

June 14, 2020

God, Sovereign over salvation of souls!

"What God said in the Old Testament"!

Jeremiah 31:31-33 (ESV) Behold, the days are coming, declares the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and the house of Judah, 32 not like the covenant that I made with their fathers on the day when I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt, my covenant that they broke, though I was their husband, declares the Lord. 33 For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, declares the Lord: I will put my law within them, and I will write it on their hearts. And I will be their God, and they shall be my people.

Introduction

We began our sovereignty of God study by asking the question: Is God sovereign?

Daniel 4:34-35 (ESV) At the end of the days I, Nebuchadnezzar, lifted my eyes to heaven, and my reason returned to me, and I blessed the Most High, and praised and honored him who lives forever, for his dominion is an everlasting dominion, and his kingdom endures from generation to generation; 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?"

Psalms 115:3 (ESV) Our God is in the heavens; he does all that he pleases.

Psalms 135:6 (ESV) Whatever the Lord pleases, he does, in heaven and on earth, in the seas and all deeps.

If He is sovereign what is He sovereign over?

1. Good and evil events
2. Sinful acts
3. Free acts of men
4. Chance occurrences
5. Details of our lives
6. Affairs of nations
7. The final destruction of the wicked
8. The salvation of souls

John 1:12-13 (ESV) But to all who did receive him, who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God, 13 who were born, not of blood nor of the will of the flesh nor of the will of man, but of God.

Then we took a couple of weeks looking at why it is that He has to be sovereign over the salvation of souls

Ephesians 2:1-5 (ESV) And you were dead in the trespasses and sins 2 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— 3 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. 4 But God, being rich in mercy, because of the great love with which he loved us, 5 even when we were dead in our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ—by grace you have been saved—

We have embraced what R.C. Sproul said, "there is not a maverick molecule in the entire universe"! We have seen in general that God is sovereign over the salvation of souls!

Jonah 2:8-9 (ESV) Those who pay regard to vain idols forsake their hope of steadfast love.

9 But I with the voice of thanksgiving will sacrifice to you; what I have vowed I will pay.

Salvation belongs to the Lord!

Finally we know what the Scriptures says about God's plans, His decrees and His providence, working through causes to bring about those plans

Psalms 139:16 (ESV) Your eyes saw my unformed substance; in your book were written, every one of them, the days that were formed for me, when as yet there was none of them.

Ephesians 1:4-5 (ESV) Even as 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 to himself as sons through Jesus Christ, according to the purpose of his will.

Today we will continue to look at the "I will's" concerning salvation!

Why does God have to be sovereign over the salvation of souls?

The Old Testament tells us what God is going to do!

The Old Testaments speaks of what God is going to do!

Jeremiah 31:31-33 (ESV) Behold, the days are coming, declares the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and the house of Judah, **32** not like the covenant that I made with their fathers on the day when I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt, my covenant that they broke, though I was their husband, declares the Lord. **33** For this is the covenant that I will make with

the house of Israel after those days, declares the Lord: I will put my law within them, and I will write it on their hearts. And I will be their God, and they shall be my people.

This is one of the most significant passages in Jeremiah

Quoted in Hebrews and alluded to a number of times in the New Testament

Luke 22:20 (ESV) And likewise the cup after they had eaten, saying, "This cup that is poured out for you is the new covenant in my blood.

Jesus refers to the "new covenant in my blood"

It is the Sinai covenant, written on stone, that Jeremiah indicates needs to be renewed by being written on people's hearts

We will see this exact thinking in Ezekiel

Jesus' own sacrificial blood seals the new covenant of our salvation

The putting into the hearts of the people is the transformation by which the covenant promise will be fulfilled

It means believing in him, trusting him, and obeying him in gratitude for salvation

Again it is not to get Him to die but it is in response to His having died and paid our penalty and bought our salvation

These verses in Jeremiah and Ezekiel perfectly describe Christians, who know God internally through regeneration and who have had their sins wiped away by his gracious provision

John 17.3

Ezekiel 36:24-27 (ESV) I will take you from the nations and gather you from all the countries and bring you into your own land. 25 I will sprinkle clean water on you, and you shall be clean from all your uncleannesses, and from all your idols I will cleanse you. 26 And I will give you a new heart, and a new spirit I will put within you. And I will remove the heart of stone from your flesh and give you a heart of flesh. 27 And I will put my Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes and be careful to obey my rules.

