

The Lord Provides

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Date: 02 December 2012

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[0:00] Good morning. It's a little bit special today, of course, but we are with the same God, and He's here! like He was three months ago, and like He will be in three months.

So the first Sunday we are in Bremen, September the 9th. I read with you the Psalm 121, which ends with this promise.

The Lord will keep you from all harm. He will watch over your life. The Lord will watch over your coming and going both now and forever.

He watched for our coming and for all our going during this time in Indiana. The Lord provides. The Lord provides.

That's the key phrase today. I want to show you how God provided a Reformed Baptist church in Neuchâtel, and we will together then take time to see what Paul says about God's providing and relate it with today.

[1:10] When God provides, that is a joy to recognize it and praise the Lord. As written in Psalm 103, the second verse, praise the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits.

Amen. So as we heard tomorrow, we are going back to Switzerland. This little country, this little country, this little country, was based on the rock of the word of God, and there are some remains of that biblical heritage.

I want to show you two of them. The first, the actual Swiss constitution still starts with, in the name of the almighty God.

And secondly, the national anthem is a church hymn. And we are now going to hear the words of this hymn read by four men, and the younger will start, and the older will then end the reading.

So I don't know if Will Richard is there. He's not there. So I have to read. Oh, will somebody read this part? Yes, Dan?

[2:38] Okay. Okay, you can read this part from your seat loud enough that everybody can hear it. Okay, and then we will hear the second, third, and fourth verse.

When the morning skies grow red, and o'er their radiance shed, thou, O Lord, appeareth in their light, when the alts grow bright with splendor. Pray to God, to him surrender, for you feel and understand, for you feel and understand, that he dwelleth in this land, that he dwelleth in this land. In the sunset thou art nigh, and beyond the starry sky, thou, O loving Father, ever near, when to heaven we are departed. Joy and bliss, and out thee, and hearty.

For we feel and understand, for we feel and understand, that thou dwellest in this land, that thou dwellest in this land. When dark clouds and shrug the hills, and gray mist the valley feels, yet thou art not hidden from thy sons.

Pierce the gloom in which we cower, with thy sunshine's cleansing power. For we feel and understand, then we'll feel and understand, that God dwelleth in this land.

[3:51] For we bless, in the wild storm coming, you yourself give us resistance and strong. You, all my believers, rest your. During war and nights of thunderstorms, let us die like trust him.

Yet we feel and understand, yet we feel and understand, that God dwelleth in this land. That God dwelleth in this land.

Thank you. Amen. Amen. The Lord provided the country with man who wanted to glorify God. This heritage is sadly forgotten today.

And this little country, like your big country, needs to remember his roots and come back to the word of God. He needs God's revival.

Amen. You see these two countries on the slide with the same scale. It's the same scale. And here I've got some numbers to give you a better idea of the comparison.

[4:55] So the population of the United States is 40 times more than Switzerland's. And the area is around 24 times bigger than the U.S.

But something is higher in Switzerland. That's the density. The number of people living on the square meter mile is about five times more in Switzerland.

After the comparison of the countries, we compared the states. So in Switzerland, we have got 26 states. And the state where we return to is called Neuchâtel.

That's the red part. The capital of the state is also called Neuchâtel. And some number to give you then a better ID.

The state has about the same population as Switzerland. And the space is two times bigger. The state of Neuchâtel is similar to your counties.

[6:00] About the size. And I want to give you an overview of the Reformed Baptist churches God has provided in Switzerland. So you see that we have three parts in Switzerland.

One Italian part in green. One German part in red. And the French part. And that is in this last part that you find the Reformed Baptist churches.

There is now no known Reformed Baptist churches in the German and Italian part. So we start with Lausanne. Lausanne, a city of about 50,000 inhabitants, was the first Reformed Baptist church in Switzerland.

And we can pray for this church which has to move from their place. They plan to build and are now looking for finances. And you see that Régis Berdoulain is the pastor.

And you see a second person. That's Bertrand Rickenbacher. He's studying for a PhD and is involved in the church. Payern and Neuchâtel are churches who came out of Lausanne.

[7:17] And I will tell the story of Neuchâtel in a few minutes. But Olivier Favre is the pastor of Payern, a town of nearly 10,000 inhabitants.

And Stéphane Sorker is in this church, as you know. In Büll, a city of nearly 20,000 people, is a church who became Reformed Baptist these last years.

And need prayers to strengthen the basics. Jan-Berdmoy is the pastor and I'm assistant for 30% of time. Then Zion, we say Sion, is a church, so down, is a church who is becoming, God willing, Reformed Baptist.

The new pastor, Christophe Demier, came from the church of Lausanne. So we are thankful for these churches and this pastor God provided in Switzerland.

