

The Sovereignty of God In Salvation Our Response: Part 5 – Lesson 2

The Sovereign King

God made the world by His own power out of nothing and is, even now, sustaining everything by His powerful Word. God is *the sovereign king* above all powers and authorities.

Psalm 103:19: The LORD has established His throne in the heavens; And **His sovereignty rules over all.**

God possesses *absolute dominion* and authority over all things. He sits on a “*throne in the heavens!*” How ridiculous it would be to say that God created the universe, but does not control what takes place in it. *The truth is that God not only controls nature and history, but He sustains the entire universe by His power, and orders the events of His entire creation to accomplish His purpose and plan.* Everything that happens in the world happens at the express will of this God who rules the world and all who are in it.

Psalms 47:7-8: ⁷For God is the King of all the earth; Sing praises with a skillful psalm.

⁸**God reigns over the nations,** God sits on His holy throne.

He is the “*Lord of Heaven and Earth*” (Acts 17:24). He *decreed* everything that happens in the world (see “The Decrees of God”). Even the evil in the world, which God hates, exists to achieve His eternal purposes that will, without a doubt, come to pass.

Psalms 135:5-6: ⁵For I know that **the LORD is great, And that our Lord is above all gods.**

⁶**Whatever the LORD pleases, He does,** In heaven and in earth, in the seas and in all deeps.

God does not merely permit the events of human history to occur; He ordained them from eternity past (foreordination). He is also *actively involved* in bringing them to pass (providence), fulfilling all of His plans and purposes.

Proverbs 16:4: **The LORD has made everything for its own purpose,** Even the wicked for the day of evil.

That God’s divine purpose could meet with frustration is *unthinkable*. Failure of God’s purpose would be failure of His sovereignty. If God’s sovereignty could fail He would *not* be God. Scripture is very clear about this.

Ephesians 1:11-12: In Him ¹¹also we have obtained an inheritance, having been predestined **according to His purpose who works all things after the counsel of His will,** ¹²to the end that we who were the first to hope in Christ should be to the praise of His glory.

The fact that God controls all events is *a main theme of the Bible*. Scripture consistently testifies that God is continually working out His purposes for the display of His glory, name and power. God is bringing His world to an *expected end*, which He purposed from all eternity. At the appointed time, all earthly powers and authorities will be brought under His sovereign authority, His purposes will be accomplished, and all will be at rest forever in the Kingdom of God!

Isaiah 46:9-11: ⁹Remember 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**”; ¹¹Calling a bird of prey from the east, The man of My purpose from a far country. **Truly I have spoken; truly I will bring it to pass. I have planned it, surely I will do it.**

Question #216: From Psalm 103:19, 47:7-8, 135:5-6; Proverbs 16:4; Ephesians 1:11-12; and Isaiah 46:9-11, record specific words and phrases that emphasize God’s sovereign kingship over all things. _____

Question #217: Prayerfully consider and record how this aspect of God’s being and nature impacts your relationship with Him. _____

A Devoted Love

Because God is infinitely valuable and worthy of worship, our only appropriate response to Him is intense commitment rooted in love and devotion. Thus, Jesus *summed up* God’s commandments like this:

Matthew 22:36-40: ³⁶“Teacher, which is the great commandment in the Law?”

³⁷And He said to him, “You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind.” ³⁸This is the great and foremost commandment. ³⁹The second is like it, ‘You shall love your neighbor as yourself.’

⁴⁰On these two commandments depend the whole Law and the Prophets.”

Mark 12:28-31: ²⁸And one of the scribes came and heard them arguing, and recognizing that He had answered them well, asked Him, “What commandment is the foremost of all?” ²⁹Jesus answered, “The foremost is, ‘Hear, O Israel! The Lord our God is one Lord; ³⁰and you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and will all your soul, and with all your mind, and with all your strength.’ ³¹The second is this, ‘You shall love your neighbor as yourself.’ There is no other commandment greater than these.”

Jesus identifies the “foremost commandment”—our ultimate responsibility as Christians—as *loving God with all our might*. Running a close second is loving our neighbors as we love ourselves. In other words, says Jesus, this is the meaning and application of the whole Bible for us, to love God! This, says the Lord, is the “*great and foremost commandment*.” In other words, this is what is **MOST** important in life, the main thing, the first thing, the great thing, the foremost thing, the thing which is front and above all others. Jesus says “*On these two commandments depend the whole Law and the Prophets*.” The entire Old Testament, all 39 books, all 929 chapters, 23,214 verses, all 590,439 words says Jesus “*depend on these two commandments*.”

Mark 12:32-33: ³²And the scribe said to Him, “Right, Teacher, You have truly stated that He is One; and there is no one else besides Him; ³³and to love Him with all the heart and with all the understanding and with all the strength, and to love one’s neighbor as himself, is much more than all burnt offerings and sacrifices.”

Our first priority—more important than all our religious endeavors, more important than anything else in all the world—is to *love God*. To love God, says Jesus, is why we exist. Jesus affirmed this great truth in Luke 14.

Luke 14:25-27: ²⁵Now great multitudes were going along with Him; and He turned and said to them, ²⁶“If anyone comes to Me, and does not hate his own father and mother and wife and children and brothers and sisters, yes, and even his own life, he cannot

be My disciple. ²⁷Whoever does not carry his own cross and come after Me cannot be My disciple.”

