

Gods Sovereignty

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[0 : 00] I wanted to talk to you about God's sovereignty because as I was going through God's omnipotence, I mainly his strength and his power, so hard to not bleed into God's sovereignty.

! And my hope in mind is that you guys would walk in sovereignty with peace and trust and see this as a source of comfort and not fear.

Along with that, that you guys would be equipped as we're a church plant with a correct mindset in evangelism, in God's sovereignty.

So with all that, I want to talk about rocks. There's a... I love rocks. There's one of my favorite classes in public school was earth science.

And my favorite part was geology, which dealt with fossils and rocks. And it was fascinating to learn about igneous rocks, the cooling of lava to create igneous rocks, diamonds being created under pressure, and crystals in their beautiful formation.

[1 : 38] And while I was obsessed with rocks, I was also obsessed with the question, can God create a rock so big that he could not lift it?

And I was haunted and plagued by this question for years. And if I answered yes, I was wrong. If I answered yes, could God create a rock so big that he couldn't lift it? It was a lie about who God is. If I answered no, it was a lie about who God is. I was like, what do I do?

Right? It wasn't until later in life that I realized that this is just a stupid question. It's a silly question. It's a contradiction. Because it's not the truth, you could get no answer to the truth of who God is. Right? Because we know that God truly is all-powerful.

[2 : 39] And this insufficient folly of a question, though so trivial, helps me introduce God's omnipotence. Right?

Um, Deocarsen defines omnipotence as God being so powerful, he can do anything he chooses to do. Uh, we can say that we are not omnipotent because we cannot do anything that we choose to do.

We could try, but we cannot. Uh, and to talk about God's omnipotence, it is impossible to separate it from his omniscience.

Uh, that, that is, um, God knowing everything and his omnipresence, which is God being everywhere. Um, and for that, uh, I wanted to us to turn to Psalm 139, which I think clearly lays out all three of these things.

Um, so I'll, I'll give you a second to turn there if you want to read along with me. I'll start in verse one and then go to verse 16. Lord, you have searched me and known me.

[3 : 52] You know when I sit down and when I stand up. You understand my thoughts from far away. You observe my travels and my rest. You are aware of all my ways.

Before a word is on my tongue. You know all about it, Lord. You have encircled me. You have placed your hand upon me. This wondrous knowledge is beyond me.

It is lofty. I am unable to reach it. That there is God's omniscience. His knowing everything.

As David says, before I say another word, God already knows of what I'm going to say. And now his, his omnipresence.

Where can I go to escape your spirit? Where can I flee from your presence? If I go up to heaven, you are there. If I make my bed in Sheol, you are there.

[4 : 49] If I live at the Eastern horizon or settle in the Western limits, even there, your hand will lead me. Your right hand will hold on to me. If I say, surely the darkness will hide me and the light around me will be night.

Even the darkness is not dark to you. The night shines like the day. Darkness and light are alike to you. This speaks of God's omnipresence.

He's everywhere. There is no dark corner of this world that we can go, that we can hide from God. Nothing that we do could hide us from God. And now his power.

For it was you who created my inward parts. You knitted me together in my mother's womb. I will praise you because I have been remarkably and wondrously made.

Your works are wondrous, and I know this very well. My bones were not hidden from you when I was made in the secret. When I was formed in the depths of the earth, your eyes saw me when I was formless.

[5 : 50] Because all my days were written in your book and planned before a single one of them began. That speaks of his power. Now, to bring them all together and why these can't be separated is because God, as the causer of all things, can have nothing happen outside of his authority.

So, David says, That's the same for all of us.

That's the same for all of God's creation. God's power has created everything. He has caused everything. If God has caused everything, if God does everything, then there's nothing that God does not know will happen.

Hence his omniscience. If God knows everything will happen, and he's an eternal being outside of time, and he can be everywhere all at once, there is nothing that can hide from him because he has caused everything to happen.

He knows where everything is. And so, that means that nothing can escape God's authority.