Thankful for the gospel shared in preaching of the word of God in line with the 6089 confession. I discovered, and for me, I discovered the doctrine of grace as an intern with Olivier Favre when he was pastor in Lausanne.

[8:30] The Lord has provided, and we are so thankful. We praise the Holy One who reveals himself to whom he wants for his own glory.

So we will now move to Neuchâtel. Are you ready to move? By plane, why not? So that's the area of Neuchâtel. Neuchâtel is a city between a lake and hills with more than 30,000 inhabitants.

There is a university and different other schools in this high place of Swiss watch precision. So from Neuchâtel, we have a beautiful view on the Alps, and the city of Neuchâtel is pretty and nice to visit. As you see. During the Reformation time, God provided for a reformer in Neuchâtel, William Farrell, preached in the Collegial, which is like a cathedral.

We can see it in the upper left. We see also beautiful places in the nature. And you see, we have our Grand Canyon of Creux du Vent.

[9:48] Translated, that means hollow of the wind. In this area, God provided a Reformed Baptist church. This Reformed Baptist church is attended by people living in this area.

And this is the map. This map shows us the area where the people of the church are living. So you see the yellow rectangle.

That's Neuchâtel, the Neuchâtel church. And down, Poirien, the Poirien church. So now I will explain how God provided the Neuchâtel church.

In 1992, God gave people from Neuchâtel, who were attending the Lausanne church, an interest in standing a regular Bible study close to their home.

Olivier Favre, then pastor in Lausanne, and one elder, Dominique John Pellou, began this Bible study in the Restaurant des Communes in Rochefort.

[10:50] Rochefort, that's just... That's a little village next to Neuchâtel.

After only a few meetings, they had to move, because the restaurant's owner, who saw this Christian activity, saw this Christian activity with a jaundiced eye. This little group found refuge in the upper region of Neuchâtel, in l'Hôtel de la Tourne, where, by God's grace, the owners were very welcoming.

So that's then further. You see that's in this region here. Before they were there, and then they came here. The little group found...

Oh, sorry. Some new people attended the group, while others stopped coming, so that in 1997, the majority came from the lower region of Neuchâtel.

The prayer ascended to God to find a meeting place geographically closer to their home. And God answered by guiding Michel Bonjour on the trail of the chapel of Corsal-Cormondreche.

[12:08] That's near to Neuchâtel. That's exactly at this place. So, it is at this place in 2002 that Sunday worship started once a month, complementing the Bible study that began 10 years ago.

In late 2003, early 2004, the people who met considered constituting the Church. Therefore, they began to work on the development of the Constitution in line with the Reformed Baptist Confession of 1689.

Involved in this process was Pastor Olivier's intern, a young man named Tim Wenger. The good hand of God guided and granted them to live the joy constituting the Church in a service on Sunday, October 24, 2004.

This Sunday, the preacher was Bob Self, then Arca's coordinator who was in Switzerland. Under the leadership of Olivier Favre, also Pastor of the Reformed Baptist Church of Pâriérn, this small congregation met twice monthly for worship and once monthly for Bible study in Neuchâtel.

And by God's providence, in February 2006, a second elder was voted, this is Roland, we say Benoit, you say Benoit. By his grace and his power, the Lord has transformed this initial group of 10 people in 1992 into a small church that met in 2012 with an average of 25 people in worship, about 15 are members.

[14:00] Of the original participants, there are only the families of the current elders. The church has been tested in recent years by some few deaths and health problems.

First, a man in his 40s active in the church, father of five adopted children, died suddenly. And God, but God in his grace, is giving strength to his wife.

She moved and he's now in the church in Pâriérn. Then, the sick wife of a brother died last March, leaving a 12 years old girl with no mother.

So the girl is called Leticia, you can pray for her. Then, the church is encouraged these days too. The Lord has given a husband to a widow with two young children.

The Lord led a couple of Iranian people into the church and there recently welcomed their first child. Just in the few last weeks, the Lord in his grace has led a family living in the region to discover the church.

[15:08] They have been regularly attending worship. And a man came to worship last Sunday, claiming to want to return to God. So we are encouraged.

God provides this church building for the Thursday Bible studies and the Sunday services. And they just met today about six hours ago when we slept this morning.

So now that's about 5 p.m. and the sun is going down in Switzerland. That's the entrance of the church and I like this verse and the entry of the church.

Come to the house of the Lord. We don't own this building. we rent it from the state church and one prayer request about the meeting place is that after March 2013 this church is going to be rebuilt for other purposes and we have to find another place.

But the great encouragement is of our God who provides the great encouragement of our God who provides for a meeting place through this church.

