

Is God sovereign? In what way is He sovereign and what does that sovereignty include? What does it mean in practice that God is sovereign? All these are important questions that most of us are not aware of, but all people have an answer inside of them based on which they act and live their lives, of which they might be aware of or not.



The Sovereignty of God is a fundamental doctrine of Christianity that must be understood properly if you want victory in your life.

Religion has invented a new meaning for the word “sovereign,” which basically means that God controls everything. Nothing can happen outside of what He wills or allows. That means God determines everything that happens in the world, either good or bad. That makes Him ultimately the origin of evil. However, there is nothing in the actual definition that states that.

For the sake of clarity, I looked up “sovereign” on www.dictionary.com. Here’s how it defines the adjective form of the word:

royal

having supreme rank, power, or authority

supreme; preeminent; indisputable

greatest in degree; utmost or extreme

being above all others in character, importance, excellence, etc.

efficacious; potent...

I completely agree that God is Sovereign, if we’re talking about these dictionary definitions. God is royal. God has supreme rank, power, and authority. There is none higher or more powerful than Him. He is the greatest, the utmost. He is above all others in character, importance, and excellence. He is efficacious (effective) and potent (powerful).

However, when some people say, “God is Sovereign,” they mean that they can chalk any kind of weirdness that happens up to a mysterious God they don’t know very well. When others say “God is Sovereign,” they actually mean that everything that happens is the will of God. It doesn’t matter if this occurrence is totally against common sense, against the Biblical picture of God and against His Character and Nature, against all His promises, against what we see in Heaven and in the Garden, against the perfect image of God that Jesus provided, and against all that Christ accomplished for us on the cross— they think God did it all.

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Sovereign Does Not Mean Inconsistent

Some people think that "sovereignty" means God is some kind of cosmic loose cannon. Regarding healing, for instance, some people say that sometimes God heals and sometimes He doesn't. "How can you pretend to know what God wants? You're not God! God is Sovereign, after all." In other words, they're saying, "God is inconsistent." But they must not know that God has already clearly revealed in His Word that His will is always healing. Period. And He never goes back on His Word. I can therefore confidently state that God will do what He says He will do.

Psalm 89:34 (NKJV)

³⁴ My covenant I will not break, nor *alter the word* that has gone out of My lips.

Psalm 119:89 (NKJV)

⁸⁹ Forever, O Lord, *Your word is settled in heaven.*

Isaiah 40:8 (NKJV)

⁸ The grass withers, the flower fades, but *the word of our God stands forever.*"

Numbers 23:19 (NKJV)

¹⁹ "God is not a man, that He should lie, nor a son of man, that He should repent. *Has He said, and will He not do? Or has He spoken, and will He not make it good?*

When God says something, we can bank on it! When God declared that He gave earth to the children of men, and that we are to have dominion over all the works of His hands, He meant it, and He won't change that. When He says that Healing is His will, and that it's the children's bread, He meant it, and He won't change it! Listen, "sovereign" does not mean, "unreliable," or "inconsistent." God does not just do random, unpredictable things— some good, some bad, some indifferent. God is steady. God is sure. God never changes. His holy and loving character and nature can be clearly seen and known. He has clearly revealed many aspects of His will in His Word. His Word contains promises of what He will do for us. His Word is the basis for true faith. If we believe His Word, we can confidently expect God to come through. God is reliable!

I want to address three myths or half-truths that may need to be rooted out of your belief-set.

Myth #1: “God Is In Control of Everything”

There is perhaps no more damaging lie than the belief that God is in control of everything and that He is the reason behind everything that happens. You hear stuff like this all time:

“I got cancer but God is sovereign. He permitted this to happen to teach me something, to make me a better person.”

“God took my baby. I guess he needed another angel in heaven.”

“I lost my job. Perhaps God took it because I was enjoying it too much.”

Statements like these are ignorant. If God was in control of everything, then he would be responsible for all the evil in our world – rape, murder, child molestation, sickening torturous diseases, genocides, pornography, sex trafficking— it doesn't matter what it is— they say He decreed and ordained all of it. But God is not the author of evil. In Him there is no shadow at all. The Bible never says God is in control. Instead, it says stuff like this:

1 John 5:19 (NKJV)

¹⁹ We know that we are of God, and the whole world lies *under the sway of the wicked one*.

Much of the world is under the influence of evil. It remains captive to what the New Testament writers called “the power of darkness.” Yes, Satan was defeated and disarmed at the cross, but his influence persists wherever the light of the gospel is not seen. The problem with thinking “God is in control” is it makes us passive spectators in the ride of life. We'll just sit there and take whatever life hands us saying, “C'est la vie. God is in control. It'll work out.” The truth is that God is not in control of everything. The good news is that His sphere of influence increases as we, His children, shine in a dark world. He has given us His authority to resist the devil and his evil influence. We have been empowered to heal the sick, raise the dead, drive out demons and otherwise reveal the gospel of His kingdom in dark places. That is because only beings with a physical body have authority on earth. That is why Satan and his demons are looking to possess and influence people, to have authority to do their things on earth. That is why the body of the new creation in Christ has become the Temple of the Holy Spirit and the Holy Spirit inhabits it forever. God cannot do anything on earth without the cooperation of man. That is why also Jesus had to come on earth in a physical body. That is why Jesus' coming and birth had to be announced ahead by the mouth of God's prophets. One of the big reasons for God giving Christians the speaking in tongues is to allow Him to do His work more freely on the earth through their mouth.

Myth #2: “God Is Sovereign”

Sovereign Does Not Mean “Control Freak” When some people say, “God is Sovereign,” they actually mean that “Everything that happens is God's will.” They believe that people are essentially puppets and pawns with no influence on the world whatsoever. In other words, they think that God's will is automatic and unavoidable— that everything that happens is the will of God, by His decree and command.

