

The Doctrines of Grace

Doctrine 1- The Absolute Sovereignty of God

An Introduction to Sovereignty

"A 'god' whose will can be resisted; whose designs can be frustrated; and whose purpose can be checkmated; possesses no claim to Deity, and so far from being a fit object of worship, merits nought but contempt." A.W. Pink

"...there is no foundation for comfort in the enjoyments of this life, but in the assurance that a wise and good God governeth the world..." William Law

"Why God draweth one and draweth not another, seek not thou to judge, if thou wish not to err." Augustine

"In the final analysis- what we have to determine is if it is acceptable with us if God operates in the Universe as though He owns it." Blair Bradley

Jeremiah 9:23&24

23 Thus saith the LORD , Let not the wise man glory in his wisdom, neither let the mighty man glory in his might, let not the rich man glory in his riches:

24 But let him that glorieth glory in this, that he understandeth and knoweth me, that I am the LORD which exercise lovingkindness, judgment, and righteousness, in the earth: for in these things I delight, saith the LORD .

First Note:

Historically when **The Doctrines of Grace** are studied- the first Doctrine that is taught is "Total Depravity"- which seeks to understand how the Fall of Adam in the Garden radically and negatively affected Mankind. But the *reason* that this was the first Doctrine taught was because it was *assumed* that everyone already had a Biblical understanding of God's Sovereignty. I do not believe that we can make that assumption in our day. I do not believe that many people in the modern Church have a complete Biblical understanding and knowledge of the God of the Bible anymore- and therefore they really do not comprehend that, in addition to God exercising Lovingkindness in the earth, He also exercises Judgment and Righteousness in equal proportions. So in light of that- I have begun this Study of **The Doctrines of Grace** with a review of **The Absolute Sovereignty of God**.

It is the great tragedy of our time that many of those who belong to God by the miracle of the new birth know little of what God has revealed about Himself in

Scripture. Thus, in effect, many in the modern Church do exactly what the others did many years ago who "worshipped an unknown god" (**The Acts 17:23**). This glaring lack of understanding about the God of the Bible is a direct consequence of not knowing the Bible itself.

The Study of the Sovereignty of God is the Study of God Himself as revealed in Holy Scripture. It is *Theology Prime*- it is The Doctrine of God. The Study of the Absolute Sovereignty of God, therefore, is the Study of the very Character and Nature of the One, True, and Living God Who is revealed to Man through the Holy Scriptures- and as such- it is an exhaustive study that will *never* be fully completed.

But, in order for us to get at least a *workable* understanding of how God's Absolute Sovereignty affects Salvation- we must comprehend a few basic, yet incomplete, Qualities and Attributes of God. Together, these Qualities and Attributes form a *basic* foundation for **The Doctrine of the Absolute Sovereignty of God**.

We will divide The Study of God's Absolute Sovereignty- into three main parts:

- Part A** The Character and Nature of the God of the Bible
- Part B** God's Great Passion for His Own Glory
- Part C** The Three Main Ways in Which God Manifests His Absolute Sovereignty Throughout His Creation

In **Part A**- we will study much about what the Holy Bible reveals about God's Own Character and Nature. And, this is vital because it is impossible to correctly and fully understand Salvation and how it works without understanding what the Holy Scriptures reveal about the Nature of the God Who created Salvation. In this Part- we will see that Almighty God is:

- ✓ Spirit, Creator, and Owner
- ✓ Incomprehensible and Triune
- ✓ Omnipotent, Omniscient, and Omni-Present
- ✓ Immutable, Effectual, and Self Existent
- ✓ Holy, Righteous, and Good
- ✓ Love, Faithful, and True
- ✓ Just and Merciful
- ✓ Savior and Judge

Now these are, by no means, all of God's Characteristics- but they do compile a workable list of God's Attributes which affect Salvation.

In **Part B**- we will come to know and value what the Bible teaches about the great Passion that the God of the Bible has for His Own Glory- which is the underlying reason behind all of God's Actions- including Salvation and Creation. That great Passion is expressed in three terms found throughout the Scriptures:

- ✓ For My Glory
- ✓ For My Name's Sake
- ✓ So they will know that there is none like Me in all the earth

In **Part C**- we will see what the Bible reveals about just how God practically manifests His Absolute Sovereignty throughout His Creation:

- ✓ By God's Omnipotent Governance of His Own Creation
- ✓ By God Imposing Morality On Man
- ✓ By God Having Mercy on Whom He Will Have Mercy

So, let's examine what the Holy Scriptures teach about God's Absolute Sovereignty together.

Job 1:20-22

20 Then Job arose, and rent his mantle, and shaved his head, and fell down upon the ground, and worshipped,

21 And said, Naked came I out of my mother's womb, and naked shall I return thither: the LORD gave, and the LORD hath taken away; blessed be the name of the LORD .

22 In all this Job sinned not, nor charged God foolishly.

Recap of the Introduction

1. Briefly write down your thoughts concerning the Sovereignty of God that you had *before* you began this study: _____

2. How would the concept of God's Sovereignty that you had prior to beginning this Study apply to Salvation? _____

3. Explain your view on "Human Free Will" and give Biblical proof of your position. Also try to make a distinction between "Human Free Will" and "Human *Responsibility/Accountability*" or are these two concepts the same? _____

4. Explain how your view of "Human Free Will" might clash with The Absolute Sovereignty of God. _____

5. Give some thoughts as to how God being absolutely Sovereign might be a problem for you. _____

6. Name some people that you admire who *reject* the concept of The Absolute Sovereignty of God. _____

7. Why would Jeremiah tell us to glory (boast) in knowing and understanding God and His Attributes? Why would *that* be something for *us* to glory (boast) in? _____

8. Under what conditions did Job do and say these things? _____

9. What understanding of God's Sovereignty did Job have? _____

10. What does **Job 1:22** teach that allows you to know that Job's actions and comments in verses 20& 21 were not simply emotional responses but represented a correct understanding about God and His Ways? _____
