

Entrust Lesson 9 Biblical Masculinity & the Sovereignty of God 2/9/23

Introduction:

- The sovereignty of God summed up in a verse:

Psalm 135:5-6 For I know that Yahweh is great and that our Lord is above all gods. ⁶ Whatever Yahweh pleases, He does, in heaven and in earth, in the seas and in all deeps.

1. A few reasons why an understanding of the sovereignty of God is important

- a. Embracing the sovereignty of God helps us distinguish the true God from false gods.

Isaiah 46:9-10 "Remember the former things long past, for I am God, and there is no other; *I am* God, and there is no one like Me, ¹⁰ declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times things which have not been done, Saying, 'My purpose will be established, and I will accomplish all My good pleasure'"

Acts 17:23-28 "...while I was passing through and examining the objects of your worship, I also found an altar with this inscription, 'TO AN UNKNOWN GOD.' Therefore what you worship in ignorance, this I proclaim to you. ²⁴ "The God who made the world and all things in it, since He is Lord of heaven and earth, does not dwell in temples made with hands; ²⁵ nor is He served by human hands, as though He needed anything, since He Himself gives to all *people* life and breath and all things; ²⁶ and He made from one *man* every nation of mankind to live on all the face of the earth, having determined *their* appointed times and the boundaries of their habitation, ²⁷ that they would seek God, if perhaps they might grope for Him and find Him, though He is not far from each one of us; ²⁸ for in Him we live and move and exist, as even some of your own poets have said, 'For we also are His children.'"

- b. Embracing the sovereignty of God helps us avoid worshiping an idol.

- Exodus 20:4 You shall not make for yourself an idol, or any likeness of what is in heaven above or on the earth beneath or in the water under the earth.

- A god who is not comprehensively sovereign cannot be defined as God. Such a god is an idol; a creation of man.
- c. Embracing the sovereignty of God brings encouragement and comfort to men living in this Genesis 3 world.

Psalm 23:3-4 He guides me in the paths of righteousness for His name's sake. ⁴ Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I fear no evil, for You are with me; Your rod and Your staff, they comfort me.

Psalm 139:9-10 If I take the wings of the dawn, if I dwell in the remotest part of the sea, ¹⁰ even there Your hand will lead me, and Your right hand will lay hold of me.

Psalm 139:16 Your eyes have seen my unformed substance; and in Your book were all written the days that were ordained *for me*, when as yet there was not one of them.

Romans 8:28 And we know that God causes all things to work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to *His* purpose.

Revelation 21:4 and He will wipe away every tear from their eyes; and there will no longer be *any* death; there will no longer be *any* mourning, or crying, or pain; the first things have passed away.

- d. Embracing the sovereignty of God helps a man embrace his proper place.

Deuteronomy 4:39 Know therefore today, and take it to your heart, that the Lord, He is God in heaven above and on the earth below; there is no other.

Job 40:1-2 Then the LORD said to Job, ² "Will the faultfinder contend with the Almighty? Let him who reproves God answer it."

James 4:13-16 Come now, you who say, "Today or tomorrow we will go to such and such a city, and spend a year there and engage in business and make a profit." ¹⁴ Yet you do not know what your life will be like tomorrow. You are just a vapor that appears for a little while and then vanishes away. ¹⁵ Instead, you ought to say, "If the Lord wills, we will live and also do this or that." ¹⁶ But as it is, you boast in your arrogance; all such boasting is evil.

Romans 9:19-20 You will say to me then, “Why does He still find fault? For who resists His will?” ²⁰On the contrary, who are you, O man, who answers back to God? The thing molded will not say to the molder, “Why did you make me like this,” will it?

***So what?** By the grace of God, the response to the sovereignty of God is not to be protest or interrogation, but humility and worship.

e. Embracing the sovereignty of God helps a man mature spiritually, something which every man is commanded to put effort into doing until he leaves this world (cf. Phil 2:12-13).

➤ This doctrine teaches us to progress out of the tendency towards man-centered / self-centered theology.

f. Embracing the sovereignty of God helps a man to grow in a biblically balanced way.

➤ As we think on the sovereignty of God, & submit to God’s majesty therein, we not only grow, but grow in a balanced manner.

➤ The sovereignty of God produces a balance in biblically masculine character, of humility and courage.

➤ Humility without courage is effeminate

➤ One way to define courage:

Consequent of embracing the biblical doctrine of God’s good sovereignty, the attitude of submission wherein we place the revealed will of God (the commands of God in Scripture) as superior to our feelings, and act accordingly. Similarly, courage means we place the decretive will of God (providence/events in life) as superior to our feelings, and respond according to the commands in Scripture, by the grace of God.

➤ However, courage without humility can tend towards proud arrogance and self-worship.

