

Message #82

Proverbs 21:1-3

From the world's perspective, man is determining his own direction and destiny. But in the Word of God, we discover there is a sovereign God at the control panel, carefully monitoring and controlling all things. As we come to chapter 21, Solomon once again takes up the grand theme of the sovereignty of God.

GOD SOVEREIGNLY CONTROLS AND EVALUATES EVERYTHING AND WISE PEOPLE LIVE THEIR LIVES IN A WISE MANNER IN VIEW OF THIS REALITY.

The sovereignty of God is a critical issue of wisdom, something Solomon emphasizes:

- 1) God is sovereign over a person's substance (10:3);
- 2) God is sovereign over a person's length of life (10:27);
- 3) God is sovereign over thoughts and speech—both evil and good (15:3, 26);
- 4) God is sovereign over answers men give (16:1);
- 5) God is sovereign over creation of all people—both evil and good (16:4);
- 6) God is sovereign and in control of a man's enemies (16:7);
- 7) God is sovereign in the direction of a man's steps (16:9);
- 8) God is sovereign in the outcome of all things (16:11, 33).

SOVEREIGN REALITY #1 – God sovereignly controls the heart of leadership. **21:1**

The Hebrew word “turn” refers to the fact that God turns or inclines a leader in any particular direction He so desires. When combined with the words “he wills” (words that literally mean God curves or bends things in a manner that delights Him), we are left to conclude the stark reality that leaders are flexible, bendable instruments in the hands of a sovereign God. The word “channel” refers to irrigation water that was controlled by farmers in ancient times. Farmers determined where they wanted water to flow, and when they wanted the water to flow. So it is with God's control over kings—He determines when one comes to power and when one ceases. He determines where a leader will serve and what he will accomplish or will not accomplish.

SOVEREIGN REALITY #2 – God sovereignly examines the hearts of all people. **21:2**

The normal tendency for every sinful human being is to justify whatever he does. The second part of the proverb makes it clear that God is not impressed with the projections of men—He weighs the heart.

SOVEREIGN REALITY #3 – God sovereignly examines the life reality of all worship. **21:3**

This proverb is clear that it is not enough just to participate in some external religious event, such as offering a sacrifice. Solomon knew that external sacrifices must never replace an internal commitment. There has always been a special danger when it comes to worship services to equate external religious activity with true internal spiritual reality. External forms of worship are Biblical but they must never replace internal development.

Wise people recognize the sovereignty of God. They understand He controls and monitors all things in life and in recognizing this reality, live lives pleasing to God.