

Systematic Theology: The Power of God

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It's wonderful to gather together on this Tuesday evening and to turn to the most important thing in the world which is the word of God and I'm glad that you're with us here this evening as we continue a study on systematic theology, and particularly studying this past Saturday and also for a couple of Tuesdays yet to come, studying on the attributes of God and this is a very timely study for us. Saturday, just by way of review, we considered the fact that God is invisible, he is infinite, he is immutable and he is independent. God is not like us. He is in a realm all of his own with an essence all of his own that we are not like, and in addition to that we said that God is omniscient and we considered the mental attributes of God, that he is omniscient, that he knows all things, and not only that he knows all things but that he is wise and he knows good goals to set and he knows the good way in order to achieve the infinitely perfect ends that he has established from before the beginning of time. That's a very critical starting point for us especially in what is going on tonight even as we are meeting. It is essential for us to realize that God is independent in his existence, that he is able to do what he wishes, that he knows all things, and he is infinitely wise in the way that he brings them to pass. That's true on a macro universal level of conducting the path of history and it's true in our individual lives as he guides us and takes us by the hand and we fear no evil for he is with us. All of these things are very very essential for us to know and to understand.

Now, tonight we're going to look at what you could call the volitional attributes of God. Volition meaning that which refers to his will, that which he decides to do, and we basically titled this "The Power of God." And I want to preface it with this, is that the way that we are going to approach this topic tonight is a little bit unusual. We'll talk about what God's omnipotence means but I'm going to tell you a lot of things and point out to you a lot of things from Scripture to emphasize the things that God cannot do. Now, that may sound really odd, you know, you're talking about God's power and then you talk about the things that he cannot do, but here's the thing and I might as well just get everything on the table from the start and then we can kind of dive into it here: we must remember that God's essence is simple, it is undivided in that every attribute of God functions in perfect harmony with all of his other attributes. There is nothing in God's wisdom that his power is not able to carry out. There is nothing in his power that would contradict his holiness, his goodness or his grace. God's essence is a single wonderful being that moves forward in perfect harmony with its infinitely perfect attributes and you're going to see why that is so important. When we talk about God's will, when we

talk about his omnipotence, we mean that God has the unhindered power and the ability to do whatever he wishes. God can do whatever he wants to do and he is able to accomplish whatever purposes he has established and no man can hinder him. There is no lack of ability in God to do what he wants to do and so we'll start there and then we'll just kind of go through some scriptures and kind of unpack that and see where the night takes us.

So as we're talking about the volitional attributes of God, we're going to talk about two things and just stay with me as I'm pretty much done with all of the technical stuff insofar as it has been technical already. We're going to talk about the omnipotence of God and then we're going to talk a little bit about the will of God in order to tie these things together, God's will and his ability to fulfill it. And you must, beloved, you must have a high view of God in multiple multiple ways. I've said this many times and I'll say it many times again: it is not enough for you as a Christian when you're in the midst of trials or when you see things unfolding in the world, it is not enough for you to simply say, "Well, God is sovereign." That is true that God is sovereign but where you are going to grow spiritually, where you are going to develop serenity in your soul, where you are going to develop a maturity that allows you to stand like a lighthouse firm with the waves of hurricanes battering against it, what enables you to stand firm in the midst of that is not just that God is sovereign but for you to understand that God exercises his sovereignty in perfect harmony with all of his other attributes. And in light of what we have just seen on Saturday, that means that God sovereign power, God's sovereign work is a work of – watch this – it is a work of sovereign wisdom, and it is a wise sovereignty that he exercises, and it is a loving sovereignty that he exercises, so that when you say God is sovereign, that should be shorthand for you to say that, "Everything that concerns my soul and my life is in the hand of God who is wise and loving and good and therefore nothing that is ultimately bad could ever happen to me." And nothing about God's ultimate purposes could ever go astray, it could never go haywire. That's impossible. It could never be a contradiction of his love. Nothing could ever be a contradiction of his wisdom because he knows all things, he is a God who is perfectly wise, and he has the perfect power to do whatever he wishes.