- John MacArthur on God's sovereignty and human pride: "No doctrine is more despised by the natural mind than the truth that God is absolutely sovereign. Human pride loathes the suggestion that God orders everything, controls everything, rules over everything. The carnal mind, burning with enmity against God, abhors the biblical teaching that nothing comes to pass except according to His eternal decrees. Most of all, the flesh hates the notion that salvation is entirely God's work. If God chose who would be saved, and if His choice was settled before the foundation of the world, then believers deserve no credit for their salvation."¹

- One way to define humility:

Consequent of embracing a biblical understanding of God (his attributes of holiness, love, majesty, sovereignty, etc. in Scripture) and a biblical understanding of self (our sinfulness, depravity, inability, imperfection until glory, not being sovereign, etc.), the attitude of a privileged servant and child before God, which sees oneself as: undeserving of blessing, in need of teaching, input, and correction from others in the Body of Christ, and requiring constant grace from God for every moment of life.

- So then, embracing the sovereignty of God will, among other things, encourage us as men to ever be growing in a biblical balance of courage and humility.

2. The Testimony of God's Sovereignty from the Church

John Calvin: "God, by his eternal counsel, manages all things in such a manner, that nothing can be done but by his will and appointment."²

"Hence, whatever takes place in the world is according to the will of God, and yet it is not his will that any evil should be done."³

On the apparent "problem of evil" (how can God be sovereign and evil exists?):
"Those who speak as if this would be to render God the author of evil are perverse disputants. Filthy dogs though they be, yet they will not, by their

¹ <https://www.gty.org/library/articles/A167/gods-absolute-sovereignty>

² John Calvin, *Commentary on the Psalms*, Psalm 115.

³ Ibid.

barking, be able to substantiate a charge of lying against the prophet, or to take the government of the world out of God's hand."⁴

A.W. Tozer: "To say that God is sovereign is to say that He is supreme over all things, that there is no one above Him, that He is absolute Lord over creation. It is to say that His Lordship over creation means that there is nothing out of His control, nothing that God hasn't foreseen and planned...God's sovereignty logically implies His absolute freedom to do all that He wills to do."⁵

John Feinberg: "God is the ultimate, final, and complete authority over everything and everyone. Whatever happens stems from his decisions and control. God's sovereign will is also free, for nobody forces him to do anything, and whatever he does is in accord with his own purposes and wishes...This is a strong notion of divine sovereignty, one typically held by Calvinist theologians. I believe the biblical evidence about the areas of divine control support this understanding of sovereignty."⁶

3. The Testimony of God's Sovereignty from Scripture

➤ Over what is God sovereign?

a. Over the smallest details

Proverbs 16:33 The lot is cast into the lap, but its every decision is from the Lord.

Matthew 10:29-31 Are not two sparrows sold for a cent? And yet not one of them will fall to the ground apart from your Father. But the very hairs of your head are all numbered. So do not fear; you are more valuable than many sparrows.

b. Weather & geological events

Job 37:4-5 "After it, a voice roars; He thunders with His majestic voice, And He does not restrain the lightnings when His voice is heard. "God thunders with His voice wondrously, Doing great things which we cannot comprehend.

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ A.W. Tozer, *The Attributes of God* Vol. 2, 144.

⁶ John Feinberg, *No One Like Him: The Doctrine of God*, 295.

Psalm 29:7-8 The voice of the Lord hews out flames of fire. The voice of the Lord shakes the wilderness; The Lord shakes the wilderness of Kadesh.

Mark 4:37, 39-41 And there arose a fierce gale of wind, and the waves were breaking over the boat so much that the boat was already filling up..And He got up and rebuked the wind and said to the sea, "Hush, be still." And the wind died down and it became perfectly calm. And He said to them, "Why are you afraid? How is it that you have no faith?" They became very much afraid and said to one another, "Who then is this, that even the wind and the sea obey Him?"

c. The animal world

Psalm 29:9 The voice of the LORD makes the deer to calve

Matthew 10:29 Are not two sparrows sold for a cent? And [yet] not one of them will fall to the ground apart from your Father.

d. Over good things that happen

Matthew 5:44-45 But I say to you, love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, so that you may be sons of your Father who is in heaven; for He causes His sun to rise on *the* evil and *the* good, and sends rain on *the* righteous and *the* unrighteous.

James 1:17 Every good thing given and every perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation or shifting shadow.

e. Events of nations

Psalm 22:28 For the kingdom is the LORD'S and He rules over the nations.

Psalm 33:10-11 The LORD nullifies the counsel of the nations; He frustrates the plans of the peoples. The counsel of the LORD stands forever, the plans of His heart from generation to generation.

f. War and the Outcomes

Proverbs 21:31 The horse is prepared for the day of battle, but victory belongs to the LORD.

g. Governments & Political Rulers

Proverbs 21:1 The king's heart is *like* channels of water in the hand of the LORD; He turns it wherever He wishes.

