness both in the external provision and in providing us with ability—and with opportunity to exercise that ability. Thus, the creature is not just filled with food; he is filled with "goodness" (end of v28).

God sovereignly rules even in difficulty and death, v29. What can we do, when trouble comes? Does that mean that God is somehow absent? No! In trouble, God is there, but "hiding His face." In death, it is God Who withholds the creature's breath. For the believer, it is a great comfort that providence is personal. The believer knows that God is for him (cf. Rom 8:31), because God has given Christ for him and to him (cf. Rom 8:32). So, even when God's face is hidden, we know that He is for us. And there is no sting in death (cf. 1Cor 15:55-57), when the One Who gave Christ for us holds our breath in His hands and receives us into glory (cf. Ps 73:24).

God's reign in this creation is with a view toward the new creation, v30. The same Spirit by Whom He did all the work of creation (cf. 1:2), the Lord continues to send forth continually. This is significant in v30, because "Spirit is translating the same word as "breath" in v29b. God's breath can never be taken away. God's Spirit continuously goes forth from Him. That is the hope in this groaning creation, but more than that, it is the hope for the new creation. He will make the face of the earth new (v30b). We see His continually refreshed mercy, and we believe Him Who has done this, when He says that He makes all things new (cf. Rev 21:5). His faithfulness is the foundation of our everlasting hope.

Who gives you your food? With what, in addition to food, should that fill you? From Whose hand should you receive even your hardships? What does this do for *how* you receive your hardships? Why does the day-to-day sustaining of the creation confirm the certainty of a new creation—upon what foundation do both rest?

Sample prayer: We praise You, O God, from whom all good things come. We praise You, who make us to enjoy Your own goodness in all the good that You give us. Come help us, we pray, to worship You—to enjoy You and Your goodness. Turn your face to us in blessing, and help us by Your Spirit, as He pours out Your love in our hearts. Come, renew us in Yourself again, and give us to enjoy You now as we will enjoy You forever in the new creation, we ask through Christ, AMEN!

Suggested songs: ARP104D "How Many Works, Lord" or TPH104B "My Soul, Bless the Lord"

(The following is a machine-generated transcription. PLEASE BE AWARE of—and patient with—transcribing errors. If there is something confusing or obviously erroneous, you are invited to listen to the audio recording via hopewellarp.org)

Psalm 104 verse 27, through 30. These are God's words. These all wait for you. That you may give them their food and do season. What you give them, they gather in. You open your hand. They are filled with good. You hide your face. Their troubled. You take away their breath.

They die and return to their dust. You send forth your spirit. They are created. And you renew, The face. Of the earth.

So for the reading of gods inspired and errant word in which we learned that receiving providence as personal is. The foundation of joy and hope. For the believer. Receiving providence as personal. Is the foundation of joy and hope for the believer. First of all, provinces personal The description.

Of the food. Being. Um, being given and consumed. Is a picture here of God personally, almost like The mother bird with every creature and all of creation gathered pleading. Helplessness blindness, you. I'm sure have seen the scene with Baby birds just craning their neck. All they know is they're neediness.

They wait for. They wait for the food. These all wait for you. That you may give them their food and do season. Um, this of course, is not denying the instrumentality of labor. Even ants. Uh, labor. Um, Sometimes are often to with a diligence that puts People to shame.

Um, but what you give them, they gather in And so it's gone in his providence giving even in their gathering. Um, The picture in, then the end of verse 28, you open your hand. They are filled with good. Um, like uh like like a man with grain hand feeding his sheep.

And, The metaphor and the analogy here. As of the lord hand, feeding. Every single one of his creatures. So that Even if a hand, if a sheep is hand fed by a man or it's just cropping the grass, in the field, the idea is that god is displaying some of his goodness.

The sheep is enjoying the goodness of god. When? Her shepherd, feeds her from his hand, the sheep is enjoying the goodness of god, whenever she crops the grass, but she does not know. That what she is. Enjoying is the goodness of god. It's grain or it's grass to the sheep.

We of all creatures. Should see that god who gives of his goodness to all of his creatures? As the god who has taken us not merely as creatures, not merely now as Uh even as image bearers but in the lord jesus christ, as our heavenly father And use the illustration of the lord jesus, you know, the the birds that your heavenly father feeds, And the flowers that you're heavenly, father Close.

So that when we enjoy our food, we are not just to be filled with food. What are we to be filled with? And to verse 28, his goodness. Now, good tasting food. And a sufficient quantity of it. That's a very pleasant thing. God is designed it. To be pleasant.

