

***On Being Presbyterian***  
**Chapter 1 - “God is King: The Sovereignty of God”**

**I. Sovereignty**

“To put it simply, when we talk about God as sovereign, we mean that God is King.” (p. 15)

Psalm 2: A Portrait of Sovereignty -- kings vs. The King

The sovereignty of God. What do we mean by this expression? We mean the supremacy of God, the kingship of God, the godhood of God. To say that God is sovereign is to declare that God *is* God. To say that God is sovereign is to declare that He is the Most High, doing according to His will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth, so that none can stay His hand or say unto Him what doest Thou? (Dan. 4:35). To say that God is sovereign is to declare that He is the Almighty, the Possessor of all power in heaven and earth, so that none can defeat His counsels, thwart His purpose, or resist His will (Ps. 115:3). To say that God is sovereign is to declare that He is “The Governor among the nations” (Ps. 22:28), setting up kingdoms, overthrowing empires, and determining the course of dynasties as pleaseth Him best. To say that God is sovereign is to declare that He is the “Only Potentate, the King of kings, and Lord of lords” (1 Tim. 6:15). Such is the God of the Bible. (A.W. Pink)

The challenge of believing in God’s sovereignty: example of Jonathan Edwards (p. 18).

God’s sovereignty is expressed in His kingship over all the universe (Creation) and over human salvation (Redemption).

**II. Creation**

It pleased God the Father, Son and Holy Ghost, for the manifestation of the glory of His eternal power, wisdom, and goodness, in the beginning, to create, or make of nothing, the world, and all things therein whether visible or invisible, in the space of six days; and all very good. (*WCF* IV.1)

What does each of the following passages teach about creation?

Genesis 1.1-3:

Psalm 24.1-2:

Psalm 19.1:

Romans 1.20:

“The upshot of God’s sovereignty over His creation is that He is both King and Judge over it” (p. 19).

Question: What is God's ongoing relationship with His creation?

Answer: Providence

God the great Creator of all things doth uphold, direct, dispose, and govern all creatures, actions, and things, from the greatest even to the least, by His most wise and holy providence, according to His infallible foreknowledge, and the free and immutable counsel of His own will, to the praise of the glory of His wisdom, power, justice, goodness, and mercy. (WCF V.1)

How do the following passages support this doctrine of providence?

Daniel 4.34-35:

Ephesians 1.11:

There is a crucial difference between the providence of God and fortune, fate, or luck. The key to this difference is found in the personal character of God. Fortune is blind while God is all-seeing. Fate is impersonal while God is a Father. Luck is dumb while God can speak. There are no blind, impersonal forces at work in human history. All is brought to pass by the invisible hand of Providence.

(R.C. Sproul)

How is the doctrine of providence more than bare foreknowledge?

Does God's providential control extend to sinful human actions? Explain giving Biblical examples.

What are the implications of a belief in God's providence for our understanding of human history?

What are the implications of a belief in God's providence for our understanding of our vocational callings?

### **III. Redemption**

"[T]he truth that God is the King over human salvation flows naturally from what we have already seen: if God is the King over his creation, having ownership rights over what he has made; and if God is the King over every sphere of life, upholding, directing, disposing, and governing all his creatures and all their actions; then does it not follow that God demonstrates the fact that he is King over his creatures by saving whomever he desires to save?" (pp. 26-27)

How do the following passages support the notion of God's sovereignty in human salvation?

Romans 3.10:

Ephesians 2.1:

Ephesians 1.4:

Romans 8.29-30:

Those of mankind that are predestinated unto life, God, before the foundation of the world was laid, according to His eternal and immutable purpose, and the secret counsel and good pleasure of His will, hath chosen, in Christ, unto everlasting glory, out of His mere free grace and love, without any foresight of faith, or good works, or perseverance in either of them, or any other thing in the creature, as conditions, or causes moving Him thereunto: and all to the praise of His glorious grace. (WCF III.5)

How would you answer the following objections to the teaching that God is sovereign in human salvation?

- According to this teaching, God is unfair.
  
- If you believe that, there is no incentive for evangelism or missions.

Always remember:

Isaiah 55.8-9

Deuteronomy 29.29