To say something is God's will is to say that He chose it; and to say that He chose it is to say that He is responsible for it. To say He is responsible for it... is... Be careful!!! Let's break this theory down to its most basic idea. If everything that happens is God's decree and will, then God is responsible for— and therefore guilty of— sin. Come on, does that make any Biblical sense whatsoever? Is God Holy or not? A Holy God is the God of the Bible, and a Holy God is not guilty of sin.

Consider the following:

It was not God's will for Adam to eat from the forbidden tree (Genesis 2:17), but Adam ate.

God is not willing that any perish (2 Peter 3:9), yet people perish.

God commands all people everywhere to repent (Acts 17:30), yet many don't.

You don't have to read more than three chapters into the Bible to realize that Almighty God, the Supreme Ruler of all, does not always get what He wants. How is this possible? This verse explains it:

Psalm 115:16 (NKJV)

¹⁶ The heaven, even the heavens, are the Lord's; but *the earth He has given to the children of men.*

God is Lord of the universe, but we are little lords of our own little worlds. This is God's gift to us – the freedom to choose how we live. The problem is, we often make choices contrary to God's will.

Why would Jesus tell us to pray, "Your Kingdom come, Your will be done, on earth as it is in Heaven" (Luke 11:2), if His will was already being done? Why would He tell us to pray for something we are already experiencing? That would make this prayer a purposeless exercise. Heaven looks like God's will. He wants it to be that way on earth. We have to pray in order for it to be done, which means it isn't already being done. There are things happening here that are not the will of God, or the Lord's prayer would be meaningless. There are opposing influences (Satan and demons, fallen Creation, and the will of men not yielded to God) still to be brought in line with His will.

Also, there are 10 times in the New Testament where the Lord mentions those believers who "overcome" (1 John 5:4-5; Rev.2:7, 11, 17, 26, 3:5, 12, 21; 21:6). In Romans 8:37, He calls us "more than conquerors." The obvious question is— If God's will is already being done, then what are we overcoming and conquering? God? His will? Of course not! We are overcoming and conquering the forces that oppose God, His will, and us— His people.

Look at what the Scripture says in Ephesians:

Ephesians 6:12 (NKJV)

¹² For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places.

Why are we wrestling? If God's will is automatic, then there is no need to fight the devil, right? Wrong! These "spiritual hosts of wickedness" are obviously doing something God opposes, or He wouldn't be having us "wrestle against" them. If they were doing God's will, and we wrestled against them, then we would be wrestling against God Himself. Was God saying we should fight against Him? Of course not!

The truth is that God is not sovereign in the sense that He always gets what He wants. Fact is, His will is not always done. The good news is that He will write the final chapter of human history and for those who trust Him all things will work out for good. And the really good news is that we can walk in the will of God here and now with the aid of the Holy Spirit. It's the best way to live.

Myth #3: "God could've stopped this from happening but

He didn't"

A boy takes a loaded gun to school and God doesn't stop him. An earthquake flattens a city and God apparently does nothing. What kind of God is this?! The "God could've stopped this but didn't" chestnut is another way of saying, "This bad thing is God's fault. He allowed it to happen." Like all the lies from above, there's a measure of truth behind this. Everything that happens, happens because God gave us the freedom to do what we like, even the freedom to hate Him, kill our brothers, and then blame Him for what we did. Of course, we look like fools when we do this. We look like Adam who blamed God for giving him a woman who led him into sin (Gen 3:12). We are masters at playing the blame game. When something bad happens we blame our genes, our parents, our spouses, or our kids. We blame the government, the system, immigrants, Communists, so we might as well go the whole hog and blame God. "I got sick. God allowed this to happen. God is at fault."

Jesus, on the other hand, never blamed anyone. He just took responsibility for other people's messes and fixed them. Believe the lie that God is behind everything that happens and you'll end up in the ash heap of life licking your wounds like a perplexed Job. You'll bend over whenever the devil wants to kick you. Who wants to live like that?

The truth is God doesn't always stop bad things from happening. The good news is that sometimes you can. You can bring the weight of His purposes to bear on your circumstances simply by trusting in Him. You can walk through the valley of the shadow of death without fear knowing that He is with you. Life doesn't have the last word when you're walking in the spirit.

A Simple Test

To see how well you are getting this, ask yourself this question: Which of the following two types of Jesus is found the Bible?

Jesus #1 sat around powerless, making excuses and doing nothing to help those who had been made sick by God.

Jesus #2 went around in the power of the Spirit doing good and healing all who were oppressed by the devil.

Hopefully you know the second Jesus is true (Acts 10:38). Yet many of us look more like the first Jesus. We're not walking in the power of the Spirit, we're not healing the sick, but we're making excuses. Chief among them is this one, "God is in control. It's His fault, not ours." James said, "resist the devil and he will flee from you." It really is that simple. We resist, he flees. But we won't resist if we think God is doing the devil's work and making us sick, killing our kids, and robbing us blind.

God is not making you sick and poor! He is not the reason you lost your money, your job, your marriage, or your kids. These are the tragedies of a life cursed by Adam's sin. But the good news is that one greater than Adam has come and He has given you authority to proclaim the good news of His kingship to all creation.

Are you sick? Talk to your sickness about Jesus by whose stripes you were healed (1 Pet 2:24).

Are you poor? Talk to your bank account about your rich King who became poor so that through His poverty you might become rich (2 Cor 8:9).

Have you been robbed, discouraged, and beaten by life? Then be like David and strengthen yourself in the Lord your mighty God (1 Sam 30:6).

Why did Jesus come? Did He come to help us understand why God never lifts a finger to help? No! Jesus came to destroy the works of the devil (1 John 3:8). In His name go and do likewise.