

Sovereign Grace

Last week we started a series on the Sovereignty of God. If you missed that sermon please go back and listen to it. As our world becomes more and more chaotic, we need to turn to God's word and remember that Our God is in Heaven and He does as He pleases.

But Sovereignty is not a word that we are really familiar with in the West. And once we become familiar with it, not only do we not like it, we have a hard time relating to it.

Sovereign means that someone has total, absolute, unchallenged authority. They can do whatever they want, whenever they want, involving whomever they want. They don't need or want input. They don't need or want your opinion. They decide what they are going to do and their word and actions are final. And in the case of God's Sovereignty, perfect and true.

I tried to come up with an example from the West to use as a comparison and I cannot.

Sovereignty is a foreign concept to us. We will see over the next few weeks how we have allowed our western world view to slant our view of God and particularly His sovereign will.

In some areas of our life and our world we are very comfortable with God's Sovereignty and in other areas we are clearly not.

Now, an important thing for us to consider as we start today is that God is not Sovereign because we say so. God is Sovereign because HE says so. This is critical for us to understand.

When we read the Bible there are several claims God makes that we must accept or reject. First is that God's Word is God's word. He is the author. He makes this claim and states it to be true. The Words and Truths in this book did not come from Man or from Earth. In addition, God tells us that these words are His revelation of Himself to us. He does not reveal everything about Himself but all that we need to know about Him is contained in this Book.

Also, God tells us in His Holy Scriptures that these words are true and amazingly...eternal. They will always be true.

So we don't claim God to be sovereign....He doesn't ask for our stamp of approval. He says I AM. Then He tells us who He is. We don't decide if He is sovereign or not. We agree with Him that He is already Sovereign.

On our Western Culture...we have trained our minds to resist sovereignty. I promise that as we go through the next 3 weeks, you will at some point find yourself pushing back against it.

We have in our minds a sense of fairness. A sense of what should be. We place upon God our expectations at times that He must line up with our sense of right and wrong....actually our sense of fairness.

Often when Christians begin to study the Sovereignty of God it is fairness that we wrestle with the most. We have preconceived ideas of how God should fit in our fairness box. So before we go too far, I need to remind you of a very real truth.

God's fairness left in the Garden when man sinned. God never promises in the Bible to be fair to everyone. Fairness is our sense from the West of how things should be. We focus on individual rights, individualism, and fairness for everyone. Other nations focus on the population, what is best for their culture and fairness for everyone is not even a possibility. Because life is so lush in the West, we can think about fairness. But when a population is struggling to survive, individual rights must fall to the greater good.

When Adam and Eve sinned and rebelled against God in the garden, God placed a curse of death on all people descended from them. In fairness if you will, we were all sentenced to death. Separated from God. Totally dependent upon Him to save us....or not. He is not required to save anyone. He would be just, righteous and Holy if He allowed every human to spend eternity in Hell.

The fact that God chooses to save anyone is called grace. Unmerited favor. A blessing no one deserves. An opportunity that God is not required to give to every person. In the West, we think that if God offers salvation to one person He has to offer it to everyone. Kind of the if you are going to bring candy to school bring enough for the whole class.

But someone from the East would wonder why we think that. God can bless whom He wants, when He wants and How He wants. We should, they often say, just be thankful that anyone gets saved.

In the next three weeks, we are going to look at the Sovereignty of God...but we are eventually going to narrow down our focus to answer what has become a burning question in churches today.

When it comes to our salvation....Did God choose us.....or did we choose Him?

But before we can study God's Sovereignty in a specific topic like Salvation, we must first understand Gods' Sovereignty overall.

As we approach end times and as we look to the path God has chosen for us, it is critical that we know how God reveals Himself because our world bombards us with lies.

We don't need to try to discover who God is we just need to agree with God on who He has always been. It is only when we understand the Sovereignty of God that we can appropriately respond in wonder and worship.

Now I must tell you that I copied this sermon. Most of the words that we are going to hear today did not come from me. Truthfully, I copied them.

When it comes to the Sovereignty of God...my words really didn't seem to add much. So I decided that we should allow God to speak to us in His words. I decided to once again allow Him to be Sovereign.

What does God's Word tell us about God's Sovereignty? He is Sovereign over all of creation....He is Sovereign King over all people....He is Sovereign

Divine sovereignty is displayed in His divine kingship of Israel.

In the New Testament, God's Sovereignty is revealed through the presence of Christ who ushers in His Sovereign Kingdom.

