

PROVIDENTIAL HARDSHIP

GENESIS 50:20

INTRODUCTION:

1. A hard life is often the providential guidance of God.
2. In hindsight, Joseph came to know that his hard life was God fulfilling His divine plan to save Israel. (Gen. 50.16,17,20)

I. THE PROMISE OF PROVIDENCE

- A. Providence defined.
 1. Providence (latin: providentia): Literally, to see and provide for ahead of time. (Gen. 22.14)
 2. **Genesis 50.20:** *"God meant it for good."*
- B. Providence described. (Rom. 8.28)
 1. Persuasion: *"we know"*
 2. Partnership: *"all things work together"*
 3. People: *"for those who love God."*
- C. God does not promise an easy life. He promises that all things will work out for our good. (cf. Acts 2.23)

II. THE PRESENCE OF GOD

- A. God was present when Joseph was in the pit.
 1. The suffering. (Gen. 41.46; 37.18-20; 42.21; 37.24,25)
 2. God was with him. (Gen. 39.2,3; 49.23,24; Acts 7.9,10)
- B. God was present when Joseph was in prison.
 1. The suffering. (Gen. 40.15; Ps. 105.17-19)
 2. God was with him. (Gen. 39.21-23)
- C. God is present with us. (Heb. 13.5; Rom. 8.31; Prov. 3.5,6)

III. THE PURPOSE OF GOD

- A. Joseph's suffering was for a purpose.
 1. **Genesis 45.8:** *"it was not you who sent me here, but God"*
 2. Joseph's suffering was "to preserve life" (Gen. 45.4,5)
- B. Suffering is not always about you. (Phil. 1.12)

CONCLUSION: ROMANS 8.28: *"All things work together...to those who are the called"* Are you among the called?

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"Go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature"
-Mark 16.15

September 27, 2026

MEETING TIMES:

SUNDAY MORNING BIBLE CLASS : 9:00 AM
SUNDAY MORNING WORSHIP: 9:50 AM
SUNDAY EVENING WORSHIP: 6:00 PM
WEDNESDAY EVENING BIBLE CLASS 7:00 PM

Are you Apologetic?

To prevent offending anyone, religion is one of those topics that is avoided. When anything Biblical is brought up, such as the subject of morality, the uniqueness of the church, or faith in Jesus alone to the exclusion of other religions, it offends those who do not agree with those views (Matt. 15.12). Those who are offended often expect and even demand an apology.

Did you know that the Bible commands that we apologize for our faith? It is not an apology the way we think of it today. It is not an expression of regret to soothe those who are offended. In 1 Peter 3.15, the apostle writes that we are to *"always be ready to give a defense to everyone who asks you a reason for the hope that is in you..."* The word 'defense' is translated from the Greek word "apologia," from which we get our English word "apology." It is a word that carries the idea of giving a logical answer. Those who see that we are people with a hope of something better will ask us to explain why we have this hope. This verse tells us to apologize, that is, provide a logical answer.

Do you have hope? Do you know why you have hope? Do you know how to articulate that hope to others? The Bible never tells us to be silent lest we offend someone. The Bible tells us to speak out (2 Tim. 4.2), but do so in a logical and convincing way. CLP

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JESUS: THE FOCUS OF BIBLE STUDY

Acts 17:2

INTRODUCTION:

1. To those who preached the gospel, the crucifixion of Christ was still fresh in their minds.
2. Jesus impacted the lives of those who knew Him. Is that what Jesus means to us?
3. **Acts 17.1:** The synagogue of the Jews was essentially a place for Bible study and prayer.

I. THESSALONIAN BIBLE STUDY

- A. There is a discussion.
 1. **Acts 17.2:** *“reasoned with them from the Scriptures”*
 2. Reasoned (dialegomai): Dia - “thoroughly”; Lego - “discuss”
- B. There is an explanation.
 1. **Acts 17.3:** *“explaining”*
 2. Explaining (dianoigo): Dia - “thoroughly”; Noigo - “open”
- C. There is a demonstration.
 1. **Acts 17.3:** *“demonstrating that the Christ had to suffer”*
 2. Demonstrating (paratithemi): Para - “by the side”; Tithemi - “to place.” Lit., to place by the side. (cf. Acts 17.3,7)

II. BEREAN BIBLE STUDY

- A. The Bereans were passionate.
 1. **Acts 17.10-12:** *“they received the word with all readiness”*
 2. Readiness (prosthumeo): Pros - “before”; Thumeo - “passion”
- B. The Bereans interpreted scriptures.
 1. **Acts 17.11:** *“searched the Scriptures”*
 2. Searched (anakrino): Ana - “up”; Krino - “to sift”
- C. The Bereans applied the scriptures.
 1. **Acts 17.13:** *“Therefore many of them believed”*
 2. More than just intellectual, they put it into practice.

III. WHAT DID JESUS MEAN TO PAUL

- A. To Paul, Jesus was the focus of Bible study.
 1. **Acts 17.3:** *“Christ had to suffer and rise again from the dead”*
 2. Is this the way we see Jesus?
- B. To Paul, Jesus was the Christ.
 1. **Acts 17.3:** *“This Jesus whom I preach to you is the Christ.”*
 2. Is that the way we see Jesus? (John 1.41; Acts 10.38)
- C. To Paul, Jesus was the King. (Acts 17.7)

CONCLUSION: Bible study is an act of spiritual self-care.

Showing Hospitality

When we hear “hospitality,” most of us picture a clean house, a good pot roast, and friends around the table. Those are good things. But that is not the Bible concept of hospitality. Hospitality is about strangers. The Greek word is philoxenia. It joins phileō, the love of a friend, with xenos, the stranger, the one who does not yet belong. Put together, it means “the love of strangers.” Inviting our friends over is fellowship. Hospitality is something harder. It is aimed at the person we don't know.

Look at how seriously the New Testament takes it. In Romans 12:13, Paul says we are to be *“given to hospitality.”* The verb behind that phrase is diōkō, “to pursue” or “to chase.” It is the same word Paul used for his own persecution of the church. We are not told to wait for strangers to wander in. We are told to go after them. The Hebrew writer put it this way: *“Do not forget to entertain strangers, for by so doing some have unwittingly entertained angels”* (Heb. 13.5). Abraham ran to three travelers in the heat of the day (Genesis 18). He had no idea who they were until later. Love for strangers was so central that Paul made philoxenos a qualification for elders (1 Timothy 3:2; Titus 1:8). An elder who does not love strangers is not qualified to be an elder.

Most Sundays, we are busy greeting each other. That is natural. We love one another, and we have a week to catch up on. But a visitor usually decides about a church in the first ten minutes, and what they are looking for is simple. “Did anyone see me?”

So let's make it practical. For the first three minutes after worship, speak only to someone you do not know. Learn their name and use it. Introduce that person to one other member. If you see someone sitting alone, go sit with them. If you have lunch plans, invite a guest.

And remember why we do this. We were the strangers once. Paul told the Ephesians they had been *“aliens from the commonwealth of Israel,”* without hope and without God (Ephesians 2:12). Then he wrote, *“Now, therefore, you are no longer strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God”* (2:19). Before you ever practiced philoxenia, someone came to you and

The next stranger who walks through our doors may be an answer to our prayers. Let's make sure they are loved before they leave.