So we step back from that and we say, knowing something about the revealed character of God from Scripture enables me to live life in a peaceful, calm manner no matter what happens. And to the extent that your life experience and the motions of your heart are different than that or contrary to that, that's not entirely and consistently your experience, then that gap is simply the opportunity for your spiritual growth and that's okay. You know, we all need to grow but we grow by sinking our roots deeply into the fertile soil of the character of God where we find the nutrients which are necessary for us to grow. If you know God, your soul is stable. Period. Whether it is in the extremity of your deathbed or whether it is in the joy of new life, God's power, God's wisdom guarantees it all.

So today we're just going to take a moment to look at the volitional attributes of God and we'll start with point 1: the omnipotence of God. The omnipotence of God, and here we find the bulwark, the fortress for your soul. God's power is known as his omnipotence

and the question is what does that mean, what is God's omnipotence? Let me give you a definition from the book that we've been using. God's omnipotence means that he can, by the mere exercise of his will, bring to pass whatsoever he has decided to accomplish and that if he so desired, he could do even more than that. I want you to notice something: God is all-powerful. He has the power to do whatever he pleases. And let's look at a couple of scriptures to get this kind of off the ground here.

Look at Jeremiah 32 is where we're going to turn to start with the words of Jeremiah which I've often turned to over the years as an encouragement to my own heart. Jeremiah 32:17 says,

17 Ah Lord GOD! Behold, You have made the heavens and the earth by
Your great power and by Your outstretched arm! Nothing is too difficult
for You,

Then over in verse 27, God in a sense echoes those words back to Jeremiah and he says in verse 27, asking the question rhetorically, he says,

27 Behold, I am Yahweh, the God of all flesh; is anything too difficult for
Me?

The implied answer being, "No. There is nothing too difficult for God. He is able to do whatever he pleases."

Turn over to Matthew 26. We're just giving ourselves a smattering of texts to anchor our thoughts on on this matter. Matthew 26:53. We saw in Jeremiah that God was the God of creation, he is the God of all flesh and here in Matthew 26:53, we see that the entire spiritual realm is also at his disposal, his pleasure. Verse 53, Jesus said,

53 do you think that I cannot appeal to My Father, and He will at once put
at My disposal more than twelve legions of angels?

A legion being a troop of about 6,000 men. Jesus said, "It's easy for God to put 72,000 angels at my disposal if he wishes." That's pretty strong. That's pretty powerful. This just gives us a slight measure of the immense ability of God to do whatever he wishes to do.

And you could say this, you could say that the Bible is a 66 book testimony to the omnipotence of God. Think about it: Genesis 1:1, there was nothing in existence and God by the mere exercise of his spoken word and his will says, "Let there be all of these things," and God created the heavens and the earth simply by an exercise of his will. He created everything out of nothing. How much more evidence of his power do we need? You sweep through the whole progress of revelation and you go from Genesis to the last book in the Bible and there at the end of Revelation you find God ending history, wrapping it up by binding the devil forever and ushering in a new heavens and a new earth where righteousness dwells. So from the beginning in Genesis to the end in Revelation, God is simply exercising his power to do whatever he wishes to do. You have

in your hands a 66 book testament to the power of God. Raising up nations and casting them down. Raising the dead. Overthrowing nations. Sending Christ. Christ being crucified and God without diminishment of his power raises him from the dead. Then you remember what he has promised for us, that he'll raise us from the dead.

Think about it in terms of your salvation, beloved, those of you that are truly born again. Do you remember what it was like, do you remember what you used to be like? That foulmouthed, angry, lustful person that was wrapped and locked into sin and unable to do anything to save yourself, dead to God, hateful to God, arrogant, and all of the things that go with the old man, and what did God do by an exercise of his power? By his power he providentially brought the Gospel into the realm of your perception and understanding. You heard the good news. You heard the Gospel that Jesus Christ was crucified for sinners just like you, and he was risen by the power of God, and that he had the promise and the ability to forgive all of your sins if you would repent and turn to him and put your faith in Christ. And God did a miraculous work in your heart and you turned to Christ. You were born again and new life flew out of that and grew out of that. The old man passed away. That foul, sinful creature that you used to be was dead and behold you had new desires, new things coming out of you. You were a new man. People recognized the difference because you were someone new. So great was the power of God, a hidden work in your heart. God had the power to do that. You're a Christian not by your own efforts but by the power of God at work through the Gospel in your heart.