[16:29] The state church is very kind with us and wants to help us to find a solution for our meeting place. So maybe it seems that God is going to provide for a meeting place through this church which is more or less liberal depending on the pastors.

But the church is before all a living building with living stones like 1 Peter 2 5 says.

This is how the church looked about 10 years ago. That's the picture you find in the prayer cards to thank you for your prayers God hears and answers them.

But the grace of God the family Bourneau and Benoit in front are still in the church. Behind you see the man who died and his wife with two of the five adopted children.

So God provided the church with Pastor Olivier. God blessed the church with his faithful service and guidance. And in this picture he is preaching to ask God's blessing on the wedding of the Iranian couple.

[17:39] They were married Muslim and wanted to have a special time in the church to ask the God to bless their union. So their son, just there, was born during the time we were in Bremen.

In the upper picture we see Denise, you recognize her I think, and the parent of Olivier Favre who attend the church in Châtel. They are precious people given by God to the church who pray and stimulate the body of Christ with encouragement.

The lower picture shows we see Roland Benoit and his wife, who is the sister of Olivier. And thank you for your prayer for them.

By the grace of God, they are a great blessing for the church. I rejoice to go back and to work with this faithful and godly man. He helped me to prepare the history part of this teaching and he encouraged me to bring it for the glory of God.

The Lord provides faithful people to the church and that's fantastic. This is the last picture of the church of Neuchâtel we have.

[19:01] So in this picture all the people of Neuchâtel are not there but there are some visitors so that's a good idea of the church size. So actually God brought to the church 24 adults 15 children and teens and two babies so 41 in all.

It is to this church that God drives us back with all the blessing he has provided us during this time with you in Indiana.

This church is able to support us for 35% the other 15% is a prayer request and we're happy to see that the Lord provides for 2013 through the church of Bull then we'll see what God provides.

Thursday evening every other week we have a Bible study as you know and God sends us people who are hungry for the word but don't receive the spiritual food in their churches there are five more so we can pray for them and for wisdom to encourage them in the scripture the scripture I invite you to open your scripture in Philippians 4 the apostle Paul rejoiced in the Lord that the church of Philippi had concern for him we are not the apostle Paul but we rejoice for God's providing and see that the word of God is actual the Lord continued to provide and he provided as he provided at Paul's time we now read Philippians 4 10 to 23 so thank you for reading!

[21:43] may three parts in this text.

First, God provides for Paul. Secondly, God provides through the church. And thirdly, God provides for the church.

So God provides for Paul, verse 10 to 13. God provides for Paul. The Lord teaches him important lessons. Paul learned to be content.

I have learned to be content. I have learned the secret of being content. And this secret is written in Philippians 4.13.

Did you see the secret? Philippians 4.13. I can do everything through him who gives me strength.

The Lord provides for our strength to be able to be content.

[23:37] Paul shares what God has taught him. That's a way to show that God provides. For us, during this time in Bremen, we see that God provided too.

He taught us important lessons. The first one, God put on our hearts the willingness to spend more time together as a couple and more time prayer.

The divine shepherd knocked on the door of my life to remind me that I am also the shepherd of my wife.

I had to confess my lack in responsibility and start to change in practice. The Lord impressed my heart with the grace, the blessing, and the importance to preach the gospel.

And my prayer is, help me, O Lord, to never forget it. And then, thirdly, the chief of the church provided good pastors who gave me good advice through their lives, their teaching, discussions, and prayers.

[24:46] We are content because we can do everything in him who gives us strength. I want to be a good shepherd, a gospel preacher, a good servant.

And if I can do it, it's only because we can do everything through him who gives us strength. That's a grace of God, a result of his glorious gospel.

Then, secondly, God provides through the church. Paul received help and encouragement from the church of Philippi. And the inspiring apostle said to them that they are a fragrant offering, an

acceptable offering, pleasing to God.

God provides through the church. And we can testify that he continues to do so in our days. We received so much during this three months for your church that we cannot tell you all the blessings. We have, you have acted with the love of Christ. The grace of God was clearly manifested through you for us.

[26:00] We pray that all will be credited to your divine account. And that you will continue to grow and welcome others by faith like you have done.

So the Lord provided through this church fellowship and deep encouragement. You know, in these 74 days in Indiana, we were more than 20 times invited for a meal.

And had more than 10 other appointments with people of the church, outside of the fellowship in the church. Every time, it was wonderful to recognize the wisdom, the patience, and the power of God. And how did we recognize the power of God? We heard more than 15 stories about how God provided for a spouse. And more testimonies about how individuals came to Christ.

That's fantastic to recognize the wisdom, the patience, and the power of God. The Lord provided through this church places to live and English courses.

