BRUSHFIRES | WEEK 2

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Core Doctrine: Divine Providence – God's Sovereignty

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Verse: Romans 11:36 (CSB)

"For from him and through him and to him are all things. To him be the glory forever. Amen."

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Book Context:

The Apostle Paul wrote Romans as the most thorough, Spirit-inspired presentation of the gospel in the New Testament. After eleven chapters unpacking God's justice, mercy, election, and saving grace, Paul reaches a breathtaking crescendo at the end of Chapter 11. This verse is a declaration of awe—proclaiming that everything exists because of God, is sustained through God, and exists ultimately for God's glory. It reminds believers that every detail of history, creation, and salvation flows under His sovereign hand.

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Core Doctrine Explanation:

The doctrine of **Divine Providence** teaches that God sovereignly governs everything that happens. Nothing is random. Nothing is wasted. He is not reacting to history—He is writing it. God's sovereignty is not cold determinism; it is the wise, loving rule of a perfect Father who works all things for His glory and for the good of His people (Romans 8:28).

Romans 11:36 teaches that all things—our gifts, our callings, our joys, even our sufferings—come *from* Him, *through* His sustaining power, and exist ultimately *for* His glory. We are not the center of the story. He is.

When we understand God's providence, our confidence is no longer tied to outcomes. It rests in His character. Whether in abundance or affliction, we can trust that God is weaving every thread of our lives into His greater design—a design that cannot fail.

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Danger of Not Holding to the Core Doctrine – Week 2: Divine Providence – God's Sovereignty

When we do not believe in the sovereign providence of God, we are left with two false hopes: ourselves or fate. And neither can carry the weight of our lives.

The drift away from trusting God's sovereignty often starts with good intentions—wanting to take responsibility, wanting to make a difference. But without the anchor of divine providence, even our best efforts become frantic. We begin to think that success depends on strategy, prayer depends on persuasion, and peace depends on everything going according to our plans.

Sometimes, the danger is even more subtle. We say God is sovereign in theory but live as if He needs our help to accomplish His purposes. When things go well, we feel proud. When they fall apart, we feel abandoned. Either way, we are measuring God's faithfulness by our circumstances rather than His promises.

And when suffering comes—and it always does—the cracks widen. If God is not sovereign, our pain has no purpose. It's just chaos. But if God is sovereign, even our tears are caught in His hands. Even our setbacks are stages for His glory.

To deny God's providence is not just to lose comfort. It's to lose hope. But when we embrace it, we can rest—not because life is easy, but because God is good, and His rule is unbreakable.

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Conversational Evangelism:

In a broken world, many people wrestle with questions of control and chaos. You can start a conversation by asking,

"Do you think everything happens for a reason—or is it all just random?"

Listen carefully to their story. Then you can gently share,

"What if your life isn't random? What if there's a God who's powerful enough to have a purpose even for your pain?"

This opens the door to share that God's sovereignty isn't just about control—it's about care. He's not distant; He's writing a better story than we can see.

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Call to Action:

This week, ask yourself: Where am I living like everything depends on me? Where am I measuring God's love by my circumstances instead of His promises?

Take time to release those areas to God in prayer. Trust His providence, not your performance. Rest in the truth that from Him, through Him, and to Him are *all things*—including you.

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Fire Starter Question:

When was a time you saw God's hand at work in a situation you didn't understand at first—and how did it strengthen your trust in His providence?