

The Value of the Doctrine of the Sovereignty of God

Is. 42:8 I am the LORD: that is my name: and my glory will I not give to another, neither my praise to graven images.

Since August we have been studying together this mighty subject of the Sovereignty of God. It is a truth, - a doctrine, - that ought to be of the highest and greatest importance to every child of God. Our faith stands or falls depending upon our consideration of this subject. There is no negotiation about it, there is no compromise, there is none of this ... “Well, that’s what you believe, I believe something different”. The Bible condemns that type of wriggling for there is no room for manoeuvre ... The truth of the doctrine of the Sovereignty of God is at the pinnacle of all the doctrines and must be valued by the believer as the most precious of the Bible’s truths.

Some people say we don’t need doctrine for it’s far too divisive ... and so it is, - *but the Bible says it’s necessary to divide truth from error*. Where you have an absence of doctrine anything goes ... error reigns! An absence of doctrine is at the heart of the ecumenical movement and all such movements for ecclesiastical integration. ... And what happens is this ... the latest and most popular Christian fad arises and becomes the ‘order of the day’.

On the other end of the scale, though, there are those who adhere so rigidly to their doctrine that they are in danger of becoming almost like the Pharisees. Their doctrine has stunted their spiritual growth and they have become a shameful advertisement for Christianity because they have become most miserable ... hardly being able to manage a smile on their faces!

Approaching the end of his ministry, Moses spoke to the congregation of Israel, Dt. 32:1 Give ear, O ye heavens, and I will speak; and hear, O earth, the words of my mouth. 2 My doctrine shall drop as the rain, my speech shall distil as the dew, as the small rain upon the tender herb, and as the showers upon the grass: 3 Because I will publish the name of the LORD: ascribe ye greatness unto our God. 4 He is the Rock, his work is perfect: for all his ways are judgment: a God of truth and without iniquity, just and right is he.

You see, doctrine is truth ... God's truth as He has made it known through the Bible ... that, - in the words of Moses, - it would be 'published' to the nations. One of these modern-day prophets can stand up and give you their 'truth', - but if it doesn't match the Word of God it is plainly 'error'. Paul told Timothy, [I Tim. 4:13 Till I come, give attendance to reading, to exhortation, to doctrine. ... 16 Take heed unto thyself, and unto the doctrine; continue in them. ... II Tim. 3: 16 All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness \(notice the order!\) ...](#) And Jesus said about pure doctrine, [Jn. 8:32 ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.](#) That is the effect it has!

"It is one thing to learn a new spiritual truth, but quite something else to practise that truth in the everyday experiences of life. Satan does not care how much Bible truth we learn so long as we do not live it. Truth that is only in the head is purely academic and never will get into the heart until it is practised by the will. ... Satan knows that academic truth is not dangerous, but *active* truth is." (Warren Wiersbe)

Read all of Paul's epistles and you will find he always begins with doctrine. *Doctrine sorts the person out!* If they don't want to listen to the doctrine at the beginning of his epistles, the remainder of those epistles is of no real advantage or value. You don't say to God, "I'll take that bit ... and I'll take that bit ... but I'll not accept that bit!"

Of all the doctrines the Bible presents to us, - in its infallibility and inerrancy, - the most important and of the highest value is this doctrine of the Sovereignty of God. Here, - very simply, - is what it does ...

IT CONCENTRATES MY MIND UPON GOD

- * [Though man may strive to go beyond the reef of space, To crawl beyond the distant glimmering stars, This world's a room so small within my Master's house, The open sky but a portion of His yard.](#)
- * [Chorus: How big is God, how deep and wide His vast domain. To try and tell these lips can only start. He's big](#)

enough, to rule this mighty universe, Yet small enough to live within my heart.

