



WCF Prayer:

Chapter 5 - Of Providence

Ever Present God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, you are creator of all things.

However, your Word reveals to us that when you created this world you did not step away but are always present. You not only uphold but also direct the affairs of all creatures, all actions, and all things from the greatest to the least. You do this by your truly wise and holy *providence*.

Eternal God, your providence demonstrates continually, your wisdom, power, justice, goodness, and mercy – which is to your praise and glory.

You exercise this providence out of your infallible will which is never restricted by external pressure or persuasion and is unchangeable.

Lord we know that although you are the First Cause of all events, you nevertheless use a multitude secondary means to work out your will.

These various secondary causes occur exactly as you decreed in eternity and in the way you purposed them to execute your will.

Though your will is unchangeable and infallible, we see it worked out in the nature and natural outcomes of these secondary causes. Lord we know that although, you so frequently use these secondary means, you are free to work without them, above or even against them when you are executing your will – all according to your own free pleasure.

We are in awe of Your Almighty power, your unsearchable wisdom and your infinite goodness as we watch your providential will being worked out within history.

Your Almighty power, unsearchable wisdom, and infinite goodness is seen in your providence, even to the first fall of humanity and all sins of angels and humanity. We know that your providence extends to that reality – but not simply by your *bare* permission. Rather, even this providence is executed through your most wise and powerful actions in ordering and governing even this for your own holy ends. Yet Lord God, we immediately declare and confess that the sinfulness of this world proceeds only from your creatures and not in any way from yourself.

You are most holy and righteous and so you are neither the author nor approver of sin - you could never be.

We are humbled in the knowledge that you are a most wise, righteous and gracious God.

We read in your Word that you sometimes leave your children exposed to many temptations and the existing corruption and deceitfulness of our hearts to chastise us for our former sins. We know you do this in kindness, that not only might we be humbled, but that we might also be raised to a closer and more constant dependence on you for life.

You not only help us become more watchful against future temptation to sin by this means, but you bring about many other just and holy outcomes.

For others, wicked and ungodly in your sight, as a righteous judge you blind them and harden their hearts for their former sins. You withhold your grace from them so that they will not have your light in their hearts.

Lord, you even withdraw gifts which they have benefited from and expose them to the corruption brought about by their sin. In this Lord, you give them over to their own lusts, the temptations of the world and the power of Satan.

Lord even circumstances that you use to soften others, they use to harden their own hearts. Lord how awful is sin, how worthy of condemnation.

However, we give praise you that your general providence does reach all creatures. However, we are filled with thanks and praise for that special providence that takes care of your church, and deals with her always for her good.