[27:10] We were welcome as children of the King. The Lord is so gracious to us. Then the Lord provided through his church important lessons in Sunday school class.

Especially with the Peacemaker series. Do you remember the 5 G's of the Peacemakers? Oh, you can tell me.

The 5 G's. What's the first one? Glorify God. Yes. And then we saw one lesson about trusting the Lord and doing good.

Okay. Then the second one. Or if it's not in order, no doesn't matter. Sorry? Yes. Get the log out of your eye. Exactly.

And then we have the lesson about God uses conflict to reveal our idols and to free us from them. And we had the lesson about confession. Confession brings freedom.

[28:04] With a 7A. But that's for another day. Then third G. That's a lesson who comes. So go and be reconciled is one of them.

Mm-hmm. Gently restore. And the basis. The ground. The gospel. That's a 5G.

The Lord provided through this church valuable teachings in the worship services. And I want to take a little time to remember what we have received during this three months.

To show you how God provides through the teaching of at Grace Fellowship. So you can try to remember this teaching with me. So in Isaiah, we saw that the idols can't do anything.

But God can do everything. And his grace is so rich and free. Israel diagnosis is sin. And God's response is grace.

[29:08] The servant's mission will succeed. Maybe you remember these statements. I gave him my sin. He gave me his righteousness. And our greatest need when walking in darkness is to fix our eyes upon Jesus.

In Genesis, we saw that Abraham glorified God in success. The gospel was promised to Abraham who believed and was justified.

In Genesis 15, we were encouraged to believe in God's promise, God's gospel. God wants our heart to worship him. Abraham glorified God by his joy.

And several preachings. One about the gospel for the glory of God in 2 Corinthians. Another about the hope Psalm 125 answers the question, can we trust God?

And the third for 1 Corinthians 6 about how we have to hunt the sin without rest. A biography about Adrian Johnson encouraged us to give our life to be God's servants.

[30:23] Then in Psalm 67, we understood that the nation worshiping God is our goal. And in Isaiah 44, we were taught about the certainty of the success of our mission.

When you heard about Jesus walking on the water, we were encouraged to look to Jesus. Maybe you remember these statements. Go back to Jesus. And no Jesus, no peace.

No Jesus, no peace. When we took the Lord's Supper together, we remembered four things about the cross.

Do you remember? The cross is a place of blood. A place of honor. A place of meeting. A place of blessing.

Or blessings. November 4th, we had an evangelistic message. The two points were the righteousness needed, the righteousness provided.

[31 : 30] It underlined the theme of today. God provides. The Lord provided through this church precious prayer times and meditation during the Wednesday evening.

And I encourage you to come in this Wednesday evening. We received a clarification about the Trinity. We remembered the extraordinary reality we have all in Christ.

We were challenged to grow in faith with Matthew 6. We heard about the mission of the church. Psalm 25 showed us what is prayer.

Hosea 6 leads us to understanding of what is revival. With Psalm 34, that was clear that God hears us. Hears us. Hears us.

And we were invited to rest in God. The Thanksgiving evening service was fantastic. Hunt the thanks.

[32 : 27] I love this idea. Hunt the thanks. In every field of our life. And all the testimonies together were a joyful praise to the Lord and a big blessing for us.

And last Wednesday, we saw that God gives us beautiful clothes. We have to wear humility. And when we understand the beauty of humility, we ask ourselves, why do we not wear these clothes more?

Today, I wanted to show you that God provides also for ourselves through the church. We are so thankful to have been able to receive all these gifts for our body and for our soul.

And thirdly, in Philippians, Paul underlined that God provides for the church. He writes two sentences where we can understand this teaching.

First, my God will meet all your needs according to his glorious riches in Jesus Christ. And the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ be with you.

[33 : 35] We believe that God provides for the church in Bremen, in Warsaw, in Nuschatel, and all other churches which follow the word of God.

God the Son says in Matthew 10, 42, If anyone gives even a cup of cold water to one of these little ones because he is my disciple, I tell you the truth.

He will certainly not lose his reward. And you gave us much more than a cup of cold water. Maybe it's coming.

During this time, God provided so much contact full of love and affection. So many days, some days my heart was overflowing.

Our little expression of eight letters is so weak in comparison with what we received. This expression, we will express it to the Lord. Thank you, Lord.

[34 : 41] And we will express it to all. Thank you. Thank you, everybody here. And may God bless you.

So, if we have only one expression to summarize this time with you, we use, we are so blessed. The Lord provided for everything.

God worked wonderfully through you. And we trust in the Almighty Lord. Our God will meet all your needs according to his glorious riches in Christ Jesus.

The Lord provides. Amen. Thank you. And today we'll say you goodbye.