

INTERESTING QUESTIONS ANSWERED.

GOD'S PROVIDENCE OVER THE WORLD.

Question. – I have recently lost a friend by death, and notice that your teaching seems to be that the Lord's providential care is over the consecrated ones. Am I to get the thought that God had no providential care over the interests of my friend?

Answer. – "His tender mercies are over all his works." (Psa. 145:9.) Hence, in a certain sense, God's providential care attaches to every creature.

"The whole creation is his charge,
But saints are his peculiar care."

When thinking of your friend, consider him as one of the many children of Adam whom God so loved as to give for them his only begotten Son. The redemption price has been paid by our Lord, and the time of deliverance draws near. When it shall have arrived, all the families of the earth will receive a blessing at the hands of him who loved us and bought us with his precious blood. Viewing the matter from this standpoint, there is no human creature that is not a subject of divine providence and care. In speaking of God's providences being over only the consecrated, we referred to his *special* providences of this Gospel age in respect to the calling and election of the Church, the body of Christ. Divine providence deals with this class alone in this Gospel age, favoring them by the call and by the adversities which will polish and fit them as jewels for the Kingdom. For these, all things shall work together for good, because they love God in an especial sense – better than they love self or family or houses or lands – yea, better than their own lives.

WHO ARE OUR BRETHREN?

Question. – What should be our attitude toward professing Christians of the various denominations who give evidence of but slight knowledge of the truth, and but slight appreciation of the ransom? Should we consider them brethren in Christ? and should we fellowship them as such? or should we treat them as heathen men and publicans?

Answer. – All who profess love to the Lord Jesus Christ and have faith in him as their Savior – even though their knowledge of his redemptive work be but limited and vague – and whose general conduct is noted as indicating their desire to walk after the spirit and not after the flesh, should be considered and treated as brethren. But when we use the word "brother" we are to remember that amongst believers there are two classes of brethren: (1) Those who have merely pledged themselves to the Lord for a reformation of life, and who are to some extent trusting in the Savior; and (2) those who have gone on and who have consecrated their lives even unto death, and have been begotten as new creatures by the holy spirit. These are brethren of a different order; the first were typified in the Levites, the last in the priests. Both are our brethren, and both should be treated courteously, kindly, helpfully; but it would be impossible to fellowship the first class in the same manner or degree that we would fellowship the second class. In considering the Church, only the latter should be counted, because the Church is the body of Christ, the Royal Priesthood. Only the latter, therefore, should be expected to participate in the Memorials of the Lord's death, and the pledge of consecration to be dead with him. It is to the first of these classes of brethren (typified by the Levites) that the Apostle addressed the exhortation, "I beseech you, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies living sacrifices," etc. (Rom. 12:1.) Those who follow this exhortation and make the sacrificial consecration, thereby become brethren on the highest plane of the spirit, and thus become

members of the highest degree of fellowship as members of the body of the Anointed One.

Knowledge is to be highly esteemed in the Church, and to be regarded as an evidence of progress, of growth; for none can grow strong in the Lord and in the power of his might – in grace – unless he grows also in knowledge. We properly esteem most highly those whose love for the Lord and for his truth are evidenced by zeal in the study of his Word, and whose favor with God is evidenced by their being guided more and more into the deep things of God. Nevertheless, as in the earthly family we love and care for the babes and immature, so also in the household of faith the little ones and the dwarfs are to be cared for and loved and helped that they may grow strong in the Lord and in the power of his might.