Jesus The Christ ushers in this new Kingdom on earth

Matthew 4:23 (ESV) 23 And he went throughout all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues and proclaiming the gospel of the kingdom and healing every disease and every affliction among the people.

Matthew 12:28–29 (ESV) 28 But if it is by the Spirit of God that I cast out demons, then the kingdom of God has come upon you.

Sovereign over Creation

Divine sovereignty refers to God's all-encompassing rule over the entire universe.

The divine sovereignty of God is a central theme throughout the Bible. God delegates authority, establishes kings and kingdoms, and brings to ruin any king or kingdom that fail to submit to his authority. The Bible presents Yahweh as the Creator God, with a sovereign right to rule over all creation

Read Psalm 104

Bless the Lord, O my soul! O Lord my God, you are very great! You are clothed with splendor and majesty, covering yourself with light as with a garment, stretching out the heavens like a tent. He lays the beams of his chambers on the waters; he makes the clouds his chariot; he rides on the wings of the wind; he makes his messengers winds, his ministers a flaming fire.

He set the earth on its foundations, so that it should never be moved. You covered it with the deep as with a garment; the waters stood above the mountains. At your rebuke they fled; at the sound of your thunder they took to flight. The mountains rose, the valleys sank down to the place that you appointed for them. You set a boundary that they may not pass, so that they might not again cover the earth.

You make springs gush forth in the valleys; they flow between the hills; they give drink to every beast of the field; the wild donkeys quench their thirst. Beside them the birds of the heavens dwell; they sing among the branches. From your lofty abode you water the mountains; the earth is satisfied with the fruit of your work.

You cause the grass to grow for the livestock and plants for man to cultivate, that he may bring forth food from the earth and wine to gladden the heart of man, oil to make his face shine and bread to strengthen man's heart. The trees of the Lord are watered abundantly, the cedars of Lebanon that he planted. In them the birds build their nests; the stork has her home in the fir trees. The high mountains are for the wild goats; the rocks are a refuge for the rock badgers. He made the moon to mark the seasons; the sun knows its time for setting. You make darkness, and it is night, when all the beasts of the forest creep about. The young lions roar for their prey, seeking their food from God. When the sun rises, they steal away and lie down in their dens. Man goes out to his work and to his labor until the evening.

O Lord, how manifold are your works! In wisdom have you made them all; the earth is full of your creatures. Here is the sea, great and wide, which teems with creatures innumerable, living things both small and great. There go the ships, and Leviathan (VEY-A-THIN), which you formed to play in it. These all look to you, to give them their food in due season. When you give it to them, they gather it up; when you open your hand, they are filled with good things. When you hide your face, they are dismayed; when you take away their breath, they die and return to their dust. When you send forth your Spirit, they are created, and you renew the face of the ground.

May the glory of the Lord endure forever; may the Lord rejoice in his works, who looks on the earth and it trembles, who touches the mountains and they smoke! I will sing to the Lord as long as I live; I will sing praise to my God while I have being. May my meditation be pleasing to him, for I rejoice in the Lord. Let sinners be consumed from the earth, and let the wicked be no more! Bless the Lord, O my soul! Praise the Lord!

Read Psalm 105

Oh give thanks to the Lord; call upon his name; make known his deeds among the peoples! Sing to him, sing praises to him; tell of all his wondrous works! Glory in his holy name; let the hearts of those who seek the Lord rejoice! Seek the Lord and his strength; seek his presence continually! Remember the wondrous works that he has done, his miracles, and the judgments he uttered, O offspring of Abraham, his servant, children of Jacob, his chosen ones!

He is the Lord our God; his judgments are in all the earth. He remembers his covenant forever, the word that he commanded, for a thousand generations, the covenant that he made with Abraham, his sworn promise to Isaac, which he confirmed to Jacob as a statute, to Israel as an everlasting covenant, saying, "To you I will give the land of Canaan as your portion for an inheritance." When they were few in number, of little account, and sojourners in it, wandering from nation to nation, from one kingdom to another people, he allowed no one to oppress them; he rebuked kings on their account, saying, "Touch not my anointed ones, do my prophets no harm!"

When he summoned a famine on the land and broke all supply of bread, he had sent a man ahead of them, Joseph, who was sold as a slave. His feet were hurt with fetters; his neck was put in a collar of iron; until what he had said came to pass, the word of the Lord tested him. The king sent and released him; the ruler of the peoples set him free; he made him lord of his house and ruler of all his possessions, to bind his princes at his pleasure and to teach his elders wisdom. Then Israel came to Egypt; Jacob sojourned in the land of Ham. And the Lord made his people very fruitful and made them stronger than their foes. He turned their hearts to hate his people, to deal craftily with his servants. He sent Moses, his servant, and Aaron, whom he had chosen. They performed his signs among them and miracles in the land of Ham. He sent darkness, and made the land dark; they did not rebel against his words.

