

“ _____ to _____ our _____ GOD”

Introduction

I. “Sovereign” – Webster’s definition

- A. Superlative in quality : EXCELLENT
- B. Of the most exalted kind : SUPREME
- C. Possessed of supreme power
- D. Unlimited in extent : ABSOLUTE
- E. Enjoying autonomy : INDEPENDENT
- F. Freedom from external control
- G. Synonymy: Free

II. To say that our God is sovereign is to say that our God is the _____ God. He is exalted above _____, He is _____ excellent, He is supreme. There is _____ other.

- A. Deuteronomy 6:4 – “Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God, the LORD is one.
- B. Exodus 20:2-5 – I am the LORD your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery. You shall have no other gods before me. “You shall not make for yourself a carved image, or any likeness of anything that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth. You shall not bow down to them or serve them, for I the LORD your God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers on the children to the third and the fourth generation of those who hate me.

- C. Psalm 97:9 – For you, O LORD, are most high over all the earth; you are exalted far above all gods.
- D. 1 Chronicles 29:11 – Yours, O LORD, is the greatness and the power and the glory and the victory and the majesty, for all that is in the heavens and in the earth is yours. Yours is the kingdom, O LORD, and you are exalted as head above all.
- E. Isaiah 37:16 – O LORD of hosts, God of Israel, enthroned above the cherubim, you are the God, you alone, of all the kingdoms of the earth; you have made heaven and earth.
- F. Psalm 148:13 – Let them praise the name of the LORD, for his name alone is exalted; his majesty is above earth and heaven.
- G. 1 Timothy 6:15 – He who is the blessed and only Sovereign, the King of kings and Lord of lords.
- H. elyon – God Most High / el shadai – God almighty / adonai yhwah – Sovereign LORD

III. To say that our God is sovereign is to say that God accomplishes all things according to the *good* pleasure of His _____ because He is utterly _____ from our wills and from all other controlling influences.

- A. Isaiah 43:10-13 – I am he. Before me no god was formed, nor shall there be any after me. I, I am the LORD, and besides me there is no savior. I declared and saved and proclaimed... there is none who can deliver from my hand; I work, and who can turn it back?”
- B. Isaiah 44:6-8 – I am the first and I am the last; besides me there is no god. Who is like me? Let him proclaim it. Let him declare and set it before me, since I appointed an ancient people. Let them declare what is to come, and what will happen. Fear not, nor be afraid; have I not told you from of old and declared it?
- C. Isaiah 44:24-28 – I am the LORD, who made all things, who alone stretched out the heavens, who spread out the earth by myself, who frustrates the signs of liars and makes fools of diviners, who turns wise men back and makes their knowledge foolish, who confirms the word of his servant and fulfills the counsel of his messengers... who says of Cyrus, “He is my shepherd, and he shall fulfill all my purpose.”
- D. Isaiah 46:9-10 (cf. 14:26-27) – I am God, and there is no other; I am God, and there is none like me, declaring the end from the beginning and from ancient times things not yet done, saying, ‘My counsel shall stand, and I will accomplish all my purpose.’
- E. Psalm 135:5-6 (cf. 115:3) – For I know that the LORD is great, and that our Lord is above all gods. Whatever the LORD pleases, he does, in heaven and on earth, in the seas and all deeps.
- F. Psalm 33:10-11 – The LORD brings the counsel of the nations to nothing; he frustrates the plans of the peoples. The counsel of the LORD stands forever, the plans of his heart to all generations.
- G. Daniel 4:35 – All the inhabitants of the earth are accounted as nothing, and he does according to his will among the host of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth; and none can stay his hand or say to him, “What have you done?”
- H. Ephesians 1:11 – [God] works all things according to the counsel of his will.
- I. Why is this point so significant and important?
 - 1. All other religions teach that at least some of God’s plan and will is determined by _____ wills.

2. When we say that God is sovereign, we say that God is *free* – the _____-existent, _____-sufficient, and absolutely independent “_____.”
3. Acts 17:24-25 – The God who made the world and everything in it, being Lord of heaven and earth, does not live in temples made by man, nor is he served by human hands, as though he needed anything, since he himself gives to all mankind life and breath and everything.

IV. God is sovereign in the “little”, “_____” things.

- A. Proverbs 16:33 – The lot is cast into the lap, but its every decision is from the LORD.
- B. _____ things will ultimately play into God’s sovereign _____ (Rom. 8:28-29).

V. God is sovereign over the _____.

- A. Proverbs 21:1 – The king’s heart is a stream of water in the hand of the LORD; he turns it wherever he will.
- B. Daniel 4:17 – The Most High rules the kingdom of men and gives it to whom he will.
- C. Acts 17:26 – And he made from one man every nation of mankind to live on all the face of the earth, having determined allotted periods and the boundaries of their dwelling place.

VI. God is sovereign over _____.

- A. Genesis 50:20 – As for you, you meant evil against me, but God meant it for good.
- B. Luke 22:22 – For the Son of Man goes as it has been determined, but woe to that man by whom he is betrayed!
- C. Acts 2:23 – This Jesus, delivered up according to the definite plan and foreknowledge of God, you crucified and killed by the hands of lawless men.
- D. God does not make His plans based on what He foresees we will do.
- E. Acts 4:27-28 – For truly in this city there were gathered together against your holy servant Jesus, whom you anointed, both Herod and Pontius Pilate, along with the Gentiles and the peoples of Israel, to do whatever your hand and your plan had predestined to take place.