So just with those little bits of illustration, beloved, you should see that one of the primary starting points of your thinking, what are there, there are three primary colors, right? Blue, yellow and red, and from that all other colors flow. Well, one of the primary colors in your thinking about God is that God is omnipotent and that God has the ability to accomplish whatever he desires. He can do whatever he wishes and no one can stay his hand. And if you start from that perspective, then all of a sudden fear is wiped out for you as a Christian because you realize that you're in God's hand. And also, beloved, it's not just the negative of an absence of fear, there is this positive sense of trust and confidence that comes in. You say, "I know the true and living God and the true and living God is omnipotent by which it means he is able to do whatever he desires, and he has stated that his desire is to perfect the work that he has begun in me. And what does that mean? It means it comes out well for me in the end. It could be no other way when a wise, sovereign, loving, good God has saved me. It can only come out in a way that is going to magnify the wisdom and goodness and love and power of God. My life will certainly be a testimony to that in the end." That's the way you should think. If you're not thinking like that as a Christian, you are sinning. You need to repent of not thinking about God in proper lofty ways because this is who God is. There is nothing too difficult for him.

And I realize that it's common in our day and age, it's common for teachers to extol doubt as if it were a virtue and men like to get up and teach and talk about their doubts and, "I don't know this or that about God, and I know you feel the same way." And acting like that's okay. That's not okay. God has revealed who he is. God has made himself known as a God of omnipotent power and a God of omnipotent wisdom. It is our responsibility, it is the responsibility of all men everywhere but particularly within the church, to believe

what God has said about him and to trust him in response. God says, "I'm omnipotent." God says, "I am wise." To which we say, "Yes, Lord, I believe what you have said and I rest my hope and confidence in that." That's the only right way to be. Anything else is falling short of the glory of God and so hopefully all of these things are clear.

Now, with that said, I'm going to address some things that are going to be obvious and clear and compelling, and yet it may be a little bit different than things that perhaps you've heard taught about the omnipotence of God in the past. The biblical doctrine – oh, this is so important – the biblical doctrine of the omnipotence of God is not an assertion that God can do absolutely everything without exception. That's not what God's omnipotence means and it's quite easy to show you that from Scripture. And we've already introduced this this evening but here's what I want you to see and I'm going to go at this at length because I believe that there is an important pastoral point to make and I'm more concerned for the pastoral care of the souls in front of me than trying to give a transcript that could easily be translated into a systematic published theology. I want you to understand these things because it will change your sense of confidence in your God. God's omnipotence operates in perfect harmony with the divine essence. In other words, what God has the power to do is what pleases him and what pleases him is always going to be consistent with his holiness, with his righteousness, with his justice, with his grace, with his wisdom. God would never ever ever use his power in a way that contradicted his wisdom or his goodness. Never. That is an utter impossibility. That cannot happen ever. It never has, it's not happening now, whatever comes out tonight, and it would never happen into the future because God will not and cannot violate his own perfect essence.

So when we talk about God's omnipotence, you should not think about it in the abstract as simply being an exercise of raw power. God's power is exercised in perfect harmony with all of his other attributes and this is easily shown. So let me give you a little checklist here with supporting scriptures of things that God cannot do. God, as we saw on Saturday, is immutable. That means that God cannot change. He cannot change. Go to the last book of the Old Testament where the prophet Malachi and his writings are recorded for us. Malachi 3:6 says,

6 I, the LORD, do not change; therefore you, O sons of Jacob, are not consumed.

God is immutable therefore he cannot change and therefore to speak of God's omnipotence, we need to realize that God cannot change his very divine essence. He would not do that, he cannot do that because it is an impossibility for God to change. We saw that last time.