He turned their waters into blood and caused their fish to die. Their land swarmed with frogs, even in the chambers of their kings. He spoke, and there came swarms of flies, and gnats throughout their country. He gave them hail for rain, and fiery lightning bolts through their land. He struck down their vines and fig trees, and shattered the trees of their country. He spoke, and the locusts came, young locusts without number, which devoured all the vegetation in their land and ate up the fruit of their ground. He struck down all the firstborn in their land, the firstfruits of all their strength. Then he brought out Israel with silver and gold, and there was none among his tribes who stumbled. Egypt was glad when they departed, for dread of them had fallen upon it.

He spread a cloud for a covering, and fire to give light by night. They asked, and he brought quail, and gave them bread from heaven in abundance. He opened the rock, and water gushed out; it flowed through the desert like a river. For he remembered his holy promise, and Abraham, his servant.

So he brought his people out with joy, his chosen ones with singing. And he gave them the lands of the nations, and they took possession of the fruit of the peoples' toil, that they might keep his statutes and observe his laws. Praise the Lord!

The Psalmists clearly understood the Sovereignty of God. So did Job....eventually. When Job challenged God's Sovereignty God reminded Job of who God really was.....

Job 38:1–3 (ESV) 1 Then the Lord answered Job out of the whirlwind and said: 2 “Who is this that darkens counsel by words without knowledge? 3 Dress for action like a man; I will question you, and you make it known to me.

Job 38:4–11 (ESV) 4 “Where were you when I laid the foundation of the earth? Tell me, if you have understanding. 5 Who determined its measurements—surely you know! Or who stretched the line upon it? 6 On what were its bases sunk, or who laid its cornerstone, 7 when the morning stars sang together and all the sons of God shouted for joy? 8 “Or who shut in the sea with doors when it burst out from the womb, 9 when I made clouds its garment and thick darkness its swaddling band, 10 and prescribed limits for it and set bars and doors, 11 and said, ‘Thus far shall you come, and no farther, and here shall your proud waves be stayed’?

Job 38:12–18 (ESV) 12 “Have you commanded the morning since your days began, and caused the dawn to know its place, 13 that it might take hold of the skirts of the earth, and the wicked be shaken out of it? 14 It is changed like clay under the seal, and its features stand out like a garment. 15 From the wicked their light is withheld, and their uplifted arm is broken. 16 “Have you entered into the springs of the sea, or walked in the recesses of the deep? 17 Have the gates of death been revealed to you, or have you seen the gates of deep darkness? 18 Have you comprehended the expanse of the earth? Declare, if you know all this.

Job 38:19–27 (ESV) 19 “Where is the way to the dwelling of light, and where is the place of darkness, 20 that you may take it to its territory and that you may discern the paths to its home? 21 You know, for you were born then, and the number of your days is great! 22 “Have you entered the storehouses of the snow, or have you seen the storehouses of the hail, 23 which I have reserved for the time of trouble, for the day of battle and war? 24 What is the way to the place where the light is distributed, or where the east wind is scattered upon the earth? 25 “Who has cleft a channel for the torrents of rain and a way for the thunderbolt, 26 to bring rain on a land where no man is, on the desert in which there is no man, 27 to satisfy the waste and desolate land, and to make the ground sprout with grass?

Job 38:28–38 (ESV) 28 “Has the rain a father, or who has begotten the drops of dew? 29 From whose womb did the ice come forth, and who has given birth to the frost of heaven? 30 The waters become hard like stone, and the face of the deep is frozen. 31 “Can you bind the chains of the Pleiades (PLAYA- DEZ) or loose the cords of Orion? 32 Can you lead forth the Mazzaroth in their season, or can you guide the Bear with its children? 33 Do you know the ordinances of the heavens? Can you establish their rule on the earth? 34 “Can you lift up your voice to the clouds, that a flood of waters may cover you? 35 Can you send forth lightnings, that they may go and say to you, ‘Here we are’? 36 Who has put wisdom in the inward parts or given understanding to the mind? 37 Who can number the clouds by wisdom? Or who can tilt the waterskins of the heavens, 38 when the dust runs into a mass and the clods stick fast together?

