- **Providence –** ongoing and active sustaining, governing, and purposeful care of God for His creation in general, and His people specifically

- **Hesed –** primary OT word used to describe God's love; commitment to the wellbeing of another even at personal cost
  - The uncompromising, unrelenting commitment to the well-being of His people

- **God's love is expressed through His providential care**
  - God's uncompromising, unrelenting commitment to our well-being is expressed through His active and ongoing sustaining, governing, and purposeful care of our lives



Ruth

- **Object of God's love = Naomi**
  - Sympathetic – widow, both sons dead, poor, vulnerable, no hope for secure future
  - restore her from 'empty' to 'full'

- **Providence**
  - 1.6 – When Naomi heard in Moab that the Lord had come to the aid of His people by providing food for them
  - 2.3 As it turned out Ruth was working in a field belonging to Boaz
    - As it turned out – refers to a happening/occurrence that is beyond human control
  - 3.8 - In the middle of the night something startled Boaz
  - 4.1 - Boaz went to the town gate and sat there just as the guardian-redeemer he had mentioned came along



Jonah

- **Ch1-3: object of God's love = Nineveh**
  - **Unsympathetic –** pagan, cruel, enemy of Israel

- **Providence**
  - 1.4 – the Lord sent a great wind
    - Sent – hurled like a spear; purpose in it
  - 1.17 – the Lord provided a huge fish to swallow Jonah
    - Provided – appointed, ordained; implies purpose
  - *Archeological/historical - 7-10yrs leading up to Jonah's arrival:
    - Plague
    - Almost total solar eclipse
    - Civil unrest and famine
    - Plague



Jonah

- **Ch4: object of God's love = Jonah**
  - **Unsympathetic** – reluctant (at best), selfish, hard-hearted

- **Providence**
  - To deliver Jonah – rescue him from harmful situations:
    - 1.17 – the Lord provided a huge fish to swallow Jo
    - 4. 6 – Then the Lord God provided a leafy plant and made it grow up over Jo to shade his head and to ease his discomfort



STONEBRIDGE
CHURCH

Jonah

- **Ch4: object of God's love = Jonah**
  - **Unsympathetic** – reluctant (at best), selfish, hard-hearted

- **Providence**
  - To discipline Jonah – to teach him/mature him
    - 4.7 – God provided a worm, which chewed the plant so that it withered
      - Chewed – 'attacked;' worm had a purpose- to destroy the plant
    - 4.8 – God provided a scorching east wind, and the sun blazed on Jo's head so that he grew faint
      - Blazed – 'attacked;' like worm had a purpose do did wind/sun – to make Jonah miserable



Providence – anonymous work of God in our lives almost always accomplished through secondary causes

- Anonymous - as contrasted with miraculous (obviously supernatural work of God in our lives); see miraculous in:
  - Ruth – birth of Obed
    - 4.13 – the Lord 'enabled' Ruth to conceive – lit. 'gave her conception'
  - Jonah –
    - Jonah being kept alive in belly of whale for 3days/nights
    - Plant growing so rapidly

- Through secondary causes
  - In Ruth – through circumstances, other people
  - In Jonah – through creation (nature)



Handholds to develop eyes of faith

- Grow familiar with how God's providential care looks
  - Narrative sections of Bible:
    - Genesis - Esther; Daniel 1-6; Jonah
    - Pick a person –
      - Joseph – see providential care through suffering/sins of others
      - Esther – see providential care for nation as whole
  - Missionary biographies – see providential care in lives of 'great cloud of witnesses'
  - Reflect on your own life – put on 'faith glasses;' if you had to look at your day providentially, what would you see?



Handholds to develop eyes of faith

- **Grow in understanding of God's purposes** – easier to recognize the means if we know the end
  - Revelation 21-22: paint picture of our future
  - Truth statements in Bible – declare God's purposes
    - Personal level - those God foreknew He predestined to be conformed into the image of His Son
    - Community level - Your Kingdom come Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven
    - Global level - God desires everyone to be saved and to come to a knowledge of the truth



Handholds to develop eyes of faith

- **Ask the Holy Spirit to give you eyes to see how the Father is working;** beware of ditches:
  - Seeing what isn't there - attributing everything that happens to the Lord
    - Can create an almost magical world where every occurrence has deeper meaning if only we could figure it out
    - Can create a fatalistic world where everything is already planned out in an unalterable way and we simply puppets on a stage
  - Being blind to what is there; living as if God isn't (or only rarely) involved in dailyness of our lives