Now, working out other attributes of God and just kind of thinking through things. These things are all so obvious when you think about them, the problem is that we tend to teach God's attributes in isolation from one another and therefore we think about them in isolation from one another, and that's why you often fall into spiritual difficulties, questions, confusions, doubts and despair is because you're not thinking about God

rightly in all of his attributes. So God is immutable. He cannot change. Secondly, God is eternal which means he cannot die. God is eternal and therefore he cannot die.

Look at 1 Timothy 6 in your New Testament. 1 Timothy 6:16 says that,

16 [God] alone possesses immortality

What is immortality except that he cannot die?

and dwells in unapproachable light, whom no man has seen or can see. To Him be honor and eternal dominion!

Many years ago there was a movement known as the "God is dead" movement. Well, that was foolish from the start. Of course God wasn't dead, he couldn't die. That movement was a self-contradiction and the thing that died was that movement, not God.

Now, along with that God is faithful, which means that God cannot break his promises. Turn over to the right or scroll down on your iPad, 2 Timothy 2. The Bible makes no apologies, makes no hesitancy about suggesting these things that God cannot do. 2 Timothy 2:13,

13 If we are faithless, He remains faithful, for He cannot deny Himself.

Turn over to Titus just another page or two over in your Bible, Titus 1:2 where we see that God is true and therefore God cannot lie. Titus 1:2, actually let's just read verses 1 and 2 to get the sentence in.

1 Paul, a bond-servant of God and an apostle of Jesus Christ, for the faith of those chosen of God and the knowledge of the truth which is according to godliness, 2 in the hope of eternal life, which God, who cannot lie, promised long ages ago,

The truthfulness of God, meaning that he cannot lie, that being central to the fact that he will keep his promises, that he will do what he has said that he will do. Jesus said, "Heaven and earth will pass away but my words will not pass away." There is another aspect of it, what Jesus speaks cannot pass away.

God is holy. He cannot approve evil or even be tempted to sin. In Habakkuk 1:13, the prophet said,

13 Your eyes are too pure to approve evil,

You can't approve evil because you're pure, because you're holy. You could never look with favor and approval upon sin or wickedness. That can't happen.

In James 1, keeping it in the New Testament there, in like manner with Habakkuk, both of these chapter 1, verse 13 which is a helpful little mnemonic device. James 1:13 says,

13 Let no one say when he is tempted, "I am being tempted by God"; for God cannot be tempted by evil, and He Himself does not tempt anyone.

And so all of those examples, there were six of them there if you were counting: God is immutable, he cannot change; God is eternal, he cannot die; God is faithful, he cannot break his promises; God is true, he cannot lie; God is holy, he cannot approve of evil; God is holy, he cannot be tempted to sin. Why am I belaboring this point? Why not just talk about the things that God can do? Well, we've established that God can do whatever he pleases, what you have to see is both sides of that statement. God can do whatever. God can do whatever he pleases and therefore God's power operates in perfect accord with his essence with all of his other attributes. He will never violate his holiness, his truth, his goodness or his divine essence with anything that he does.

What does that mean for you as a Christian in the 21st century? It means that you can trust him no matter what. No matter what's happening personally, no matter what's happening in the world, you can trust him because God is able to do whatever he wishes to do. He can raise up leaders, he can cast them down. He can raise you up, he can cast you down. So in a sense, you know, yes, this means that we trust him and it gives us confidence, it also humbles us before him because we don't know what tomorrow will bring. We realize that God could raise us up, he could just as easily humble us and put us on a hospital bed and leave us there indefinitely. But all the while, even when he is doing the things that are most difficult for us to understand, the things that make us feel like a freak show maybe when life is just so completely beyond our control to be able to do, to realize that God has not abandoned his wisdom, his love or his goodness for us in the process. He is simply taking us through something with wisdom and with power and with love and knowledge in a way that we don't understand so that we never make accusation against the character of God, against the wisdom of God, against the goodness of God because it is clear in our mind, it is established as a bedrock principle of thought never to be violated, never to be questioned, "God is always good. He is always able to do what he wants and if he has deemed it fit for me to go through this time in my life, then even though I don't understand, it must be good, it must be wise, it must be a furtherance of his loving purposes in my life." You see, this changes everything. Once the character of God is settled into your heart like that, then so many of the other questions go away. And the question is not for us that know God, the question is not, "Is God good? Is God loving? Has God forgotten me?" Those questions aren't on the table anymore. The question becomes more simple, the question becomes, "Will I remember the character of God and trust him no matter what?" And that changes the whole perspective.