Job 38:39–41 (ESV) 39 “Can you hunt the prey for the lion, or satisfy the appetite of the young lions, 40 when they crouch in their dens or lie in wait in their thicket? 41 Who provides for the raven its prey, when its young ones cry to God for help, and wander about for lack of food?

God's not finished yet. Job 39

Job 39 (ESV) 1 “Do you know when the mountain goats give birth? Do you observe the calving of the does? 2 Can you number the months that they fulfill, and do you know the time when they give birth, 3 when they crouch, bring forth their offspring, and are delivered of their young? 4 Their young ones become strong; they grow up in the open; they go out and do not return to them. 5 “Who has let the wild donkey go free? Who has loosed the bonds of the swift donkey, 6 to whom I have given the arid plain for his home and the salt land for his dwelling place?

7 He scorns the tumult of the city; he hears not the shouts of the driver. 8 He ranges the mountains as his pasture, and he searches after every green thing. 9 “Is the wild ox willing to serve you? Will he spend the night at your manger? 10 Can you bind him in the furrow with ropes, or will he harrow the valleys after you? 11 Will you depend on him because his strength is great, and will you leave to him your labor? 12 Do you have faith in him that he will return your grain and gather it to your threshing floor?

13 “The wings of the ostrich wave proudly, but are they the pinions and plumage of love? 14 For she leaves her eggs to the earth and lets them be warmed on the ground, 15 forgetting that a foot may crush them and that the wild beast may trample them. 16 She deals cruelly with her young, as if they were not hers; though her labor be in vain, yet she has no fear, 17 because God has made her forget wisdom and given her no share in understanding. 18 When she rouses herself to flee, she laughs at the horse and his rider.

19 “Do you give the horse his might? Do you clothe his neck with a mane? 20 Do you make him leap like the locust? His majestic snorting is terrifying. 21 He paws in the valley and exults in his strength; he goes out to meet the weapons. 22 He laughs at fear and is not dismayed; he does not turn back from the sword. 23 Upon him rattle the quiver, the flashing spear, and the javelin. 24 With fierceness and rage he swallows the ground; he cannot stand still at the sound of the trumpet. 25 When the trumpet sounds, he says ‘Aha!’ He smells the battle from afar, the thunder of the captains, and the shouting.

26 “Is it by your understanding that the hawk soars and spreads his wings toward the south? 27 Is it at your command that the eagle mounts up and makes his nest on high? 28 On the rock he dwells and makes his home, on the rocky crag and stronghold. 29 From there he spies out the prey; his eyes behold it from far away. 30 His young ones suck up blood, and where the slain are, there is he.”

Job 40 (ESV) 1 And the Lord said to Job: 2 “Shall a faultfinder contend with the Almighty? He who argues with God, let him answer it.” 3 Then Job answered the Lord and said: 4 “Behold, I am of small account; what shall I answer you? I lay my hand on my mouth. 5 I have spoken once, and I will not answer; twice, but I will proceed no further.”
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God is Sovereign King and Judge of All

Divine sovereignty is viewed both in the Old and New Testament as God’s all-encompassing rule

Psalm 103:19 (ESV) 19 The Lord has established his throne in the heavens, and his kingdom rules over all.

He rules over Israel as King

Psalm 114:1–2 (ESV) 1 When Israel went out from Egypt, the house of Jacob from a people of strange language, 2 Judah became his sanctuary, Israel his dominion.

He will judge Israel and all nations with a final judgement that brings peace

Psalm 96:10–13 (ESV) 10 Say among the nations, “The Lord reigns! Yes, the world is established; it shall never be moved; he will judge the peoples with equity.” 11 Let the heavens be glad, and let the earth rejoice; let the sea roar, and all that fills it; 12 let the field exult, and everything in it! Then shall all the trees of the forest sing for joy 13 before the Lord, for he comes, for he comes to judge the earth. He will judge the world in righteousness, and the peoples in his faithfulness.

Isaiah 2:4 (ESV) 4 He shall judge between the nations, and shall decide disputes for many peoples; and they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning hooks; nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war anymore.

His Sovereign Judgment fell on Israel and I believe will fall on the USA

Isaiah 2:6–7 (ESV) 6 For you have rejected your people, the house of Jacob, because they are full of things from the east and of fortune-tellers like the Philistines, and they strike hands with the children of foreigners. 7 Their land is filled with silver and gold, and there is no end to their treasures; their land is filled with horses, and there is no end to their chariots.