[7 : 13] He knows where everything and everyone is because he ordains where they are and where they will be. Now, with that in mind, we can more clearly think of God's sovereignty, right, with these three connected.

And there's three common wrong worldviews of how the world works. It's not exhaustive, but just common. Before we jump into God's sovereignty.

The first is atheism, right? The natural man. He only believes in what he can see, what can be measured. Hypothesis, the scientific theory.

Scientific theory. Seeing is believing. Maybe even money makes the world go round. Only what I can spend is truly my God. That is one worldview.

The other is deism. That God created this world, and he left. He's the great watchmaker. Like, Garvin created this watch.

[8 : 20] I know the watchmaker, though. God created this watch and threw it out there. The universe, right? And it keeps ticking and keeps ticking and just keeps going.

And God, you know, God's outside. He's like, hands off. That's the world, right? The other worldview is what Carson calls the God of the gaps, which is what a lot of Christians believe.

This is where the world is going. It's not totally deism, but, you know, the watch goes out of whack sometimes, and God sticks his finger in there.

Boom, miracle. And another one is, God, I really, really, really, really need your help. Please help me. But other than that, you never think about God.

God, it's God. God only fills the gaps where he is needed by you. And those are three wrong worldviews of how the world works.

[9 : 23] And it wants to think clearly and soberly about God's sovereignty. So let's do a little brain exercise. Today, there's a mom that just gave birth.

I know this. My wife is after birth. A couple just got married. A dude just skipped church and caught a massive fish.

A raccoon got snared by Max and Charlie or Joey. And so many other good things that are happening today. It's all caused by God.

But also, there's a flip side. There are parents who just lost their son, their daughter. There's a woman who was raped.

There is a drunk driver who just died in a car crash. There's someone who just lost the battle with cancer and died. A family's death stated by divorce.

[10 : 32] There's so many good things, but yet so many evil things. And it comes to the question, what is God's sovereignty, though, with all these evil things?

Is God's sovereignty just a chessboard match with Satan? And when God is losing, bad things happen? That's not sovereignty.

God is in control at all times. God is in control at all times. And we may think that he is not, but he is.

And I want us to take a look at the story of Job. And Job gives, the story of Job gives a great picture of this. So turn with me to Job 1, starting in verse 14.

Before this, Satan and God had a conversation. And God gave Satan permission to afflict him in some of the most horrible ways.

[11:41] Starting in verse 14. A messenger came to Job and reported, While the oxen were plowing and the donkeys grazing nearby, the Sabians swooped down and took them away.

They struck down your servants with the sword, and I alone have escaped to tell you. So these people came down, thieves, stole all of Job's oxen, and murdered his servants.

A lot about God. He was still speaking, when another messenger came and reported, God's fire fell from heaven, it burned the sheep and the servants, and devoured them, and I alone have escaped to tell you.

Another devastation. That messenger was still speaking, yet another one came and reported, The Chaldeans formed three bands, made a raid on the camels, took them away, they have struck down the servants with the sword, and I alone have escaped to tell you.

Another thieves, murdered more servants. He was still speaking, when another messenger came and reported, Your sons and daughters were eating and drinking wine in their older brother's house.

[12:58] Suddenly, a powerful wind swept in from the desert and struck the four corners of the house. It collapsed on the young people, so that they died, and I alone have escaped to tell you.

Horrible. Horrible. Yet, Job's, Job's response is astounding.

Job stood up, tore his robe, shaved his head, he fell to the ground, and worshipped, saying, Naked I came from my mother's womb, and naked I will leave this life.

The Lord gives, and the Lord takes away. Blessed be the name of the Lord. God is not in some cosmic chess board game with Satan.

And when he loses, bad things happen. No. This shows God is ordaining, allowing, and controlling all of these different things to go on all at once.

[14:10] Now, you know, I wonder if our first instinct is to worship. That certainly is not my first instinct.

