

Message #21

Ecclesiastes 6:10-12

There is no doctrine in all of the Bible that is more calming or stabilizing than the doctrine of the sovereignty of God. Here is what you are faced with in this world—either God “is” sovereign or He “isn’t.” God either rules or He must be ruled. God either does the swaying or He must be swayed. God either must accomplish His will or He must subject His will to others. The Bible in no uncertain terms clearly affirms that God is totally and completely sovereign in every realm. God is the supreme ruler who does what He wants, when He wants with whomever He wants. No one can defeat His counsel, His purpose or His will. It is just as Psalm 115:3 says, “But our God is in the heavens; He does whatever He pleases.”

When we read the inspired writings of Solomon, it becomes very clear that he had a high and holy grasp of the sovereignty of God (i.e. Prov. 16:1-4). And as we come to a text like this in Ecclesiastes, it is obvious that even when Solomon was focused on life “under the sun,” he still knew there was One calling the shots who was “above the sun.” Solomon believed the “day of prosperity” was from God and he believed the “day of adversity” was also from God (Eccl. 7:14).

NO PERSON WILL FIND TRUE MEANING OR FULFILLMENT IN LIFE UNTIL HE COMES TO ADMIT AND BELIEVE IN THE SOVEREIGNTY OF GOD.

Man cannot even be in a right frame of thinking until he begins to grasp the sovereignty of God. Any man who thinks he is in control is a man “chasing the wind.” We are the clay, God is the Potter. We are the creature, God is the Creator. God is totally and completely sovereign and we will not even begin to find real meaning in life until we grasp this Biblical point.

POINT #1 – God is completely sovereign over everything that exists. **6:10a**

Whatever has become, whatever has been named or declared. The Hebrew word “named” is one that refers to God naming or calling something. This particular word was used when God created a woman, “called Woman” (Gen. 2:23), it was used of God changing Abram’s name to Abraham (Gen. 17:5). Now the “niphal” stem of the verb “name” indicates that God has already called what exists and then it, in and of itself, fulfills its own name.

God names something or declares something and then that something comes into existence and, in and of itself, fulfills its name or its calling.

It doesn’t matter who it is or what it is, God is totally sovereign over whatever exists. Proverbs 16:4 says, “The LORD has made everything for its own purpose, even the wicked for the day of evil.” Daniel 4:35 says, “And all the inhabitants of the earth are accounted as nothing, but He (God) does according to His will in the host of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth and no one can ward off His hand or say to Him “What hast Thou done?”

When God says in his Word that “all things have been created by Him and for Him and He is before all thing and in Him all things hold together” (Col. 1:16b-17), we need to believe it.

POINT #2 – God is completely sovereign over every man that exists. **6:10b**

Man is nothing much when compared to God. God is infinite in everything and we are finite in everything.

Everything about man is known by God. Man’s existence, man’s character and man’s destiny are all known by Him. God knows all the positives and the negatives about a person. He knows all the pluses and minuses. He also knows all the sin.

No one will ever have meaning and fulfillment in life until one realizes it is not man who is sovereign, but God. God is sovereign over every man who exists.

POINT #3 – God is completely sovereign and man cannot dispute it. **6:10c-12**

One can submit to the fact that God is sovereign or one can argue with the fact that God is sovereign; but no man will change the fact that God is sovereign. Solomon learned that a critical key to fulfillment and contentment was not disputing with the issue of God’s sovereignty.

Man cannot ever get away from his own limitations.

I like what C. S. Lewis said—“To argue with God is to argue with the very power that makes it possible to argue at all.” Dr. Chuck Swindoll said disputing with God about His sovereignty is a “waste of time and effort” (Living On the Ragged Edge, p. 183).

When we dispute with God about His sovereignty, we reject what God has revealed about Himself, we miss the lessons we can learn in the midst of anything and we typically think emotionally, irrationally and unbiblical.

Even Solomon, when focused “under the sun,” knew disputing about God’s sovereignty was something that would never cause one to be fulfilled.

Now I understand the two conjunctions “for” which begin **verse 11** and **verse 12** as being two reasons why it is ridiculous to try and dispute over the matter of God’s sovereignty.

Reason #1 - Because such a dispute is nothing more than empty words. **6:11**

The word “futility” which shows up in this verse and the next refers to something vain, empty and meaningless (Gesenius, p. 214).

Whenever man wants to dispute with God about His sovereignty, God views such dispute as nothing more than empty and meaningless talk.

When Solomon says, “What is the advantage to a man?” what he contextually means is, “What is the advantage of empty, meaningless talk about God?” The answer is this—there is no advantage. In fact, empty meaningless talk is a disadvantage to man because one’s speech can become sin against God that will bring His judgment.

There is an important principle that we need to draw from this verse—we do not have to try and explain God’s sovereignty. What God asks us to do is believe in His sovereignty.

Reason #2 - Because such a dispute is refuted by a man’s life . **6:12**

For us to dispute with God about His sovereignty is an absolute waste of time. We do not even know what is good for us in our own lifetime. Our own lives are like a shadow and we don’t know what we are doing here half the time and we certainly don’t know what will happen after we are gone.

I am totally convinced that Solomon knew a key to a meaningful life was an acceptance of the sovereignty of God. People who lack a perception of God’s sovereignty are people with a shallow existence. They cannot ever be right with this world and they cannot ever be right with God. Life is a shallow struggle filled with many questions and few answers. But when one begins to understand God’s sovereignty, life can be an exciting journey completely directed by the sovereign hand of God.

An old chorus presents the theology that really does give meaning to life:

“I know who holds the future and I know He holds my hand.
With God things don’t just happen, everything by Him is planned.
So as I face tomorrow with problems large or small,
I’ll trust the God of miracles, give to Him my all.”