**The Sovereignty of God**

*1 Timothy 6:15*

**Introduction**

1. **1 Timothy 6:15** – In his doxology at the end of his letter to Timothy, Paul gives notice to the sovereignty of God.
   1. **Potentate** – sovereign, supreme ruler.
   2. King of those who are called king, and Lord over those who exercise lordship.
   3. **There is no authority or power higher than God – ALL THINGS are in His control.**
   4. **Sovereignty** – having supreme power and authority. (TOTAL with God)
2. **The sovereignty of God is a fundamental biblical principle on which we base all of our confidence and assurance as Christians.** (*If God is not all powerful, then all of our trust cannot be expected to be placed in Him.*)
3. However, this is sorely misunderstood by many in the world today.
4. The Sovereignty of God
5. God is Sovereign:
   1. As Creator
      1. **Why is it God’s right to be ruler over the world? Because He created it.**
      2. **Acts 17:24-25** – Paul in discussing why it is folly to pair the “Unknown God” with idols.
         1. He is Creator, not created.
         2. For this reason, He is ***“Lord of heaven and earth.”***
      3. **Colossians 1:15-17** – Of Jesus who is the image of God.
         1. Created through Him, and for Him.
         2. **He has preeminence – thus, the right to dictate all things!**
      4. **Psalm 24:1-2** – The creation is the Lord’s, for He created it – In all ways, both possessive, and then the right to dictate.
   2. As King of kings Lord of lords
      1. God is in control of all governing authorities. Not only to the degree that they must submit to Him, but even those who do not acknowledge Him are controlled by Him.
      2. ***“The king’s heart is in the hand of the Lord, like the rivers of water; He turns it wherever He wishes” (Proverbs 21:1).***
      3. **Daniel 5:18-21** – Daniel right before giving Belshazzar the interpretation of the writing on the wall – reminding of his father Nebuchadnezzar.
         1. Nebuchadnezzar was arrogant, and forgot that it was God who ***“gave Jehoiakim king of Judah into his hand” (Daniel 1:2)***.
         2. **(v. 21)** – Nebuchadnezzar’s punishment showed him that God was in control.
      4. **So it is today. God is in control, and kingdoms rise and fall according to His will.**
6. God’s Sovereignty Displayed
   1. **God’s sovereignty** – ***“I know that You can do everything, and that no purpose of Yours can be withheld from You” (Job 42:2).*** *Such is displayed with:*
   2. Israel
      1. **Genesis 12:1-2** – The land and nation promise to Abraham.
         1. **(v. 1)** – The Canaan land.
            1. **Genesis 50:24** – Joseph before dying.
            2. **Such was accomplished when God, after Israel doubted and were punished, brought them into the Canaan land.**
         2. **(v. 2)** – The nation, Israel.
            1. **Genesis 15:2-6** – Abraham in a time of uncertainty is promised the fulfillment of God’s original promise.
            2. **Exodus 1:1-7** – Abraham had Isaac, Isaac Jacob, and Jacob 12 sons which grew into a great nation while in Egypt.
      2. **God fulfilled His promises to Abraham concerning Israel. Despite all the enemies, and attempts of Satan, God’s purposes were not thwarted.**
   3. Redemption
      1. **Genesis 3:15** – Prophecy spoken by God to the serpent after causing Adam and Eve to sin.
         1. One will come through the seed of the woman, and will defeat the Devil.
         2. This would come in God’s time.
      2. **Genesis 12:3** – God determined to do such through the seed of Abraham.
      3. **Matthew 1:17** – The genealogy of Christ starting with Abraham shows this was accomplished.
      4. **Psalm 2** – No attempt to overthrow God’s plan worked. God laughs at those who stand against Him.
      5. **God said He would bless the world through the seed of Abraham, and He did by sending Jesus.**
   4. Judgment
      1. **Acts 17:30-31** – God commands repentance because He will judge the world. We have assurance by Jesus’ resurrection.
      2. **Judgment is coming and will not fail. God’s sovereignty has proved true thus far, and will not fail.**
7. The Sovereignty of God is NOT…
8. Calvinism
   1. **False doctrine born from an exaggerated view of God’s sovereignty.**
   2. “Calvinism…is a biblically centered theological perspective focusing on the sovereignty of Scripture, the sovereignty of God, His election, redemption, and our securing in Christ's work.” (carm.org – Christian Apologetics and Research Ministry)
   3. Tenets of Calvinism that grow from the false view of God’s sovereignty (TULIP):
      1. **Total Depravity** – Inability to submit to God apart from a direct operation of grace on His part.
         1. **Ezekiel 18:20** – Wickedness or righteousness is upon the individual.
         2. In other words, IT IS HIS CHOICE.
      2. **Unconditional Election** – Without any foresight of faith or good works, God has chosen select individuals for salvation.
         1. **Ephesians 1:4-6** – Chose us IN HIM.
         2. The selection is one of group, not individual.
         3. *I.e. ALL WHO ARE IN CHRIST ARE CHOSEN/PREDETERMINED for salvation – anyone can be in Christ – baptized into Christ.*
         4. ***“In truth I perceive that God shows no partiality. But in every nation whoever fears Him and works righteousness is accepted by Him” (Acts 10:34-35*** – Peter to Cornelius’ household).
      3. **Limited Atonement** – Because of God’s predestining certain individuals, the atonement in Christ’s blood is limited to those chosen few.
         1. **1 John 2:1-2** – He is the propitiation for the WHOLE WORLD.
         2. *Any who meet His conditions receive remission of sins through His atoning blood.*
      4. **Irresistible Grace** – Those elected, for whom the atonement is limited, cannot resist such a free gift.
         1. **Luke 6:46** – Those who do not obey resist the grace of God.
         2. *God reaches out to the world, and many refuse by not believing and obeying.*
      5. **Perseverance of the Saints** (the most emphasized today) – Those who are elected, for whom atonement is made, and are given irresistible grace will not, and cannot fall from grace – will be saved no matter what they do.
         1. **Hebrews 12:15** – It is possible to fall short of the grace of God.
         2. *If we turn back to the world with* ***“an evil heart of unbelief in departing from the living God” (Hebrews 3:12)*** *we will be lost.*
   4. **Essentially, the idea is that everything that happens is by the volition of God, and that we have no part to play. Nothing that happens is by chance, but is preordained by God to happen.**
      1. **Idea – any concept of free-will limits God’s sovereignty, for it is something not in His control, but ours.**
      2. **HOWEVER, to suggest God CANNOT allow free will because His sovereignty REQUIRES Him to decide EVERYTHING robs Him of His right to grant man to have FREE-WILL. (God is then limited.)**
9. DO NOT BE DECEIVED – God plays a part in your salvation, BUT SO DO YOU (**cf. Philippians 2:12-13** – Work out YOUR OWN SALVATION – God works in you through His word which we have the obligation to obey).

**Conclusion**

1. The sovereignty of God is a fundamental, and important biblical principle.
2. **God is the Most High, with ALL authority – Therefore, He MUST be obeyed.**
3. **However, we have the choice to obey Him, or not to obey Him.**
4. He has given us the assurance of the result of both choices. Neither will fail – **cf. Romans 2:6-11**.