TWO NOTES

- A. The sovereignty of God does not mean that God is the author of sin (Genesis 18:25; James 1:13; 1 John 1:5).
- B. The sovereignty of God does not contradict the responsibility and accountability of men.
 1. As humans, we have “free will” in so far as we are free to choose in accordance with our desires and without any outside coercion. God never coerces us to do anything (forces us to do something contrary to what we desire).
 2. And yet there is another kind of “free will” that contradicts God’s sovereignty and would make humans self-directing, self-governing, and morally independent of God (autonomous).
 - a. In this kind of “freedom”, our wills are not bound to our desires.
 - b. Or if they are, it is assumed that we are capable of changing our desires.

- c. In this kind of free will, God makes some of His plans based on what He foresees we will do.
 - d. And so our freedom is said to be just as ultimate as God's freedom, when the reality is that even our "freedom" is under the control of His sovereign will.
 - e. Our freedom derives from and is dependant upon *His* freedom.
 - f. Philippians 2:12-13 – Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling, *for* it is God who works in you, both to will and to work for his good pleasure.
3. The *Bible* teaches that ever since the fall, our wills have been in _____ to the sinful desires of our hearts.

VII. God is sovereign in our _____

- A. Ephesians 2:1-5 – And you were *dead in the trespasses and sins* in which you once walked, following the course of this world, following the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that is now at work in the sons of disobedience— among whom we all once lived in *the passions of our flesh*, carrying out *the desires of the body and the mind*, and were *by nature* children of wrath, like the rest of mankind. But God, being rich in mercy, because of the great love with which he loved us, even when we were dead in our trespasses, *made us alive* together with Christ—*by grace* you have been saved.
- B. Ephesians 1:4-6, 11-12 – He chose us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and blameless before him. In love he predestined us for adoption as sons through Jesus Christ, *according to the purpose of his will*, to the praise of his glorious grace, with which he has blessed us in the Beloved... In him we have obtained an inheritance, having been predestined *according to the purpose of him who works all things according to the counsel of his will*, so that we who were the first to hope in Christ might be to the praise of his glory.
- C. John 6:65, 37, 39 (cf. 10:27-29; 1 John 5:18) – ***No one can*** come to me unless it is granted him by the Father... ***All*** that the Father gives me ***will*** come to me, and whoever comes to me I will never cast out... And this is the will of him who sent me, that I should ***lose nothing*** of all that he has given me, but raise it up on the last day.
- D. Romans 9:15-18, 22-24 – For he says to Moses, "I will have mercy on whom I have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I have compassion." So then it depends not on human will or exertion, but on God, who has mercy. For the Scripture says to Pharaoh, "For this very purpose I have raised you up, that I might show my power in you, and that my name might be proclaimed in all the earth." So then he has mercy on whomever he wills, and he hardens whomever he wills... What if God, desiring to show his wrath and to make known his power, has endured with much patience vessels of wrath prepared for destruction, in order to make known the riches of his glory for vessels of mercy, which he has prepared beforehand for glory— even us whom he has called?
- E. Romans 11:33-36 – Oh, the depth of the riches and wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are his judgments and how inscrutable his ways! "For who has known the mind of the Lord, or who has been his counselor?" "Or who has given a gift to him that he might be repaid?" For from him and through him and to him are all things. To him be glory forever. Amen.

Conclusion

- A. When we truly understand the sovereign majesty of God, then it is *obvious* that His glory must be the _____, the _____, the _____, and the _____, for *everything*!
- B. It is our failure to seek God's glory in all things that is the root and definition of all our _____.
1. Romans 1:21-23, 25 – For although they knew God, *they did not honor him as God or give thanks to him*, but they became futile in their thinking, and their foolish hearts were darkened. Claiming to be wise, they became fools, and *exchanged the glory of the immortal God for images resembling mortal man and birds and animals and creeping things...* they exchanged the truth about God for a lie and *worshiped and served the creature rather than the Creator*, who is blessed forever! Amen.
- C. It is only when we live life for God's glory that we can ever be truly _____, for we were _____ to worship God.
1. “***Desiring*** to Exalt our Sovereign God”!
 2. Westminster Confession: Man's chief end is to _____ God, and to _____ Him forever.
- D. ***Here*** is our relevance as an assembly to the community in which we meet:
1. **We need to bear witness to the sovereign majesty of our God.**
 2. **As a result of this corporate witness, we will call the world to account for their sinful refusal to exalt God.**
 3. **As a result of this corporate witness, we will display to the world the sovereign grace of God and His awesome power to save even the worst of sinners.**
4. The very *first* request in the Lord's Prayer: “_____ be Your name.”
 5. 1 Corinthians 14:24-25 – But if all prophesy, and an unbeliever or outsider enters, he is convicted by all, he is called to account by all, the secrets of his heart are disclosed, and so, falling on his face, he will worship God and declare that God is really among you.
 6. Our additional visibility as an assembly comes with great _____.

Teaching our Children

Q. What do we mean when we say that God is sovereign?

Teach your children about the sovereignty of God using the main headings for Roman Numerals II. – VII. and Conclusion B. and C. along with the associated Scriptures.
(You could try to do this in one sitting, or you could take all week!)

Your primary goal is simply to help your children *begin* to see the *exclusive greatness* of God and their responsibility to bring Him glory!

Your secondary goal is to help your children to see that God's sovereignty brings us great joy, comfort, and peace.

In the end, we want our children to understand that we were *created to glorify God and enjoy Him forever.*