Isaiah 2:8–10 (ESV) 8 Their land is filled with idols; they bow down to the work of their hands, to what their own fingers have made. 9 So man is humbled, and each one is brought low— do not forgive them! 10 Enter into the rock and hide in the dust from before the terror of the Lord, and from the splendor of his majesty.

Isaiah 2:11–12 (ESV) 11 The haughty looks of man shall be brought low, and the lofty pride of men shall be humbled, and the Lord alone will be exalted in that day. 12 For the Lord of hosts has a day against all that is proud and lofty, against all that is lifted up—and it shall be brought low;

Isaiah 2:13–16 (ESV) 13 against all the cedars of Lebanon, lofty and lifted up; and against all the oaks of Bashan; 14 against all the lofty mountains, and against all the uplifted hills; 15 against every high tower, and against every fortified wall; 16 against all the ships of Tarshish, and against all the beautiful craft.

Isaiah 2:17–22 (ESV) 17 And the haughtiness of man shall be humbled, and the lofty pride of men shall be brought low, and the Lord alone will be exalted in that day. 18 And the idols shall utterly pass away. 19 And people shall enter the caves of the rocks and the holes of the ground, from before the terror of the Lord, and from the splendor of his majesty, when he rises to terrify the earth. 20 In that day mankind will cast away their idols of silver and their idols of gold, which they made for themselves to worship, to the moles and to the bats, 21 to enter the caverns of the rocks and the clefts of the cliffs, from before the terror of the Lord, and from the splendor of his majesty, when he rises to terrify the earth. 22 Stop regarding man in whose nostrils is breath, for of what account is he?

Romans 1:18–32 (ESV) 18 For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who by their unrighteousness suppress the truth. 19 For what can be known about God is plain to them, because God has shown it to them. 20 For his invisible attributes, namely, his eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly perceived, ever since the creation of the world, in the things that have been made. So they are without excuse. 21 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.

22 Claiming to be wise, they became fools, 23 and exchanged the glory of the immortal God for images resembling mortal man and birds and animals and creeping things. 24 Therefore God gave them up in the lusts of their hearts to impurity, to the dishonoring of their bodies among themselves, 25 because they exchanged the truth about God for a lie and worshiped and served the creature rather than the Creator, who is blessed forever! Amen. 26 For this reason God gave them up to dishonorable passions. For their women exchanged natural relations for those that are contrary to nature; 27 and the men likewise gave up natural relations with women and were consumed with passion for one another, men committing shameless acts with men and receiving in themselves the due penalty for their error.

28 And since they did not see fit to acknowledge God, God gave them up to a debased mind to do what ought not to be done. 29 They were filled with all manner of unrighteousness, evil, covetousness, malice. They are full of envy, murder, strife, deceit, maliciousness. They are gossips, 30 slanderers, haters of God, insolent, haughty, boastful, inventors of evil, disobedient to parents, 31 foolish, faithless, heartless, ruthless. 32 Though they know God's righteous decree that those who practice such things deserve to die, they not only do them but give approval to those who practice them.

If God brought his just wrath against His people Israel.....In His justice, I believe He will do the same to us. I don't see how we cannot expect that.

God is Sovereign over all leaders and all kings.

Although Israel did not always recognize God's sovereign authority, even foreign kings would come to recognize the divine rule of God, not just over Israel, but all nations. After God humiliated Nebuchadnezzar, he confessed that Israel's God has an everlasting dominion that extends to all peoples and inhabitants of the earth.

Daniel 4:1–3 (ESV) 1 King Nebuchadnezzar to all peoples, nations, and languages, that dwell in all the earth: Peace be multiplied to you! 2 It has seemed good to me to show the signs and wonders that the Most High God has done for me. 3 How great are his signs, how mighty his wonders! His kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and his dominion endures from generation to generation.

Following this confession, Daniel describes a coming day when the Son of Man will ride upon the clouds and receive all authority, glory, and a kingdom (Dan 7:13–14).

Daniel 7:13–14 (ESV) 13 "I saw in the night visions, and behold, with the clouds of heaven there came one like a son of man, and he came to the Ancient of Days and was presented before him. 14 And to him was given dominion and glory and a kingdom, that all peoples, nations, and languages should serve him; his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom one that shall not be destroyed.

The same thing happened to Darius the Persian King

Daniel 6:25–27 (ESV) 25 Then King Darius wrote to all the peoples, nations, and languages that dwell in all the earth: “Peace be multiplied to you. 26 I make a decree, that in all my royal dominion people are to tremble and fear before the God of Daniel, for he is the living God, enduring forever; his kingdom shall never be destroyed, and his dominion shall be to the end. 27 He delivers and rescues; he works signs and wonders in heaven and on earth, he who has saved Daniel from the power of the lions.”

