

The Sovereign God

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“For I know that the Lord is great, and that our Lord is above all gods. Whatsoever the Lord pleased that did he in heaven, in earth, in the seas, and all deep places.”—Psalm 135:5, 6.

Our purpose in desiring to write on the subject of God’s Sovereignty is that it is the basic truth. All truth and all doctrine roots, in and stems out of this primary principle.

We cannot too strongly emphasize the fact that if you truly hold in all its implications, the truth of God's absolute sovereignty, you essentially have all truth and contrariwise, if you in any degree and in any implications, deny or let slip this basic truth of God’s absolute sovereignty you have essentially lost all truth and all pure doctrine.

Although there are many, relatively speaking, who still give lip service to the truth of God’s Sovereignty; there are few, very few, who consistently hew to the line. Remember that it is exactly at this juncture that the point of departure occurs.

Quite naturally the question now arises in your mind—“Why is this the point of departure?”—“Why stumble at this truth?” The answer is not far-sought. We are all, by nature, very proud and conceited creatures. This is a truth that is not only attested to by Scripture but which, if we are honest with ourselves, also our own experience will verify. To confess that we are absolutely nothing and can do nothing—“incapable of doing any good and inclined to all evil,” (H. Cat. Lord’s Day 3) is possible only by God’s grace, and is indeed very humbling.

If there is one thing in particular that distinguishes man by nature it is this lack of humility. We, over and again, wish to hear our own praises sung and our own accomplishments applauded and this at the expense of, nay, to the exclusion of, the praise of the Sovereign God.

Make no mistake now in supposing that this self-exultation and this negation of God’s Sovereignty is usually done openly and brazenly—Oh no! But the blow to our pride must be softened. Take for instance the phrase from the H. C. which we just quoted, “incapable of doing any good and inclined to all evil.” The quotation is usually explained as, if it read “incapable of doing any spiritual good and inclined to all spiritual evil.” Man, it is reasoned, can do many things, pleasing to God, in matters temporal and civil and he is not inclined to all evil continually but this is the case only in spiritual things. This is of course pure human reasoning based upon human observation without the light of God’s revelation and Holy Spirit. Humbly bowing before God’s Word and spiritual search of our own motives and experience would teach otherwise. The desire to exult self, contrary to what God plainly teaches in His word, is a denial of His absolute sovereignty. It is plainly the desire to soften the blow to human pride that motivate those who so pervert God’s Word and our confessions. They teach that man is not wholly incapable of doing any good and inclined to all evil and that continually.

The Word of God and experience teaches that as long as man does not consider his condition to be hopeless, he has hope in himself; and as long as he does not consider himself dead he does, not seek the Life. God's sovereignty can only and absolutely be maintained if we also maintain the total depravity and incapability of man by nature. So God wills it and so He reveals Himself to us in His Word—Soli Deo Gloria—To God be ALL the glory. He purposed from all eternity to raise up a people who would show forth His praise and confess His sovereignty—“He is our God and we are His people.” We can never bow deeply enough into the

dust before Him, nor can human lips or tongue ever sufficiently exalt and praise the Sovereign God Who is the God of Gods and King of Kings.

The truth of God's sovereignty is the source of our greatest joy and comfort. It assures us that He is able to do all that He has promised; that all things are in his hand, that nothing happens but that which He has planned, that His people are safe whatever may happen, and that He will surely bring us through this life into His glorious and eternal Kingdom.

Hold fast to the scriptural truth of God's absolute Sovereignty and never let it slip.

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