I do not have trials like Job. I mean, I have, I mean, the most trials I have in my life is my two kids. You know, Reuben is three years old, he's going to sleep, and then he's up for the tenth time like, Kid!

Get to bed! That's my greatest trial. Can I get upset by that? Obviously, I don't have afflictions like Job, but for many, it's hard to believe that God can ordain such hard things.

But he has. And you might say, what about famine? Yes. He's ordained them. What about wars? Yes. What about Hitler?

He murdered millions. Women, men, children? Yes. What about, what about, what about he has ordained them? And in case of God's ordaining and his sovereignty, we might think with all those, especially with all these people who do all these evil things, you know, what about hell?

[15:36] You know, if God ordains all these things and ordains all these people to do all these things, why is it fair that people go to hell? Right? That doesn't make any sense.

I'd be hard-pressed to answer this question if Paul didn't already. please turn with me to Romans, Romans chapter 9. Romans 9, starting in verse 14.

What then should we say? Is there injustice with God?

Absolutely not. For he tells Moses, I will show mercy to whom I will show mercy and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion.

So it does not depend on human will or effort but on God who shows mercy. For the scripture tells us, Pharaoh I raised up for this reason that I might display my power in you and that my name may be proclaimed in the whole earth.

[16:45] So then, he has mercy on whom he wants to and harden whom he wants to harden. And you will say, therefore, why then does he find fault?

Or, why does he find fault to send people to hell? For who can resist his will? Who can, who can choose not to do what he has already ordained?

Is what Paul asks. If God has ordained it, how can we choose not to do it? But who are you, mere man, to talk back to God?

Well, what does form say to the one who formed it, why did you make me like this? Or has the potter have no right over the clay to make from the same lump one piece pottery for honor and the

other for dishonor?

And what if God, wanting to display his wrath and to make his power known, endured with much patience objects of wrath prepared for destruction?

[17 : 48] And what if he did this to make known the riches of his glory on objects of mercy that he prepared beforehand for glory? Even in God's sovereignty, he still ordains that men who do sinful things would go to hell.

And he is not responsible in any way for man's sin. And some of you might say, really?

He ordained it. How is that so? Well, I can say the word ridiculous and it be of my own free will. I can do anything and be of my own free will.

How does free will and God's sovereignty work together? They're not opposed to one another at all. How are we held accountable yet God is not?

And I think the closest analogy that I've found to this mystery is in Psalm 139. That God has written all of our lives already.

[19 : 12] I think one of the best analogies is that of an author. Consider with me C.S. Lewis. Lewis, I don't know that he's a sorcerer and I don't know that he's a murderer.

Yet he creates the character of the White Witch. He creates Aslan to destroy her. Yet C.S. Lewis receives glory for all of these characters and is not responsible for anything that the White Witch did.

It's mere philosophy almost. Or even A.W. Tozer. A.W. Tozer didn't create orcs in this life yet he creates Sauron to create these things.

Tolkien, sorry. Thanks. Tolkien. Tolkien. Whoa, whoa, whoa, whoa. Tolkien. God-ordained it.

You're right. Tolkien creates Sauron who's this evil maniacal fallen angel in some sort of way. Yet Tolkien is not a murderer nor does he create orcs in that way but yet he receives all of the glory for his work.

[20 : 35] And so in a similar way with God God has written a story of all of us in this incredible awesome way yet we are still responsible for all of the actions that we have done and he receives all of the glory.

Why are you in this story? For his glory. Lewis receives the glory for his book. Tolkien receives the glory for his book. God receives the glory for his book.

God yet. Yet. This would be really this would be a really really hard pill to swallow if we didn't acknowledge that God is also good and holy and loving.

Right? Like in Romans 8 you don't have to turn there I can just read it it says for we know that God in verse 38 for we know that God for we know that all things work together for the good of those who love God who are called according to his purposes.

God is working together all things. Right? Or another translation says God works together all things for the good of those who love him. Right?

[21 : 55] he is doing the working because he is good. He can do good things because he is good. This would be awful news if God was a tyrannical evil maniacal God but he is not.