But how much greater the joy of the one? Who knows that he is not just enjoying good things from god. But that he is enjoying the goodness. Of god. And even enjoying god himself. In that goodness. So receiving providence as personal Gives us joy as a foundation of joy.

It's also foundation of hope. Because it's not just the pleasant things that come. From the hand of our god. Verse 29. This is still personal. You hide your face. They are troubled. You take away their breath. They die. And return to their dust. These referring to all the animate creatures here.

But this does remind us. Doesn't it of genesis 3 dust? You are into dust. Uh, you shall return out of the Um, Out of your, the earth you were taken. And you saw return to it. It reminds us that precious in the lord is the site precious and In the side of the lord is the death of his saints.

That reminds us that every one of our breaths, As lent to us, given to us. Uh, by the lord. And so, whatever trouble we are in Even if he is hiding his face from us,

Restraining, our ability to Uh, to perceive by sight by our observation, by our calculation.

That he is for us yet. We may know that he is for us. We know that he is for us because of his character, we know that he is for us because of his covenant, we know that he is for us especially Because of the cross. Of the lord jesus christ.

So that the question in Romans 8:31, If god is for us, Uh, Who can be against us? Is answered with and god is for us. Romans 8 verse 32, how do we know he's force? He did not spare his own son, but gave him up for us all. And so he must surely Together with him freely.

Give us. All things, so that in all these things we are more than conquerors and what are all these things? Well, things like peril and nakedness and famine and sword. And, Uh, for being killed for his sake all day long, and being led as sheep, To the slaughter. None of which separates us from the love of god in christ jesus.

And so, when we come into hardship and we come into pain and we come even into death, That which gives us hope is not to say, god is not in this. That which gives us hope is to see the personal intentionality of god. In the trouble and in the death, you hide your face.

They are troubled. You take away your breath, they die and return to their dust. Because that reminds us not just of the personal nature that this comes from the hand that gave me christ. This comes from christ's hand, that was pierced for me. But it also reminds us of ultimate purpose.

You send forth your spirit. And this is tied. Excuse me. You send forth your spirit. And this is tied directly to verse 29 because the word for breath in the Hebrew of verse 29, referring to the creature and the word for spirit in the Hebrew of verse 30, referring to God, it's the same word.

That actually sounds like a breath. It's rouja. As sounds like breathing out. And so, the last breath of the believer, Is not the last word on the believer. And one of the ways that we can see that is that god has given to his creation these cycles. Of death and renewal death and refreshment.

Uh, so that we see in the spring and god's wisdom, remember he put the the The lights in the sky for signs, and seasons for days, months, and years. To communicate to us. Something about his faithfulness. And so the sun comes up every morning and we say god is faithful and the moon completes its cycle every Every month and we say, god is faithful.

And the earth goes through a season of dying in the fall and of renewed. Renewing, the face of the earth and the spring. And it's almost like Um, the Uh, the lord actually pay him repays, the whole face of the earth, every spring, with all the green and all the flowers butting on the trees and, and the first spring flowers that have pop up out of the ground.

So you say the faithfulness of god. And god in his faithfulness is determined that death will not be the end of us. But that there will be resurrection. The one who continually renews the face face of the earth. In psalm 104 verse 30 says, behold, i make all things new In revelation 21 talking about a new heaven, and a new earth, and a resurrection that we will inherit not with these bodies.

But with the transformed bodies, So, Receiving providence's personal. Gives us hope not just because we know what he has done, that he has given himself to us in christ. But because we know has ultimate purpose. Is that resurrection that blessing that he has determined for us? Uh, from before the world began.

So, it's very important. That in all of creation and all of history. That we see the sovereign providence of god. As personal. According to his purpose. And this of course, is not just Um, beneficial to us. In terms of joy. And hope but ought to call fourth, praise from our hearts.

So that we continually praise god, for what we see him doing. In his creation. And in the course of his providence, And may he fill our hearts with that praise. Let's ask him for the for his help. Our father in heaven, we pray. That your spirit who caused these words to be written on the pages of scripture.

Would cause the truths of these words to be written on our hearts. That our hearts would be full of gladness and thanksgiving. That we would know. Your love to us in jesus, from which we can never be separated. That we would have hope in you hope in christ. By the fellowship of your holy spirit to pours out your love and our hearts for.

We ask it in jesus name, Amen.