This is a powerful picture of the new life that God gives to his people when they come to him in faith. What is needed is not simply a new ethical direction or a decision to live a better life.

What is needed is "a new heart, and a new spirit"—and not a new heart created in some self-generated way.

But one given by God: "I will give you a new heart" (v-26)

The same language that we have already looked at in Ephesians 2.4

We are people whose hearts are naturally made of stony rebellion toward God.

No one is any different.

Romans 3:10-12 (ESV) as it is written:

"None is righteous, no, not one;

11 no one understands;

no one seeks for God.

12 All have turned aside; together they have become worthless;

no one does good,

not even one."

None are exempt from this

Our only hope of salvation is for God, by the power of his Holy Spirit, to perform the miracle of removing those stony hearts and giving us "hearts of flesh"

We must be given a new heart that responds to him and loves him and desires to know him

We are dead in our transgressions, and we need to be brought from death to life

June 29 we will see what Jesus says about being born again

We are radically transformed from the inside out

It is such a change that even our desires change

Phil 2:13, Romans 6:19-20

So what can we do to bring about this change?

Beat on our chests and say O God have mercy on me and save my soul

Jeremiah 29:11-13 (ESV) For I know the plans I have for you, declares the Lord, plans for welfare and not for evil, to give you a future and a hope. 12 Then you will call upon me and come and pray to me, and I will hear you. 13 You will seek me and find me, when you seek me with all your heart.

Note how prayer works

God tells us what He is going to do

Then He tells us how to pray

Tell Him what He has said He is going to do

Then pray and ask Him to do it in our lives

Claim the promise that those who seek God with a whole heart will find him

Prayer is not trying to get God to do something he might not otherwise do

It is aligning our thoughts, desires, and will with God's

Our Father which are in heaven...

Who shall have the glory--the worm or Jesus?

(Letters of William Romaine, 1714-1795)

I received your letter, and think you overlook our ever adorable Jesus, in setting any value upon a poor, dirty worm such as myself.

If His grace raised this poor, dirty worm from a dunghill and set it upon a throne with His princes, who shall have the glory--the worm or Jesus? Shall any of His due praise be given to the worm? God forbid!

As vile and base as I am--yet He lets me approach Him and converse with Him freely.

He condescends to admit me into fellowship with Him; and He opens His treasures and says, "All these are yours. I bought them for you with the price of My blood, but I give them to you as a free gift!"

There is not one thing that thwarts your will, that is not in God's will-(Letters of William Romaine, 1714-1795)

My dear friend,

Your frequent afflictions are His sweet lessons. It is the proper work of the grace of Jesus to humble the proud sinner, to make him and to keep him sensible of his needs, convinced always that he has not any good of his own and cannot possibly of himself obtain any--but what he must be receiving every moment out of the fullness of Jesus.

All providences, sicknesses, losses, successes--are only so far blessings, as they lead us more out of ourselves, into the fullness of Jesus.

The Lord having appointed you for His heavenly kingdom, has also appointed all the steps which are to lead you there. Your every affliction is in the covenant. Your sicknesses, your failings, your disappointments--there is not one thing that thwarts your will, that is not in God's will. Nothing can befall you but what is . . . divinely ordered, contrived for you by infinite wisdom, brought upon you by infinite love!

Oh, for eyes to see, for a heart to receive all God's dealings with you in this covenant view. How sweet would be your many trials, if you found them all appointed and managed for you by the best of friends! Learn to receive them thus.

To the care of His dear loving heart I commend you and yours,

William Romaine