

Christ the Sovereign Over All Things
Philippians 2:5-11

I. Intro

A. Quick Review of Advent Themes

1. **Christ the Source of All Creation -**
 - a. The promise of a redeemed people was made to Jesus before ever a single person came into being, because the promise of the Father was not primarily for people but for Christ.
 - b. God the Father created that He might give to God the Son a gift of love comprised of a redeemed humanity that would love and worship the worthy and glorious Son for all eternity
2. **Christ the Savior of All Men**
 - a. If we are to truly celebrate and model the Good News of the Advent season, we must reestablish a deep and painful understanding of sin
 - b. Where there is no sin, there is no need of a Savior; and where there is sin, but no knowledge of a Savior, there is no hope.
 - c. We must reestablish a deep and painful understanding of sin if we are to truly grasp the immensity of God's mercy in the sending of the Savior
3. **Christ the Shepherd of All Hearts**
 - a. Jesus is the fulfilment of every historical promise of God to shepherd His people.
 - b. Hear and follow the voice of the Shepherd
4. **Christ the Sovereign Over All Things**
 - a. The last of Advent sermons for this year
 - b. **In the sovereignty of God we discover the fundamental, unhindered, unassisted power and authority of God to rule over all He has created, including the hearts, lives, and eternal destiny of human beings.**
 - c. Everything about our existence flows from and in the sovereignty of God

B. Proposition

1. **Advent Fear**
 - a. That somehow looking closely at God and His plan for His Son and the people He created and chose for His Son
 - (1) Will reduce the extraordinary to the ordinary
 - (2) Will resolve the Mystery Who is the Infinite God to a finite definition that can be manipulated and marginalized
 - (3) Will render the Word of God to the words of men in such a way we will lose the wonder and awe of God speaking to our rebellious hearts at all
 - b. God is more than merely the answer to our questions
 - (1) He is more than simply the resolution of our theological

- and interpretational conflicts
 - (2) He is more than the means to an end
 - (3) He alone is the sovereign Creator, full of glory and worthy of praise
 - (4) He alone is the Elector, the Caller, the Justifier, the Sanctifier, the Glorifier, and, in the end, the One Who sits upon the throne ruling all He has created and reigning over all as He pleases.
2. **If we are to truly affirm and honor the Christ whose birth we celebrate, then we must understand and appreciate the sovereignty of God,**
- a. Because the sovereignty of God is more than something God possesses or something God does;
 - b. Because sovereignty is the essence of Who God is, a fundamental expression of His glory not merely to analyzed but adored
 - c. Because the advent of Christ, the incarnation of the Son of God, the life, and death, and resurrection of Jesus in which our redemption is accomplished and upon which it is grounded rest entirely in the sovereign determination and activity of God.

C. Two Questions

- 1. What does sovereignty mean?
- 2. What does Christ's sovereignty mean for my life? How does the sovereignty of God at work in Christ intersect with my life experiences?

II. Two Questions Regarding the Sovereignty of Christ Over All Things

A. What does "sovereignty" mean?

- 1. Sovereignty Proper
 - a. **God's sovereignty refers to his absolute and unrivaled rule over all his creatures and their circumstances.**
 - b. To affirm that God is sovereign is to affirm that God reigns, universally and invincibly.
 - (1) God's sovereignty implies his absolute ownership, authority, and control over all things.
 - (2) God's sovereign dominion includes nature as well as human history
 - (3) His control extends even to what seem to us to be chance events—and includes even events that harm God's people or appear to defeat God's purposes.
 - (a) Joseph's declaration of his brothers' evil intent as the good will of God
 - c. Scripture translates God's sovereignty into practical expression:
 - (1) he "rules over all" (Ps 103:19);
 - (2) he "does all that he pleases" (Ps 115:3);
 - (3) his purposes cannot be thwarted (Job 9:12a; 42:2; Prov 21:30; Isa 14:27; 43:13; Dan 4:34–35) or challenged (Job 9:12b; Isa 45:9–10; Rom 9:19–21);

- (4) his “counsel ... stands forever” (Ps 33:11; Isa 46:10);
 - (5) “he works all things according to the counsel of his own will” (Eph 1:11).
2. The doctrine of God’s sovereignty intersects with several important theological issues (which we are talking more about in Sunday school classes and small groups):
- a. Divine sovereignty and causality—God rules over all things and either ordains or permits all things, but he does not cause or originate sin.
 - b. Divine sovereignty and human freedom—God sovereignly directs or rules over free human decisions.
 - c. Divine sovereignty and salvation—The initiative for conceiving, providing, and applying salvation rests exclusively with God and specifically with God the Father, yet humans are responsible for believing.¹

B. How does God’s sovereignty intersect with my life experience?

- 1. **Philippians 2:5-11**
- 2. **The Answer to the Question**
 - a. **(v. 5) The best way to understand and appreciate the sovereignty of God is through the eyes of Christ.**
 - (1) *Have this mind among yourselves which is yours in Christ Jesus*
 - (2) Adopt as your own the attitude and understanding Jesus has about Himself
 - (a) Like needing glasses to see
 - (b) The world is only clear when you look through the right lenses
 - (3) How does the Son regard the Father
 - (a) Worthy of love
 - (b) Worthy of obedience
 - (c) Worthy of self-sacrifice
 - (d) Worthy of utter devotion
 - i) Some much so that at the end of time, when Christ has conquered all the enemies of God and consolidated His eternal kingdom
 - ii) **1 Corinthians 15:24 (ESV)** ²⁴ *Then comes the end, when he delivers the kingdom to God the Father after destroying every rule and every authority and power.*
 - (4) The best way to understand and appreciate the sovereignty of God is through the loving, worshipful eyes of the Son
 - b. **(vv. 6-8) The best way to experience and treasure the**

¹ Talbert, L. (2018). [God’s Sovereignty over Creation](#). In M. Ward, J. Parks, B. Ellis, & T. Hains (Eds.), *Lexham Survey of Theology*. Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press.

sovereignty of God is in the deeds of Christ.

- (1) Jesus
 - (a) He chose to release privilege
 - (b) He emptied Himself - essentially He set aside what was His by nature and by right in order to honor the Father with His whole self
 - (c) He made obedience to the sovereign plan of God the hallmark of His life
- (2) Us:
 - (a) If such self-sacrificing devotion and commitment characterizes the Son of God
 - (b) Should it be less the character of the Son's disciples, those who love Him and follow His example?

c. **(vv. 9-11) The best way to honor the sovereignty of God is to exalt the Son of God to the glory of God.**

- (1) Before the world began God made the sovereign choice to create a world in which the death of His only begotten Son would be the mechanism through which sinful creatures would be restored to a relationship of love through love.
 - (a) Christ would take on a human body and live in this world the life we were first created to live; a life of unbroken communion with God
 - (b) He then, having lived a sinless life, would voluntarily, on our behalf suffer the punishment due sin: death
 - (c) Having accomplished the Father's sovereign plan God would raise Him from the dead and grant those who put their faith in Him forgiveness of sin and eternal life.
 - (d) The whole number of sovereignly predestined, chosen people, called and enabled by God with faith on no merit or effort of their own but solely in the will and working of God, would love and cherish the Son in all His glory for all eternity
 - (e) This is the Father's love gift for the Son, a gift the Son willingly gave His life to secure.
- (2) Jesus is the key to the sovereign plan of God.
- (3) Faith in Christ and faithfulness to Christ are the keys to exalting Christ as Lord and giving glory to God.

III. Congregational Response

A. Questions for Response Cards

1. What gets in the way of your loving and appreciating the sovereignty of God?
2. What about the sovereignty of God do you treasure the most?