When Israel insisted on a human king, God made it clear that they were rejecting Him as their King.

1 Samuel 8:7–9 (ESV) 7 And the Lord said to Samuel, “Obey the voice of the people in all that they say to you, for they have not rejected you, but they have rejected me from being king over them. 8 According to all the deeds that they have done, from the day I brought them up out of Egypt even to this day, forsaking me and serving other gods, so they are also doing to you. 9 Now then, obey their voice; only you shall solemnly warn them and show them the ways of the king who shall reign over them.”

Solomon, the wisest man on earth, learned this truth too. When he looked back over the world that he had totally dominated.....He tells us this truth. .

Proverbs 21 (ESV) 1 The king’s heart is a stream of water in the hand of the Lord; he turns it wherever he will.

Paul knew this truth to be true as well.

Romans 13:1 (ESV) 1 Let every person be subject to the governing authorities. For there is no authority except from God, and those that exist have been instituted by God.

God's Sovereignty is manifested in His Kingdom...Kingdom of Heaven...brought to Earth.

The kingdom is the central message of the New Testament. It is portrayed as God’s sovereign rule, present in the Old Testament law and embodied in Christ. During his earthly ministry, Jesus demonstrated the power and reality of God’s sovereignty and made the Father’s will his mission: “May your kingdom come, may your will be done on earth as it is in heaven”

By demonstrating obedience to the will of the Father, Jesus served as an example to those who would submit to the sovereignty of God.

In the coming age, evil will be destroyed (Rev 19:17–21),

17 Then I saw an angel standing in the sun, and with a loud voice he called to all the birds that fly directly overhead, “Come, gather for the great supper of God, 18 to eat the flesh of kings, the flesh of captains, the flesh of mighty men, the flesh of horses and their riders, and the flesh of all men, both free and slave, both small and great.” 19 And I saw the beast and the kings of the earth with their armies gathered to make war against him who was sitting on the horse and against his army. 20 And the beast was captured, and with it the false prophet who in its presence had done the signs by which he deceived those who had received the mark of the beast and those who worshiped its image. These two were thrown alive into the lake of fire that burns with sulfur. 21 And the rest were slain by the sword that came from the mouth of him who was sitting on the horse, and all the birds were gorged with their flesh.

Heaven and earth will be made new (Rev 21),

Revelation 21:1–5 (ESV) 1 Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and the sea was no more. 2 And I saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. 3 And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, “Behold, the dwelling place of God is with man. He will dwell with them, and they will be his people, and God himself will be with them as their God. 4 He will wipe away every tear from their eyes, and death shall be no more, neither shall there be mourning, nor crying, nor pain anymore, for the former things have passed away.” 5 And he who was seated on the throne said, “Behold, I am making all things new.” Also he said, “Write this down, for these words are trustworthy and true.”

In that New Heaven New Earth and New Kingdom, Jesus will reign forever (Rev 11:15; compare Exod 15:18).

Revelation 11:15–17 (ESV) 15 Then the seventh angel blew his trumpet, and there were loud voices in heaven, saying, “The kingdom of the world has become the kingdom of our Lord and of his Christ, and he shall reign forever and ever.” 16 And the twenty-four elders who sit on their thrones before God fell on their faces and worshiped God, 17 saying, “We give thanks to you, Lord God Almighty, who is and who was, for you have taken your great power and begun to reign.

He will be recognized as the “Lord of lords and King of kings” (Rev 17:14),

Revelation 17:14 (ESV) 14 They will make war on the Lamb, and the Lamb will conquer them, for he is Lord of lords and King of kings, and those with him are called and chosen and faithful.”

So.....God is very clear in His revelation to us the magnitude and all encompassing truth of His Sovereignty.

We understand from God that He alone is the true God with all Authority. Any authority given to humans is DELEGATED authority from God.

God reveals Himself to us in His Word. He makes claims about who He is. He doesn't invite our opinion, our approval or our suggestions....He just states who He is and tells us to decide. He doesn't change to please us. He is. He is...Or as God says repetitively....I AM. David clearly learned this truth.

1 Chronicles 29:10–13 (ESV) 10 Therefore David blessed the Lord in the presence of all the assembly. And David said: “Blessed are you, O Lord, the God of Israel our father, forever and ever. 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. 12 Both riches and honor come from you, and you rule over all. In your hand are power and might, and in your hand it is to make great and to give strength to all. 13 And now we thank you, our God, and praise your glorious name.

