



The Lord Is Sovereign

One of the most important attributes and perfections of God is also one that is least understood, incorrectly taught, or much worse: denied. The Sovereignty of God is the Christian teaching that God is the Supreme Authority and that **ALL THINGS are under His control**. God has the absolute right to do all things according to His own good pleasure. God is the Sovereign Lord of all! He has incontestable rights as Creator, Owner, Sustainer and Possessor of heaven and earth. Sovereignty is an attribute of God based upon the premise that God as Creator of heaven and earth has the absolute right and full authority to do or allow whatever He desires. The Westminster Confession of Faith states that “God from all eternity, did, by the most wise and holy counsel of His own will, freely, and unchangeably ordain whatever comes to pass.” RC Sproul explains that “Sovereignty is a divine attribute confessed almost universally in historical Christianity” and that “if God is not sovereign over the entire created order, then He is not sovereign at all”. *Ps 115:3- “our God is in the heavens; He does whatever He pleases”*

Where we get in trouble quickly is to think that God is like us! God is Creator. We are just a created creature in His likeness. When we think that God is like us, we can create a god of our own making which is not at all like the God of the Bible. The Bible says in *ISH 55:8-9 “For My thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways My ways, declares the Lord. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are My ways higher than your ways and My thoughts than your thoughts”*.

The “Prosperity Gospel” teachers limit the sovereignty of God and commit a reversal of roles in their upside down theology. God becomes the servant to followers of the prosperity gospel. They believe He must respond to their positive thinking, positive words, and even their faith in their faith! They teach that God wants you to be healthy -- just confess and believe it; to be wealthy -- again confess and believe it; comfortable...everything you need...job promotion...debt free...etc.... If you say these things out loud, believe it (give the seed money!) you can manipulate God to do your will; and He must respond. Use your positive words to change your situation. This twisting of the Bible makes God our cosmic genie which *we* can control! Nothing could be further from the truth! Costi Hinn in his book “God, Greed and the (Prosperity) Gospel” says “It makes Jesus’ death on the cross simply a transaction to provide an earthly reward of fancy cars, perfect health and wealth and expanding bank accounts.” They have a false god of their *own* creating! They do not know God’s Word nor the God of the Word. Dr S. Lewis Johnson (a pastor John MacArthur listens to) Professor of Theology and a Pastor for 45 years (died 2004) stated “Man loves to rob God of His sovereignty! They dictate to God their own will!”

A common question that comes up concerning the sovereignty of God is: Does God use evil for His purpose, and does He actually send evil? The answer is yes! Many Christians, who do not know their Bible well, would say God does not. This can be because they created a god in their own image instead of the God clearly shown in the Bible. We see in the book of Job, God allows Satan to cause great harm to Job -- but the Sovereign God who controls Satan, limits what Satan can do to Job! *See Job 1:6-21, 2:1-10, 42:1-6, 10-16*. The reason God sent Satan was to increase Job’s faith and understanding of the Sovereign God. After Job went through hell on earth, he surrenders and repents to the Sovereign God and Job received a deeper and more intimate relationship with God as a result of his trials! God used evil to produce good. God also sends evil to bring judgment on people and nations in order to bring them to repentance. Spend time studying the book of Judges and you will see Israel doing what was right in their own eyes and sinning against Sovereign God. They would sin; God would send an evil nation against them; the people would turn to God and repent; and God would deliver them. God used evil to bring Israel to repentance. The story of Joseph in *Genesis 37-47* shows Joseph being sold into slavery by his brothers and how Joseph suffered much -- but the Sovereign God used it to get Joseph before Pharaoh; and Joseph ends up saving the family of the promise (Jacob’s family) from starving to death in a famine! God sent an evil spirit to lie to wicked King Ahab of Northern Israel as a judgment to lead him to his death- *See 1Kings 22:20-23*. God sent an evil spirit on Israel’s wicked king Saul- *1Samuel 16:14-15- “Now the Spirit of the Lord departed from Saul, and an evil spirit from the Lord tormented him...Behold now, an evil spirit from God is tormenting you.”* **GOD IS NOT EVIL AND CANNOT BE EVIL. HE IS ALWAYS HOLY, RIGHTEOUS, AND JUST AND ALL HE DOES IS HOLY, RIGHTEOUS, AND JUST.** (Remember *ISH 55:8-9* mentioned earlier) Whatever God does will come to those ends -- even the use of evil for His Holy purpose.

One of the hardest things to understand is the Sovereignty of God and man’s free will! The question arises whether free will is compatible with an Omniscient God who knows everything: past, present, and future. If God knows the future, does that foreknowledge preclude human free will because it would be impossible to freely make a choice contrary to the future God foreknows?! Here we can make the mistake of thinking that since God possesses knowledge about a specific matter, that He then *influences* it. That does not follow at all. Just because God omnisciently knows what choice we will make, does not mean we could not still freely choose other options! The assumption is made that because God knows what choice I will make, I am somehow denied other choices! (From “Does God’s Omniscience Conflict with Human Free Will?” Wintery Knight 09/02/2017) When Adam chose to disobey God, God did not excuse Adam! God was not the source of Adam’s disobedience! Rather God held Adam responsible for Adam’s exercise of his own free will!

In the Pandemic of 2020, I hear some Christians and Christian Leaders say that God would not send a pestilence. There are over 50 Scriptures, in the Old and New Testaments that say that the Sovereign God does send pestilence- a few: *2 Sam 24:15, 1 Chron 21:14, JER 29:18, EZK 38:22, REV 6:8*. If God is Sovereign (and He is), nothing happens on planet earth and in heaven without His knowledge and consent. The pandemic is part of God’s sovereign plan for planet earth. If we take the time to see all that happened on planet earth with the pandemic it is amazing! God pushes the reset button and so many of man’s plans and activities come to a screeching halt. God judged many idols of man which are also alive and well in the so-called Evangelical churches of our day! Our idols of sports, entertainment, economy, recognition, innovation, pragmatism (to name a few) are alive and well in much of the American church. For the first time in 2000 years all the churches across the globe were shut down for Easter! Only a Sovereign God could do that. As I have written before, God is not looking for the American church to get back to the “normal” before Covid-19! He is calling the church to repent of her idols. I have witnessed a sifting in the churches through this shutdown. I see those deeply grieved by the shutdown of the meeting of the saints and those who were not. Hear me saints: If you are not troubled to your inner being about the closures, delayed openings and limited numbers coming to church there is a spiritual problem in the heart! If you can go to Walmart, Home Depot, restaurants but cannot make it to church because you say you are afraid, you have a serious spiritual problem of the heart!

I also see Christians living in fear of death. Christians should not fear death! The Scriptures speak to this- *Heb 2:14-15- “Therefore, since the children share in flesh and blood, He Himself likewise also partook of the same, that through death He might render powerless him who had the power of death, that is, the devil, and might free those who through fear of death were subject to slavery all their lives. Rom 8:15- “For you have not received a spirit of slavery leading to fear again, but you have received a spirit of adoption as sons by which we cry out, “Abba! Father!” 2Tim 1:7- “For God has not given us a spirit of fear, but of power and love and discipline.”* Repent and Return! Trust Sovereign God!



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