

Message #56

Proverbs 16:1-6

Man without a will is a machine, and God without sovereignty is not God! From man's perspective, he is moving through life making all of his decisions as if he were totally in charge, free as a bird. From God's perspective, His providence, His supremacy, and His sovereignty is orchestrating everything right down to very thoughts and words. God cannot ever be blamed for man's unrighteous choices, but man cannot do anything apart from God's sovereign choices.

GOD IS TOTALLY SOVEREIGN OVER EVERYTHING, AND WISE PEOPLE ADMIT THIS AND IN VIEW OF THIS, TOTALLY RELY ON HIM.

Chapter 16 begins a new section because of the change in Hebrew poetry. Chapters 10-15 were primarily antithetic parallelism in which one idea was contrasted with another. The type of parallelism that is found from 16:3 to 22:16 is primarily synonymous and synthetic—one idea is stated and then a similar idea which further explains or develops the first idea. Notice the noun for God—LORD = the sovereign, self-existing I AM.

SOVEREIGN REALITY #1 – God is totally sovereign over speech. 16:1

This particular proverb is setting forth that the preparations and arranging and putting in order are done by man, but whatever ultimately happens is the work of God.

SOVEREIGN REALITY #2 – God is totally sovereign over motives. 16:2

The word “weigh” means examine, try, prove, or make even—God carefully examines and weighs the motives behind the action. We judge on the basis of how a person acts, whereas God judges on the basis of why a person acts.

SOVEREIGN REALITY #3 – God is totally sovereign over thoughts. 16:3

The idea of “committing our works” to the LORD is the idea of rolling our deeds, actions and burdens onto the LORD. If we do this, God will sovereignly work in our thoughts and cause our meditations, purposes and projects to come into existence.

SOVEREIGN REALITY #4 – God is totally sovereign over everything. 16:4

The Hebrew word “made” means to make, prepare and fabricate all things. The real original, ultimate purpose of God creating man—not primarily to save man or to condemn man—was to glorify Him. Both the righteous and the wicked will end up doing just that.

SOVEREIGN REALITY #5 – God is totally sovereign over punishment. 16:5

The thing that really comes into major conflict against the sovereignty of God is man's pride.

SOVEREIGN REALITY #6 – God is totally sovereign over forgiveness. 16:6

Two things lead a sovereign God to forgive people: 1) The acknowledgement of the fact that forgiveness is due to God's mercy and lovingkindness; 2) An honest, truthful dealing with sin before God. What causes one to turn away from evil is a wise fear of the LORD.