God will have no rivals for His esteem and devotion in His kingdom. Jesus *expects* to be more important than everything we hold dear, including our families and even our very lives. Those unwilling to make such a commitment *cannot* be His disciples. His commandment requires us to love the Lord our God **“with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind, and with all your strength”** This standard is set extremely high. It demands that we love God with all that we are and all that we have.

- **with all your heart:** This speaks of emotion; we are to be wholly devoted to God with strong affection.
- **with all your soul:** - This refers to life itself; we are to center our lives around His service, devoting ourselves to living for Him with willingness to die at his command.
- **with all your mind:** This means loving God with our intellect, bringing memory, thought, imagination, reason, judgment, and all our mental powers under submission to Him in adoration and love. This requires enjoying His Word and His gospel more than the vain thoughts of our own minds, the entertainment, comedy and communications of the world. It naturally results in devoting our time to meditation and worship of God.
- **with all your strength:** This suggests bringing all the faculties of soul and body to labor and toil for His glory, as the highest priority in our lives.

As we value God because He is supremely valuable, we must love Him with wholehearted devotion. Good Christian, does your life give evidence of your love for God? Or does it reveal other things competing with Him for your love and devotion? Only those who love God with their whole being will be truly satisfied in this life. Full contentment and fulfillment flow from fulfilling the purpose for which we were made.

Deuteronomy 10:12-13: ¹²And now, Israel, what does the LORD your God require from you, but **to fear the LORD your God, to walk in all His ways and love Him, and to serve the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul,** ¹³**and to keep the LORD’s commandments** and His statutes which I am commanding you today for your good?

Question #218: Based on what Jesus identifies as “the foremost commandment,” what is our highest responsibility as Christians? _____

Question #219: List one or more *specific* ways you can love God:

With all your heart: _____

With all your soul: _____

With all your mind: _____

With all your strength: _____

Which of these areas are the easiest for you to do? _____

Which are the hardest? _____
List one or more ways you can use the areas that are easy for you to strength the areas that are hard for you. _____

A Commitment to Obedience

Since God is the Sovereign, the supreme authority, the Lord of heaven and earth, who has given us high and holy commandments, we are obligated to respond to Him in unwavering obedience. If a powerful earthly authority gave us a righteous directive, we would obey. How much more should we honor God with obedience to Him. Shall we rail against our Maker? Shall we rebel against the King of Kings? God forbid!

Deuteronomy 4:39: Know therefore today, and take it to your heart, **that the LORD, He is God in heaven above and on the earth below; there is no other.**

God is the One to whom we will all give an account of our deeds. Even in times of testing when it seems all the world is against us, we must obey God, regardless of the cost. The first century Apostles set a righteous example for us.

Acts 5:27-30: ²⁷And when they had brought them, they stood them before the Council. And the high priest questioned them, ²⁸saying, **“We gave you strict orders not to continue teaching in this name,** and behold, you have filled Jerusalem with your teaching, and intend to bring this man's blood upon us.” ²⁹But Peter and the apostles answered and said, **“We must obey God rather than men.”**

Those who love God will in fact obey Him. Our obedience reflects our belief that He is the Sovereign Lord who alone is worthy of our adoration and trust.

John 14:15: **If you love Me, you will keep My commandments.**

1 John 5:3: For **this is the love of God, that we keep His commandments;** and His commandments are not burdensome.

Question #220: Describe the basis of our obligation to obey God unwaveringly. _____

Faith and Trust

Since our Sovereign God is in full control of all things *and* has our best interests in mind, we are absolutely safe in His care.

Romans 8:28: And we know that **God causes all things to work together for good** to those who love God, **to those who are called according to His purpose.**

Many Christians have a hard time believing that God will do this for them. They know they are not worthy of such goodness from God, and so they doubt that this promise applies to *them*. Such doubts fail to grasp the *graciousness* of God's promise! This is not a blessing Christians must earn; it is one we receive by grace and faith and trust His word. Has not God proven Himself worthy of our trust? To whom else shall we go? He is the Sovereign Lord! The Bible calls us to place our trust in Him.

Psalms 43:5: **Why are you in despair, O my soul? And why are you disturbed within me? Hope in God,** for I shall again praise Him, The help of my countenance, and my God.

Proverbs 3:5-6: ⁵**Trust in the LORD with all your heart**, And do not lean on your own understanding. ⁶**In all your ways acknowledge Him**, And He will make your paths straight.

How then should we respond to the fact that God is Sovereign in all things and over all things? We should entrust our lives to Him wait upon Him. He will not leave us nor forsake us! He is our God who delights in our deliverance and peace

Psalm 37:3-7: ³**Trust in the LORD, and do good**; Dwell in the land and cultivate faithfulness. ⁴Delight yourself in the LORD; And He will give you the desires of your heart. ⁵**Commit your way to the LORD, Trust also in Him, and He will do it.** ⁶And He will bring forth your righteousness as the light, And your judgment as the noonday. ⁷**Rest in the LORD and wait patiently for Him; Do not fret** because of him who prospers in his way, Because of the man who carries out wicked schemes.

Psalm 33:18-22: ¹⁸Behold, **the eye of the LORD is on those who fear Him**, On those who hope for His lovingkindness, ¹⁹To deliver their soul from death, And to keep them alive in famine. ²⁰Our soul waits for the LORD; **He is our help and our shield.** ²¹For our heart rejoices in Him, Because we trust in His holy name. ²²Let Thy lovingkindness, O LORD, be upon us, **According as we have hoped in Thee.**

Question #221: What part does faith and trust play in *willing* obedience? _____

Notes: