

# The Sovereignty of God

February 6, 2000

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## ❖ 1 Chronicles 29:11

*<sup>11</sup> Yours, O LORD, is the greatness, The power and the glory, The victory and the majesty; For all that is in heaven and in earth is Yours; Yours is the kingdom, O LORD, And You are exalted as head over all.*

The concept of the sovereignty of God is something that at various times in the history of the Christian church has been understood better than at other times. The last century or so could be characterized as a time where we humanized God. We have brought Him down to our level and identified Him as just a bigger, smarter one of us. Our theology of God has become a miserable caricature and a blasphemous travesty of the truth. The god of the twentieth century is a helpless effeminate being who commands the respect of no really thoughtful man. God has been made into a creation of our sentiment and is an object of pity rather than awe-inspiring reverence.

## ❖ God Is Sovereign In The Exercise Of His Power

There have been times in history when the power of God has been more visibly evident than others. For example, when the Israelites were delivered from the Egyptians, God opened the ocean and swallowed up the adversaries of Israel, but at other times the nation had to fight their enemies by mortal combat and they lost. Again, when Israel fought Jericho, God mightily exercised His power by leveling the city and no other city fell in this manner.

### .. Sovereignty In The Creation

**Revelation 4:11** - <sup>11</sup> *"You are worthy, O Lord, To receive glory and honor and power; For You created all things, And by Your will they exist and were created."*

It is by the will of God that all things came into being. It is also through his power that all things consist. When we lose our understanding of God's sovereignty over creation, we turn the creator/creation distinction upside down. There is a common school of thought called Deism that believes that God's involvement in the world is that only of initial creator. After creating all matter and the natural laws which will govern that matter, God removed himself from the administration of the matter so that it could run its own course. But we see that this belief completely contradicts orthodox Christianity in that all of the creation is not only governed by Him, it is all held together by Him. Col. 1:17.

Why is two thirds of the earth covered with water? Why are some nations covered with sand or ice or lush tropics? Why do elephants have long trunks? Why does the moon continue in a particular orbit? All of these questions are answered by the understanding that this is how it pleased God to create these things.

### .. Sovereignty In Administration

**Psalms 103:19** - <sup>19</sup> *The LORD has established His throne in heaven, And His kingdom rules over all.*

We see that God has established a kingdom. The elements of a kingdom are a King, subjects and the rule of law. Not only does the rule of God include the matter which He created, but the affairs of men are also governed by Him. All authority on heaven and earth was the Father's and He has given all things to His Son Jesus Christ.

## ❖ God Is Sovereign In The Exercise Of His Mercy

**Romans 9:15-16** - <sup>15</sup> *For He says to Moses, "I will have mercy on whomever I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whomever I will have compassion."* <sup>16</sup> *So then it is not of him who wills, nor of him who runs, but of God who shows mercy.*

The mercy of God is directed by the will of Him who shows mercy. Mercy is not a right to which man is entitled. Mercy is that adorable attribute of God by which He pities and relieves the wretched. But under the righteous government of God, no one is wretched who does not deserve to be so. The objects of mercy, then, are those who are miserable, and all misery is the result of sin, hence the miserable are deserving of punishment not mercy. To speak of deserving mercy is a contradiction of terms.

## ❖ God Is Sovereign In The Exercise Of His Love

When we say that God is sovereign in the exercise of His love we are saying that God loves whomever he chooses. God does not love everybody or everything. We see many examples of those whom God's love has not been granted; the Devil, Esau, the condemned unregenerate. Is it an act of love for God to condemn someone to hell? No, it is an act of righteous justice.

All of the sons of Adam are by nature objects of wrath. By our nature, there is nothing within us to attract the love of God.

There is nothing within us to compel God to love us. But it is equally true to say that God does love some. Therefore the cause of His love must rest within Himself which is another way of saying that He loves whom He chooses.

**Romans 9:10-18** <sup>10</sup> *And not only this, but when Rebecca also had conceived by one man, even by our father Isaac* <sup>11</sup> *(for the children not yet being born, nor having done any good or evil, that the purpose of God according to election might stand, not of works but of Him who calls),* <sup>12</sup> *it was said to her, "The older shall serve the younger."* <sup>13</sup> *As it is written, "Jacob I have loved, but Esau I have hated."*

<sup>14</sup> *What shall we say then? Is there unrighteousness with God? Certainly not!* <sup>15</sup> *For He says to Moses, "I will have mercy on whomever I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whomever I will have compassion."* <sup>16</sup> *So then it is not of him who wills, nor of him who runs, but of God who shows mercy.* <sup>17</sup> *For the Scripture says to Pharaoh, "For this very purpose I have raised you up, that I may show My power in you, and that My name may be declared in all the earth."* <sup>18</sup> *Therefore He has mercy on whom He wills, and whom He wills He hardens.*

In the final analysis, the exercise of God's love must be traced back to His sovereignty or otherwise He would love by rule; and if He loved by rule then He is under a law of love and if He is under a law of love then He is not supreme but rather is Himself ruled by law.

## ❖ God Is Sovereign In The Exercise Of His Grace

**2 Timothy 1:8-11** - <sup>8</sup> *Therefore do not be ashamed of the testimony of our Lord, nor of me His prisoner, but share with me in the sufferings for the gospel according to the power of God,* <sup>9</sup> *who has saved us and called us with a holy calling, not according to our works, but according to His own purpose and grace which was given to us in Christ Jesus before time began,* <sup>10</sup> *but has now been revealed by the appearing of our Savior Jesus Christ, who has abolished death and brought life and immortality to light through the gospel,* <sup>11</sup> *to which I was appointed a preacher, an apostle, and a teacher of the Gentiles.*

Grace is the antithesis of justice or fairness. Justice demands the impartial enforcement of law. Justice bestows no favors and is no respecter of persons. Justice shows no pity and knows no mercy. But after justice has been fully satisfied, grace flows forth.

No one can haul God into court and accuse Him of injustice because grace was not bestowed to all. This is a complete contradiction in terms. But God is not at all unjust by punishing wrongdoers. Some will say, "how could a loving God condemn someone to hell?" A much more difficult question would be "how can a righteous God deem the guilty to be innocent?" Does He ignore their sin? Does He deny the presence of sin in them? Does He diminish the law so as to say that the law doesn't apply to them? No! He fulfilled all of the requirements of the law through those whom He has given to His Son—the Elect.

**Romans 8:3-4** - <sup>3</sup> *For what the law could not do in that it was weak through the flesh, God did by sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, on account of sin: He condemned sin in the flesh,* <sup>4</sup> *that the righteous requirement of the law might be fulfilled in us who do not walk according to the flesh but according to the Spirit. (NKJV)*

## Questions for Little Saints The Sovereignty of God February 5, 2000

**1) What does it mean to say that God is sovereign?**

**2) The Bible teaches us that God has created all things. In Romans 1:19-20 we learn that God teaches us about Himself through all of the things He has made. What kinds of things do we learn about God when we look at our world?**

**3) Why do things work as they do?**

**4) What are some of the ways that God shows His love for us?**

**5) We are taught in the Scriptures that we are saved by grace through faith (Ephesians 2:8). What does it mean to be saved? What is grace?**