- * When I look into the Bible and draw from it what it says about God I would never ever be able to exaggerate or overstate the magnitude of Who He is.
- * I could never draw you a picture, - with human words, - of the vastness of His Person and His capabilities. I couldn't do it adequately because human words are so limited and we are so restricted in our considerations.
- * Many is the scientist, - with all his cleverness and intelligence, - completely incapable of grasping hold of the ability of God to create the world, the worlds, the universe and the universes.
- * They can't understand it for the same reason *any* unbeliever can't understand it. They throw up all types of stupid and idiotic theories of Darwinism and evolutionism ... that if they had the good wit and good judgment to study objectively they would see their theories make no sense at all!
- * Look what Isaiah said, [Is. 42:5](#) Thus saith God the LORD, he that created the heavens, and stretched them out; he that spread forth the earth, and that which cometh out of it; he that giveth breath unto the people upon it, and spirit to them that walk therein.
- * Every little plant God puts in its place and causes it to grow. When the egg hatches and the little bird appears ... God put it there.
- * When the storms and the lightning and tornadoes and earthquakes and hurricanes and the floods strike ... that is God at work!
- * When God had me born He had me born in Northern Ireland, He had me brought up in a family that brought me to church and Sunday School. He had me come into contact with the Gospel. ... *None of that was chance!* That is the way He worked it out 'at His desk' in Heaven when He drew up His eternal plan.
- * When His Son died on a middle cross of Calvary, - *that* wasn't chance either, or bad luck. Jesus didn't happen to be in the wrong place one day at the wrong time.
- * But Paul in writing to the Church in Corinth, - and such a hotch-potch they were, - he wrote, [I Cor. 8:6](#) But to us there is

but one God, the Father, of whom are all things, and we in him; and one Lord Jesus Christ, by whom are all things, and we by him.

- * Do you see the Sovereignty of God? ... Don't say to me, "Yes ... *but*" ... because if there is a 'but' in the sentence you haven't seen yet what the Bible clearly teaches about Him.
- * Just stop at the "Yes" and marvel at what the Prophets, the Psalms, the Gospels, the Epistles ... what all of the Bible in its complete entirety says about Him ... and then consider that there is still so much more you have to learn about Him that we must keep on learning right into Glory!
- * Yes, the value of the doctrine of the Sovereignty of God is this ... that **it concentrates my mind and my heart upon God.** ... Going to the other end ...

IT CORRECTS MY VIEW OF ME

- * Ignorance of this doctrine brings insult to God, - when a professing child of God rejects this doctrine of His Sovereignty they are in danger of incurring the displeasure of Almighty God.
 - * God in His Word tells us how capable He is; ... then the professing child of God comes along and contradicts what He says.
- * It is a dangerous thing to argue against God or set out to even inadvertently undermine Him.
 - * For striking the rock when he shouldn't have Moses was not permitted to enter the Promised Land.
 - * For claiming he never knew Jesus Peter was kept away from the cross ... and could only watch from a distance.
- * Just before the summer we took a look at the Doctrines of Grace.
- * We began by looking at the corruption of the soul. The soul and heart, - the Bible teaches us, - is completely beyond repair; ... it cannot be restored or mended.
- * And yet, how is it that the false good works gospel of Arminianism convinces many they have to have some measure of initial involvement in their salvation, - "It's me that has got to get myself to believe ... that is the part *I* have to play! There is so much God has to do ... but there is also something I have to do too otherwise He couldn't save me!"

- * It's a damnable error that sets out to rob God of the truth that "Salvation is of the Lord!"
- * I'll tell you what the Bible says I could contribute towards my salvation, - absolutely nothing, for [Prov. 14:12](#) *There is a way which seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death.*
- * When I recognise even a small part of the Sovereignty of God and how it was He accomplished my salvation at Calvary I daren't even dare (!) to try to say to Him, "God, I'm saved only because I decided to follow Jesus". I'm saved ... because *God decided* to save me!
- * God could have had me born in the jungles of Africa and I never would have heard I needed to be saved.
- * He could have had me born in some tenement flat in the Gorbals or in Easterhouse and by the time I was twelve or thirteen I would have been high on drugs ... and that is how my life would have gone.
- * God could have had me believing in a salvation that began with me and depended all on me ... *but He didn't!*
- * As a young boy of only 11 He showed me I was heading towards a lost eternity in Hell and He showed me that only through saving faith in the Lord Jesus Christ would I escape.
- * I can't even take the glory in saying I believed because I worked it out myself ... because I never would have worked it out myself were it not for the quickening and awakening power of the Holy Spirit.
 - * I would never have believed if God had not worked in me to believe.
- * You see, I can't take *any* glory for my salvation. When I look at Him, and when I concentrate my mind on Him it shows me how far away I must have been.
- * Yes, I believed in Him by saving faith but it was His Sovereign Grace that drew near to me and warmed my heart to believe.
- * This subject, - which I hope you can tell I love, - **concentrates my mind upon Him** and it also **corrects my view of me** into accepting my powerlessness to save myself and that salvation is all of Him.