So what you do when you're going through difficult times that you can't understand, you stand in front of the mirror metaphorically or literally speaking, and you preach to yourself and you say to yourself, "Do you remember the omnipotence of God that he can do whatever he pleases?" Yes, I do. "Do you remember that God is wise in all that he does and that his omniscience and his wisdom are perfect?" Yes, I do. "Do you remember

that he's loving in all of his ways as supremely manifested when Christ gave his life for you on the cross of Calvary and voluntarily suffered for your sins, and voluntarily took on the weight of eternal punishment so that you could be forgiven?" And you ask yourself, "Do you remember that?" And you say, "Yes, yes I do." So you remember wisdom. "Yes, I do." You remember goodness. "Yes, I do." You remember divine love. "Yes, I do." You remember divine omnipotence. "Yes, I do." You remember then that God could deliver you from this situation in a moment if he wanted to. "Yes, I do. I have no questions about the power of God."

But you say, "But this is hard." Alright, now we're at the point where we say, "Therefore, trust him. Therefore, honor him with your trust when you don't understand because there is no surpassing virtue in trusting God when everything is prosperity for you and it is exactly the way that you want it to be." There is no virtue and that. As I've said many times, an unbeliever can be happy and content when life is ordered the way that he wants it to be. Your spiritual opportunity, the call of God on your life, supremely rises to the surface when it's not the way that you want it to be, when life is difficult, painful, and the steps are slow and trudging day after day after day and you say, "I see all of this. I admit it all. But I am going to trust God for his revealed character despite what my circumstances might tempt me to say to the contrary." You must live this way. You must think this way.

And this was the point that God brought Job to, wasn't it, in Job 42? Made that spectacular revelation of himself in Job 38-41 and Job, while he's still is scraping his boils and still grieving the loss of everything that he had and everyone that he loved said, "Lord, I see." Let's go to Job 42 for just a moment here and before God relieved his suffering. You see, this is just incredibly awesome. God revealed himself in chapters 38, 39, 40 and 41, and what was Job's response? Job 42:1,

1 Then Job answered the LORD and said, 2 "I know that You can do all things, And that no purpose of Yours can be thwarted."

"God, I trust you. I see now in light of your revealed character who you are. I know that your purpose can never be thwarted. The way that I questioned you earlier in the book, verse 6, 'I retract, and I repent in dust and ashes.'"

So God is omnipotent. He is able to do whatever he wants and he always acts in accordance with his divine essence. And just almost as a postscript there in the book of Job, once that principle of trust was established and submission was established in Job's mind, God restored everything to him twofold just to show his faithfulness, his love and his goodness to be recorded for millennia thereafter. So, beloved, I just ask you whether you will exercise your own volition in order to trust the God tonight who has revealed himself like this no matter what. That's the challenge that his omnipotence lays before us.

Now, let me just say a word. We addressed this last time on Saturday but let me just say a word about this in terms of how this relates to the person of Christ. Christ was tempted. Christ died on the cross. That's central to our faith. Just understand that those are things

that pertain to his human nature. His divine nature was not tempted to sin. His divine essence never died. So we come once again as we think about these things as they pertain to Christ, that whenever it seems like maybe there's something different about Christ, it's not to question his deity, it's to remember, "Oh yes, he had two natures. He had a human nature and these things operated in the realm of his human nature but did not touch or change his divine essence."

One other thing that I would say about this omnipotence and almost a waste of time to say this but because skeptics like to say these things, it's worthwhile for us to say it: omnipotence does not trifle in logical inconsistencies or impossibilities. God does not make square triangles, for example. That's all I'll say about that.

So we've seen the omnipotence of God and we're dealing with the volitional attributes of God. Let's look, secondly, the will of God, and to see in what way the divine omnipotence is exercised and what is this volitional dynamic in the character and the essence of God. Well, we won't spend a whole lot of time on this because we've addressed it in other places but we can distinguish between the moral will of God and the secret will of God.

Look at Deuteronomy 29:29 with me, if you will. We glanced at this last time. Deuteronomy 29:29, a very very helpful text on this very point about the nature of the will of God. Deuteronomy 29:29 says,

29 The secret things belong to the LORD our God, but the things revealed belong to us and to our sons forever, that we may observe all the words of this law.

There is an aspect of God's will which is revealed in Scripture. It is commanded in Scripture. This is the revelation of God in the law and in the Gospel where he has commanded men what they must do, what they must be, and in the Gospel has commanded us in how we must be saved. This is the revealed will of God or the moral will of God. It is his revealed teaching in Scripture that governs the conduct of men and shows the way of salvation to them. That aspect of God's will is broken every day. Men disobey and violate God's law. That aspect of it is violated.

What is God's secret will, however, and how does it relate to those violations of his moral will? God's secret will, we start to swim in some deep water here, God's secret will is the will of God's decree which is hidden in God and can be known only from its effects. In other words, God's secret will is that exercise of his volition by which he has determined everything that will ever come to pass and Scripture attributes everything that happens to the secret will of God.

Look at Isaiah 46 beginning in verse 9. Isaiah 46:9-10,

9 Remember the former things long past, For I am God, and there is no other; I am God, and there is no one like Me, 10 Declaring the end from

the beginning, And from ancient times things which have not been done,
Saying, 'My purpose will be established, And I will accomplish all My
good pleasure';

God in the clearest most definitive term says, "I will accomplish everything that I have decided to have happen." Before time began, God determined the course of the universe, determined the course of human history, determined the course and the plan in which, and the part that you would play in it. Before time began, God chose those who would believe in Christ. Before time began, God established the outcome of creation so that it would please him in every respect. Ever since Genesis 1:1, God has been taking everything that has been happening and directing it to accomplish exactly what his desire would be. Look, you don't need to look there, we have studied it many times, in Ephesians 1:11, the Apostle Paul said that God works everything according to the counsel of his will. Absolutely everything without exception. Christian, on a night like this, there is no reason for you to worry about what tomorrow's headlines are going to be. God is working out his will. Period. God is accomplishing what he desires.

You say, "But what about sin? Isn't God's will not accomplish when people sin?" Yes, in a moral way this is a violation of what God commanded but understand that the violations of his moral will are governed by his secret will so that even when men are sinning, God is still going to accomplish his purpose no matter what. It's so vital to understand this. Genesis 50:20, Joseph said, "you meant evil against me, but God meant it for good."

Look over at the book of Acts 2. The greatest crime ever committed in human history was the unjust execution of our Lord Jesus Christ. Godless men acting on godless wicked motives trying to kill God who was in their presence in human flesh. And what does Scripture say about it? Acts 2:23, actually go back to verse 22,

22 Men of Israel, listen to these words: Jesus the Nazarene, a man attested to you by God with miracles and wonders and signs which God performed through Him in your midst, just as you yourselves know-- 23 this Man, [watch it] delivered over by the predetermined plan and foreknowledge of God, you nailed to a cross by the hands of godless men and put Him to death.

God's predetermined plan was that Christ would be crucified on the cross. In time, godless men having nothing to do, no desire to fulfill the will of God trying, and actually in their own motives and according to their own wicked desires, to frustrate the purposes of God, crucified Christ in order to silence him. And yet in their sinful ways, God was furthering his secret purpose, his predetermined plan, so that whether it was Joseph and his brothers or whether it was Christ and those who crucified him, we see God carrying out his secret will even in the presence of sin.

And so what do we say about that? God's sovereign will, his sovereign purpose even included the reality of evil and sin. It included that. God didn't have to switch to Plan B in

Genesis 3. Can you imagine how foolish that would be, how foolish that would make God look if only the first two chapters of Genesis were a reflection of his will and then everything from Genesis 3 was just chaos that God never saw coming when he created the heavens and the earth? Sin became the means by which the justice of God could be put on display and in an even greater way, sin became the occasion for God to display his grace. We would know nothing about undeserved favor if there wasn't evil within us on which God could respond in grace to us.

So the will of God should be understood on two different realms: 1 in the moral realm that is violated by our sin, which is never excused, which God never approves of, and yet his secret will where he takes everything that ever happens and works it all to accomplish without fail exactly what he wants to intend and what he has intended from the beginning of time. That's the will of God. That is a manifestation of the volitional nature of God and it is wise and it is good and it is powerful and it is our hope on an evening like tonight.

So let's just wrap this up with a statement, thirdly, I said two things, it turns out there are three: the omnipotence of God, the will of God treated all too superficially here this evening, and then let's just wrap it up with a statement about the sovereignty of God. The sovereignty of God, all of these things supporting this final conclusion. Beloved, now with everything that we've said, now we're in a position to be able as you go out tonight, as you live going forward, now when you say that God is sovereign, what my desire for you to be, what my prayer for you is that now when you use that phrase "sovereignty" in the midst of your sorrows and you comfort yourself by saying God is sovereign, now I want you to see that that is not an abstraction, that you're not simply appealing to an arbitrary aspect of God that he does whatever he wants without regard to how it affects you. Now sovereignty in light of what we've said tonight, should be the sweetest word in your vocabulary because God's sovereignty means this: it means that God has the independence to do as he pleases. He controls his creation so that nothing acts outside the bounds of his will and what that means is that when you realize that his sovereignty is exercised in harmony with his divine essence, that sovereignty means you can be at perfect rest. Every one of you in the room tonight, every one of you hearing this over the live stream or in subsequent media, you should put your head on your pillow tonight with a sense of trust and confidence and you should sleep like a baby, assuming there are no physical causes to make you do otherwise. You should put your head on your pillow and rest in your heart because God is sovereign and his sovereignty is infinitely wise. It is infinitely good. It is infinitely loving. His purposes cannot be thwarted.

And you know, Christian brother, you know, Christian sister, that his sovereign purposes in your life must be good. You know that for certain because how could the one who died for your soul at Calvary possibly ever intend any harm to you? How could that be? How could you ever question? Christ has already done the greater thing in love on your behalf when he suffered the punishment for your sins in his own soul. How could you question his love? You can't. You can't look at the cross. You can't look at the countenance of the one, so to speak metaphorically speaking, suffering on the cross for you and say, "I don't know if you really love me." Oh, it makes me quake to say that just in order to refute it. We don't talk that way. We don't question the love of Christ. His love is proven. It is

established. It is an unalterable fact that shapes your worldview and his sovereignty, his perfect control over all things, his ability to do whatever he pleases and therefore he is exercising his sovereignty toward you in love, in wisdom, in grace, with an ultimate outcome that brings you to eternity with him. Beloved, the volitional attributes of God, his omnipotence, his will, his sovereignty, means that you can trust him. It drives you to trust and it drives you to worship.

Let's close with Romans 11. Turn there with me. Romans 11:33-36. We've turned here a couple of times, we won't apologize for doing it again. This is the spirit of worship with which you should walk out of here this evening, and when you start to look at the news reports, you let this determine the way that you think rather than letting the news reports determine the way that you think. Verse 33,

33 Oh, the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God!
How unsearchable are His judgments and unfathomable His ways! 34 For
who has known the mind of the Lord, or who became His counselor? 35
Or who has first given to Him that it might be paid back to Him again? 36
For from Him and through Him and to Him are all things. To Him be the
glory forever. Amen.

Let's pray together.

Father, indeed we bow low before you. We praise you for your supreme power and we praise you for the undivided divine essence that always exercised that power in harmony with all of your other attributes of wisdom, of holiness, of grace, of truth, of faithfulness. O God, how great is our security in you? Lord, we worship you by trusting you now and, Father, in our trust we worship you. You transcend us and yet you have condescended to us in our Lord Jesus Christ. Thank you. In Christ's name we pray. Amen.

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