So God has clearly revealed His Sovereignty from Genesis to Revelation. He says over and over....this is who I AM. But we really wrestle with this....The issue that is our struggle relates to fairness. We in the West demand that God is fair to every individual....particularly when it comes to salvation. But we know that is not true in almost every other area of God's Reign.

Job challenged God's fairness...he had lived a model life....and God seemingly in a game with Satan....made his life horrible. God took away his family, his health, his possessions....it really didn't seem fair. When Job challenged God we saw God's response.

Jeremiah learned a lesson about God's Fairness....

Jeremiah 18:5–8 (ESV) 5 Then the word of the Lord came to me: 6 “O house of Israel, can I not do with you as this potter has done? declares the Lord. Behold, like the clay in the potter’s hand, so are you in my hand, O house of Israel. 7 If at any time I declare concerning a nation or a kingdom, that I will pluck up and break down and destroy it, 8 and if that nation, concerning which I have spoken, turns from its evil, I will relent of the disaster that I intended to do to it.

In Romans 9 we will see that people once again were challenging God's fairness.

Romans 9:20–21 (ESV) 20 But who are you, O man, to answer back to God? Will what is molded say to its molder, “Why have you made me like this?” 21 Has the potter no right over the clay, to make out of the same lump one vessel for honorable use and another for dishonorable use?

The same thing expressed by Jesus.

Matthew 20:14–15 (ESV) 15 Am I not allowed to do what I choose with what belongs to me? Or do you begrudge my generosity?’

God gives out gifts as God desires. All blessings from God are gifts and He gives as He desires.

Physical Gifting

When it comes to physical appearance....God hasn't been fair. Some people are given what the world considers great beauty and others are not. Some are born with great genetics and others are not.

Some are born to compete as horse jockeys and others as basketball players.

Some have high metabolism others don't.

Some are born with genetic disorders that limit them physically and others are not.

Some are born with all of their senses others are born blind, deaf, or challenged.

Some have been given remarkable physical gifts and others have not.

Is it fair? Doesn't matter. Fairness was left in the garden. Clearly these things are simply God's Sovereign Will. Our God is Heaven and He does as He pleases.

John 9:1–3 (ESV) 1 As he passed by, he saw a man blind from birth. 2 And his disciples asked him, “Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?” 3 Jesus answered, “It was not that this man sinned, or his parents, but that the works of God might be displayed in him.

How warped is that?

Mental Gifting

When it comes to mental gifting....Some have been given enormous intelligence and an uncanny ability to learn and remember. They can consider the depths of physics, languages, communication, electronics....and others can't operate a microwave.

You may educate and train and you will make them better....but never great....you cannot improve on what is not there. Genius is given by God...not man.

God has not made us all alike, but diversified His gifts. One man is fluent in six languages and another struggles learning his native tongue.

Why is this? Because God has asserted his sovereignty over the intellect as well as the body.

Is it fair? Doesn't matter. Fairness was left in the garden. Clearly these things are simply God's Sovereign Will. Our God is Heaven and He does as He pleases.

Life Circumstances

Some people are born to royalty with a silver spoon in their mouth....others are born into the most desperate of poverty with absolutely nothing in their mouth.

Some are born into privilege and wealth with every opportunity....Other seem defeated from the start...born addicted to drugs to teenage parents addicted to drugs.

Some grow up in homes loved by parents, safe and encouraged....others are born to parents who use them, abuse them and berate them.

Some are born with healthy bodies and never see a doctor until very old age.....others are born with diseases and illnesses that severely limit their lives...their opportunities....their freedom.

Some age gracefully and keep their mental faculties while others struggle with reality.

Some are born on this earth during wonderful times of peace and prosperity while others are born into a refugee camp in a war zone.

Some have parents who are healthy and provide a great deal of aid and support to them....others have parents who die from AIDS and can't help them at all.

Is it fair? Doesn't matter. Fairness was left in the garden. Clearly these things are simply God's Sovereign Will. Our God is Heaven and He does as He pleases.

The Gospel

God chose Israel and left the Gentiles in darkness for years.

The Israelites rejected God, continually worshiped false idols, chased after sinful way, and it seems like over a thousand times thumb their noses at God....Yet they were God's people with a Covenant....and other nations...Pagan nations were utterly destroyed by God. Taking our women and children along the way.

Why did God's light of blessing shine on them....and others were engulfed in Spiritual darkness?

