

SOVEREIGNTY OF GOD – PART 2: GOD’S POWER OVER OUR SALVATION

Do some thinking while we wait to begin...

Read Ephesians 2:1-10, and then discuss...

1. How many contributors to the work of salvation are there?
2. Look at vv1-3: What WERE we like?
3. Look at vv4-10: What has GOD done?
4. What difference should this make to our (a) evangelism; (b) assurance?

RECOMMENDED RESOURCES

- R.C. Sproul, “Chosen by God”
- John Frame, “No other God”

*May the Lord grant
That we may contemplate
The mysteries of His heavenly wisdom
With truly increasing devotion,
To His glory
And to our edification, Amen.*

1. KEY FOUNDATIONS:

(a) Recap: He is sovereign over creation, providence and history (Ephesians 1:10)

(b) We are totally depraved

Ephesians 2:1-3

John 8:44, “You are of your father the DEVIL, and your will is to do your father's desires.”

Titus 3:3, “For we ourselves were once foolish, disobedient, led astray, SLAVES to various passions and pleasures, passing our days in malice and envy, hated by others and hating one another.”

Church history: Pelagius... Augustine... Martin Luther

(c) God's chief end is His own glory

Ephesians 1:6, 12, 14

Isaiah 42:8, "I am the LORD; that is my name; my glory I give to no other, nor my praise to carved idols."

Also 1 Sam 12:22, 2 Sam 7:23, Neh 9:9-10, Ps 106:7-8, Ezek 20:13b-26, 36:22-23, Isa 42:6-8, 48:9-11, 63:12-14, Matt 6:9, Jn 12:27-28, 17:1-3, Rom 9:17, Rev 5:9, 7:9

(d) The Saviour's work is God's alone: Jesus' incarnation, life, death & resurrection & ascension

Distinguish: redemption accomplished... and applied

2. HE CHOSE US BEFORE THE WORLD BEGAN: ELECTION / PREDESTINATION

John 6:37-39

Ephesians 1:4, "... he chose us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and blameless before him"

Acts 13:48, "And when the Gentiles heard this, they began rejoicing and glorifying the word of the Lord, and as many as were appointed to eternal life believed."

Also Matt 24:24, 24:31, John 6:35-37, 44, 10:29, 15:16, Acts 13:48, Rom 8:30, Romans 9-11, Eph 1:4, 1 Thess 1:4-6, 5:9, 2 Thess 2:13, Tim 1:9, 2:10

Questions...

"This divine choice is an expression of free and sovereign grace, for it is unconstrained and unconditional, not merited by anything in those who are its subjects. God owes sinners no mercy of any kind, only condemnation; so it is a wonder, and matter for endless praise, that he should choose to save any of us; and doubly so when his choice involved the giving of his own Son to suffer as sin-bearer for the elect (Romans 8:32)." (Concise Theology, p149).

3. HE BRINGS THE DEAD TO LIFE - REGENERATION

John 6:44, 65

Matthew 11:25-27, "At that time Jesus declared, "I thank you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that you have hidden these things from the wise and understanding and revealed them to little children; ²⁶ yes, Father, for such was your gracious will. ²⁷ All things have been handed over to me by my Father, and no one knows the Son except the Father, and no one knows the Father except the Son and anyone to whom the Son chooses to reveal him."

Acts 16:14, "One who heard us was a woman named Lydia, from the city of Thyatira, a seller of purple goods, who was a worshiper of God. The Lord opened her heart to pay attention to what was said by Paul."

Also Ephesians 1:1-10, 2:5,8, Rom 8:29-30, 9:16, Jn 6:44, 3:3-8, 10:28-29, Acts 5:31, 11:18, 2 Corinthians 4:4-6, Phil 1:29, 1 Pet 1:3

4. HE WILL KEEP US TO THE END – PRESERVATION / PERSEVERANCE

John 6:39

Also John 5:24, 6:37-47, 10:27-30, Romans 8:28-33, Ephesians 1:13-14, 1 Thess 5:23-24, Phil 1:6,

5. APPLICATION (THE "USE"): REPENTANCE AND FAITH – AND ASSURANCE

Don't abuse God's sovereignty

Non-believer: repent and believe

Christian: humbled... and assured

6. BONUS EXTRA! A HYMN BY A.M TOPLADY ON GOD'S SOVEREIGN LOVE

How vast the benefits divine
which we in Christ possess!
We are redeemed from sin and shame
and called to holiness.
Not for the works that we have done-
all these to him are owed;
but he of his electing love
salvation has bestowed.

To you alone, O Lord, is due
all glory and renown:
praise to ourselves we dare not take,
or rob you of your crown.
You were yourself our guarantor
in God's redemption plan;
in you his grace was given us
before the world began.

Safe in the arms of sovereign love
we ever shall remain;
not all the rage of earth or hell
can make your promise vain.
So none of all your chosen ones
shall fail your heaven to gain;
here they will share abounding grace,
and there with Jesus reign.

Augustus M Toplady 1740-78 and Dewey Westra 1899-1979 / Praise! No. 711

7. LASTLY: IN THE LIGHT OF WHAT WE'VE LEARNED TODAY WRITE YOUR OWN MEDITATION ABOUT GOD'S POWER OVER HUMAN SALVATION

Write down what you would like to say to yourself the next time you doubt that God can save people all the way to glory (either yourself, or someone else):

Write down what you might then say to God (i.e. pray). For example, you could complete each of these sentences...

Heavenly Father, you are...

Heavenly Father, you have...

Heavenly Father, I am...

Heavenly Father, please would you..