- * Well, ... when He has done so much for me then with confidence I am able to say with Paul, [II Tim. 1:12 I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day. ...](#)

IT COMMITS MY WAYS TO HIM

- * When you consider your salvation in Christ it humbles you and it puts you in your place. There is no ground for boasting, except that all our boasting is in God Who saves us. He gets the glory. [Ps. 23:1 The LORD is my shepherd; I shall not want. 2 He maketh me to lie down in green pastures: he leadeth me beside the still waters. 3 He restoreth my soul: he leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake.](#)
- * It keeps you humble for you see you have nothing of yourself to boast about ... and if God hadn't touched your life you would be on the road to hell.
- * I love the old Puritan doctrine of *Preterition*. It teaches that all mankind was walking down the road to hell, away from God, and then God comes along and in mercy and grace He lifts out from that broad road those whom He will save.
- * He has placed our feet now on a different path, [Dt. 33:27 The eternal God is thy refuge, and underneath are the everlasting arms.](#)
- * He went and He found you ... and it took Him by way of the cross. And from the cross He saw you wallowing in the pit of filth and mire and the Bible tells you He reached down and [Ps. 40:2 He brought me up also out of an horrible pit, out of the miry clay, and set my feet upon a rock, and established my goings. 3 And he hath put a new song in my mouth, even praise unto our God. ... Do you see ... I wouldn't even have a new song if it wasn't for Him giving one to me!](#)
- * There is absolute security in His grip. The hand that made creation is the hand in which you are firmly held ... and He will never let you go.
- * If you are trusting in your own works and in your own form of salvation the grip it has on you is only temporal, - it is only for as long as *you* can keep it yourself.
- * What a difference in God's Gospel of Grace, - it's all of Him, and nothing of me. He keeps me in the salvation that He has won for me at Calvary.

- * Do you realise too that it means that long after the foundations of this world will have collapsed you will still be secure in Christ!
- * He is a great God and He wills only that which is good, and His will is irreversible and irresistible. He is perfect in everyway ... and He is my Heavenly Father.
- * He is in control of every footstep and every breath, - our next moment is a gift from Him! ... That is how it is that we can confidently **commit our ways**.

CONCLUSION When you are talking about this subject of the Sovereignty of God ... where do you stop? ... when do you stop? ... *how* do you stop?! ... because you feel there is always so much more to say!

- * I encourage you to read the Bible and what it teaches about this subject of the doctrine of the Sovereignty of God. Everything God does is within this context.
- * I encourage you to read men who are convinced of these truths.
 - * Stay away from any of them that undermines God's Sovereignty or gives you a part to play that would set out to rob Him. Be careful not to be *carried about with ever wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive* (Eph. 4:14).
- * When you think about this subject, - think about it often, **concentrate your mind upon God**, - and Who He is, what He has done, What He does, what He is capable of doing, - and, in case you've got it wrong, make sure to **correct your view of yourself** so that you are not hankering after any of the glory, - whether you are meaning to or not.
- * And then you will have the beautiful confidence to be able to **commit your ways unto Him** and He will direct thy paths.
- * *How big is God, how deep and wide His vast domain. To try and tell these lips can only start. He's big enough, to rule this mighty universe, Yet small enough to live within my heart.*
- * I trust that God has made more of Himself known to you through our simple study over these recent months of this greatest of subjects, **the Sovereignty of the Almighty and Everlasting God**. Amen.