Why did some of us arrive in Christian homes fully exposed to God's truth and others are born in places where God's truth can't even be found? Why do some have churches at every corner and others don't? How can two people sit in the same church, listen to the same message, both need salvation and yet only one responds?

Is it fair? Doesn't matter. Fairness was left in the garden. Clearly these things are simply God's Sovereign Will. Our God is Heaven and He does as He pleases.

As I said at the start....we really struggle with the fairness of God because we don't understand His Sovereignty.

We love it when God is sovereign and blesses us.....We love it when He steps into our individual world and pours out his favor.

In other words, we love God's Sovereignty when He agrees with us on how great we are. When He does what we want Him to do. When we are being blessed by God we don't even really think about fairness....We arrogantly believe that God should bless us and in the West we think God must bless us.

We love God's Sovereignty as long as it agrees with ours. We allow God to be God everywhere except when He challenges our claim to being God ourselves.

We love the idea of God in His Worship making planets, stars, animals....We love it when God is in His depository handing out money....We love God's Sovereignty when things work in our favor...In fact, we call good things blessings.

We love God anywhere He wants to be...except when He is on His throne. When He sits upon His throne....Sovereign over all....we begin to squirm and wiggle. Truthfully sometimes we grit our teeth...

When our Enthroned Lord exercises His right to do what He wills with His own.....to dispose of His creatures as He desires for His purposes....As He places His eternal mission of salvation over the temporary life of someone on earth....When He does all of this without consulting and getting the approval of those involved...

That is when we rise up in indignation. We swell up in pride...Like Job we demand of God an explanation that satisfies us.

We ask Sovereign God....How could it be good that my friend died of cancer? That you could have healed them but didn't? God why didn't you stop the Tsunami....the Earthquake....the Tornado....God why don't you protect the children? Why do children get sick? Why God didn't you gift me like them?

Have you ever noticed that we never seem to get an answer for our "Why God?" question?

It is not that God is uncaring....not listening....or punishing you....It is because that question has been asked and answered in Scripture.

No matter what happens in your life....Cancer...Paralysis....Blindness....Deafness....Loss of loved ones....War....Presidential elections....there is one truth that trumps...Pun intended...every event in your life....GOD IS SOVEREIGN

Psalms 115:2–3 (ESV) 2 Why should the nations say, “Where is their God?” 3 Our God is in the heavens; he does all that he pleases.

Romans 8:27–28 (ESV) 28 And we know that for those who love God all things work together for good, for those who are called according to his purpose.

John 16:33 (ESV) 33 I have said these things to you, that in me you may have peace. In the world you will have tribulation. But take heart; I have overcome the world.”

We have to understand....God is Sovereign and God is Love.

His Sovereign Will is always wrapped in His love for us. His love for creation. He knows all, understands all, knows the future and decides all...His decisions are always just...always right and always the best way to accomplish His mission on earth....

Wait a minute...I hear you....How can all the things we just talked about be just? It seems so unfair.

Fairness depends upon your starting point. If everyone on the Titanic is going to drown...and some are saved....is it fair? Probably not...but is it best to save some? Yes

If you believe that everyone on the Titanic must survive no matter what, you will see the lifeboats as unfair. If you believe that everyone on the Titanic is going to drown...then you see the life boats as....well life boats.

Our issue with God's fairness is that we forget that we are all born enemies of God, deserving of death and appropriately and justly sentenced to eternity in Hell. That is our starting point. If God gives us what we truly deserve that is it. No one saved. All go to Hell....and God is just and righteous and loving.

God in His Grace....His unmerited and undeserved favor....has chosen to save some.

It is unfair...maybe. Is it best yes. The term there but by the GRACE of God Go I is a true statement of our reality. We deserve punishment and death. IF some are saved because God chooses to do so....praise God.

God is Sovereign....He is God...He really does as He pleases....We are going to close this sermon by celebrating communion together. I don't know about you...but when I study the Sovereignty of God I begin to understand just how truly blessed I really am. I know what I deserve....I know what I have been saved from.....I know I didn't do it...didn't deserve it....and don't fully understand it.

But one day. Sovereign God decided to prompt my heart with the Holy Spirit. He moved me to listen...He revealed truth to me...He moved me to Jesus...He showed me the way...He did what I could never do... He gave me the faith to believe....the faith to obey and the faith to surrender.

He saved me and I honestly don't know why. I am saved and others are not....and I don't know why God chose to reveal His truth to me. It is a blessing...a gift...unmerited favor....

So as we share communion today....Spend some time thanking Sovereign God for choosing you among so many. Is it fair? No. Is it God's Grace...yes....Let's Pray.