And if we continue in verse 31 it says what are we to say about these things if God is for us who is against us he did not even spare his own son but offered him up for us how will he not also with him grant us everything.

Right? In God's love his holiness his goodness he offered up his son for us. He ordained that his son would die for you and for me.

This is good news. Is it good news? It is good news. He is so good to give you his son. You do not deserve that. Yet he ordained it.

And not only that not only is God sorry not only is God good holy and loving there is no deceit found within God.

[23 : 26] I believe it is sorry I lost my page losing my page here there's Psalm 92 15 that says the Lord is just he's my rock and there's no unrighteousness in him.

yes there's unrighteousness and wickedness in the world but God is good. His purposes are still mysterious to us but his purposes are still good.

All his purposes and his ways and all his ordaining are still good. And of the of man's accountability Jesus even says before he's about to be betrayed of Jesus he says for the man the son of man will go away as it has been determined meaning Jesus will be crucified and hung on a tree as it has been determined as it has been ordained sovereignly but woe to that man by whom he is betrayed

right there is God's ordaining yet man's responsibility in all of them and we are responsible for our sins and with all that I wanted us to just really consider that

God is for us those who are in Christ God is for us he's not against us he's good faithful holy and loving and I'm not saying all this sovereignty so that we can go outside and look at the sky and look sky is bluer now right it is to see that even the grass is clothed by God right Jesus in the story with Peter tells him to go and throw a hook and a coin will be in the fish's mouth right God ordains the fish not only that if we grumble against the weather we grumble against God because who's in control of the weather God he ordains volcanoes and tornadoes and hurricanes and droughts right all things is held by God and so

I have with that just three application points the first is if you have not trusted in God for salvation then you are headed for hell as is spoken of the love of God there is nothing that can separate us nor death nor famine nor things to come and for those who are not in Christ there is nothing that can separate you from the wrath of God if you are not in Christ I plead with you trust in his son trust in his son for salvation he sent his son because he loves you the second thing is if we are not trusting in God's sovereignty and that his purposes are good then we will fear his sovereignty and what he is doing this would look like random things happening different things in our life like car breaking down family kids whatever happening we would just start having anxiety right and we fear instead of trusting we must be like

[27 : 31] Job when God took everything he fell down and worshiped we must remember James words to consider it pure joy in various trials it would not be pure joy if we did not see God's hands in the trials that we are receiving are you in trials right now that is because of God's ordaining that's not by any other means consider it pure joy and it's good as James says not only for perseverance but that you would remember that it's God's hands that's in your life and even in discipline we must remember that God disciplines those he loves if we do not worship God and in his sovereignty in both the good and the bad we will begin to grumble and blame

God for all the evils in our life and we will start boasting ourselves to see that oh I did this no no we must trust him wait upon him we must have faith in him the third thing is if we do not see that God is sovereign in evangelism that he is the means and the ends of evangelism then all of the pressure will be upon ourselves God has ordained all things right as I've said throughout this entire sermon but he has called me and he has called you to preach his word right some might say well if God has ordained everything why doesn't God just save everyone or do I really need to go and preach if God will just save them yes you do need to go and preach because that is God's ways in the same way you need to pray also because in God's sovereign decree he acts by your prayers and he saves by you going and preaching God's ways are mysterious but there should be no pressure that you put upon yourself for someone being saved because it is God that does the saving now a common reason that we don't evangelize or when the opportunity is preaching we feign from the opportunity is because of fear right as Christians and especially as a church plant the worst thing that we could do in evangelism if we're preaching the true gospel is do nothing failure in evangelism is doing nothing right you have the true gospel and you choose to do nothing with it you choose to sit with it that that is true failure rejection is not failure in evangelism rejection saying maybe the next one we'll hear and receive right and so

I encourage you as we are church blend don't preach God's word he's got you in his hands quite literally and with all that I want you guys to remember that the sky is bluer because God is working but I close with that