

Title:        **TWO PILLARS FOR MY SOUL**  
Texts:        1 Corinthians 1:30 and Romans 8:28  
Subject:      *Substitution and Providence*  
Date:         Sunday Morning — May 18, 2008  
Tape #        Z-49b  
Reading:     *Mark 9:11-24*  
Introduction:

It has been five weeks since I stood in this place to preach the gospel to you. I had planned to preach to you today, but the Lord chose to prevent that. As you know, I've again been in the hospital all week.

In the last five weeks I've been on a physical, mental emotional and spiritual rollercoaster of such heights and depths, with such turns and twists as I never dreamed possible. Someday, if the lord will allow me to do so in a manner that will honor Christ and be of benefit to your souls, I will try to tell you about it. But I can tell you this: — For the first time in my life, I think I know by experience the meaning of that poor soul's words in Mark 9:24 who, with weeping eyes, cried out to the Lord Jesus, "*Lord, I believe; help thou mine unbelief!*"

Let me tell you just two things that sweetly and powerfully sustained my soul in my darkest hours.

1. **The union of my soul with Christ.**

- Substitution
- Satisfaction
- Cleansing Blood\

(1 Corinthians 1:30) "But of him are ye **in Christ** Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption."

(Romans 8:1) "*There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are **in Christ** Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.*"

“Nothing between my soul and my Savior,  
 Though now His sweet face may not be seen;  
 Nothing prevents His mercy and favor;  
 Jesus is mine, there's nothing between!”

**TWO PILLARS FOR MY SOUL****2. The will of God.**

One day, at my very lowest, Shelby asked me a question that pierced my heart like a white hot, barbed dagger. She asked, “Sweetheart, you’re not mad at God, are you?” She asked me that because I had been acting like a man mad at God. When Shelby, that dear, faithful lady, asked that question, my heart broke within me, and I replied, “O my God, I hope I’m not; but I think I have learned the meaning of those words, ‘*Lord, I believe; help thou mine unbelief!*’” She responded, “You do know this is God’s will, don’t you?” To that I replied, “Oh, yes. This is our Father’s will, gracious, wise and good.” And that is the second thing that sustained and sustains my soul. — The will of God.

(Romans 8:28) "And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to *his purpose.*"

All that has transpired in these past few weeks was ordained by my heavenly Father before ever the worlds were made and has been brought to pass by his wise and good providence. How sweet that fact is! How strong is that pillar for my weak soul!

1. Our heavenly Father is the almighty, all-wise and infinitely gracious God. — “*The Lord is good!*”

2. In his grace and in his providence the Lord God has given and daily gives me (if I had but eyes of faith to see) countless tokens of his infinite love of my soul. — “*I have loved thee with an everlasting love!*”

3. His love is immutable. He never repents of it. He never withdraws it.

4. My times are in his hands (Psalm 31:15).

5. Whatever my affliction, pain or trouble may be, it is part of his original, eternal plan and purpose; and all are ordered, numbered, weighed and measured by his mercy, love and grace. They are not the result of chance, accident or a fortuitous combination of circumstances, but the providential accomplishment of God's purpose, designed to answer some wise and gracious end, for my soul’s good, his glory, and his cause in this world.

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6. In a word, the very hairs of my head are all numbered by my Father. Not one can fall to the ground but by his will, degree, design and doing.

(Matthew 10:30) "But the very hairs of your head are all numbered."

7. That means that my trouble, no matter how dark, no matter how heavy, no matter how difficult, will not continue one moment longer than my Father sees fit, and not one moment longer than is needed to accomplish his gracious purpose.

(2 Corinthians 4:17-18) "For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding *and* eternal weight of glory; (18) While we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen: for the things which are seen *are* temporal; but the things which are not seen *are* eternal."

8. He who brought me into this dark valley has promised to be with me, sustain me, uphold me with the right hand of his righteousness and bring me through it.

(Isaiah 43:1-5) "But now thus saith the LORD that created thee, O Jacob, and he that formed thee, O Israel, Fear not: for I have redeemed thee, I have called *thee* by thy name; thou *art* mine. (2) When thou passest through the waters, I *will be* with thee; and through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee: when thou walkest through the fire, thou shalt not be burned; neither shall the flame kindle upon thee. (3) For I *am* the LORD thy God, the Holy One of Israel, thy Saviour: I gave Egypt *for* thy ransom, Ethiopia and Seba for thee. (4) Since thou wast precious in my sight, thou hast been honourable, and I have loved thee: therefore will I give men for thee, and people for thy life. (5) Fear not: for I *am* with thee."

9. "The cup which my heavenly Father hath given me, shall I not drink it?" (John 18:11) Yes, I will, drink it in the strength he imparts, and rejoice in the Lord, even in tribulation. I commit myself and the pains of my body, heart, mind and soul to him whose purpose cannot be thwarted, whose plan cannot be altered, whose will cannot be overturned, to him who worketh all

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things after the counsel of his own will, and “*performeth all things for me*” (Psalm 57:2).

(Romans 8:31-39) "What shall we then say to these things? **If God be for us, who can be against us?**

(32) **He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?**

(33) **Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect?** *It is God that justifieth.*

(34) **Who is he that condemneth?** *It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us.*

(35) **Who shall separate us from the love of Christ?** *shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? (36) As it is written, For thy sake we are killed all the day long; we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter. (37) Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us. (38) For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, (39) Nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord."*

10. He who loved me and gave himself for me has promised and has proved, again and again, — “*My grace is sufficient for thee.*” And I have, once more, found it true. His grace is sufficient for me.

- Electing Grace
- Redeeming Grace
- Saving Grace
- Providential Grace
- Preserving Grace

His grace is sufficient for me. May you find it sufficient for you!

Amen.