Daniel 2:21 It is He who changes the times and the epochs; He removes kings and establishes kings; He gives wisdom to wise men and knowledge to men of understanding.

h. Business success

Psalm 127:1-2 Unless the LORD builds the house, they labor in vain who build it; unless the LORD guards the city, the watchman keeps awake in vain. ²It is vain for you to rise up early, to retire late, to eat the bread of painful labors; for He gives to His beloved *even in his* sleep.

i. Our financial situation

Proverbs 22:2 The rich and the poor have a common bond, the LORD is the maker of them all.

j. Individual human decisions, including sinful and righteous actions

1 Kings 12:12-15 Then Jeroboam and all the people came to Rehoboam on the third day as the king had directed, saying, "Return to me on the third day." ¹³The king answered the people harshly, for he forsook the advice of the elders which they had given him, ¹⁴and he spoke to them according to the advice of the young men, saying, "My father made your yoke heavy, but I will add to your yoke; my father disciplined you with whips, but I will discipline you with scorpions." ¹⁵So the king did not listen to the people; for it was a turn of events from the LORD, that He might establish His word, which the LORD spoke through Ahijah the Shilonite to Jeroboam the son of Nebat.

Proverbs 16:1 The plans of the heart belong to man, but the answer of the tongue is from the LORD.

Proverbs 19:21 Many plans are in a man's heart, but the counsel of the LORD will stand.

Proverbs 21:1 The king's heart is *like* channels of water in the hand of the LORD; He turns it wherever He wishes.

Matthew 26:24-25 “The Son of Man *is to go*, just as it is written of Him; but woe to that man by whom the Son of Man is betrayed! It would have been good for that man if he had not been born.” ²⁵ And Judas, who was betraying Him, said, “Surely it is not I, Rabbi?” Jesus said to him, “You have said *it* yourself.

k. Birth and death

Genesis 21:1-2 Then the LORD took note of Sarah as He had said, and the LORD did for Sarah as He had promised. ² So Sarah conceived and bore a son to Abraham in his old age, at the appointed time of which God had spoken to him.

Psalms 139:16 Your eyes have seen my unformed substance; and in Your book were all written the days that were ordained *for me*, when as yet there was not one of them.

Jeremiah 28:15-17 Then Jeremiah the prophet said to Hananiah the prophet, “Listen now, Hananiah, the LORD has not sent you, and you have made this people trust in a lie. Therefore thus says the LORD, ‘Behold, I am about to remove you from the face of the earth. This year you are going to die, because you have counseled rebellion against the LORD.’ ” So Hananiah the prophet died in the same year in the seventh month.

l. False signs, dreams, visions, and prophecies

Deuteronomy 13:1-3 “If a prophet or a dreamer of dreams arises among you and gives you a sign or a wonder, ² and the sign or the wonder comes true, concerning which he spoke to you, saying, ‘Let us go after other gods (whom you have not known) and let us serve them,’ ³ you shall not listen to the words of that prophet or that dreamer of dreams; for the LORD your God is testing you to find out if you love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul.

1 Kings 22:19-23 Micaiah said, “Therefore, hear the word of the LORD. I saw the LORD sitting on His throne, and all the host of heaven standing by Him on His right and on His left. “The LORD said, ‘Who will entice Ahab to go up and fall at Ramoth-gilead?’ And one said this while another said that. “Then a spirit came forward and stood before the LORD and said, ‘I will entice him.’ “The LORD said to him, ‘How?’ And he said, ‘I will go out and be a deceiving spirit in the mouth of all his prophets.’ Then He said, ‘You are to entice *him* and also prevail. Go and do so.’ “Now therefore,

behold, the LORD has put a deceiving spirit in the mouth of all these your prophets; and the LORD has proclaimed disaster against you.”

m. The creation of the universe and everything it contains:

Genesis 1:1 In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.

n. Satan and demons

Job 1:12 Then the LORD said to Satan, “Behold, all that he has is in your power, only do not put forth your hand on him.” So Satan departed from the presence of the LORD.

Mark 5:6-7 Seeing Jesus from a distance, he ran up and bowed down before Him; and shouting with a loud voice, he said, “What business do we have with each other, Jesus, Son of the Most High God? I implore You by God, do not torment me!”

o. Punishment of unbelievers

Psalms 11:6 Upon the wicked He will rain snares; fire and brimstone and burning wind will be the portion of their cup.

Revelation 20:11-15 Then I saw a great white throne and Him [Jesus] who sat upon it, from whose presence earth and heaven fled away, and no place was found for them. ¹² And I saw the dead, the great and the small, standing before the throne, and books were opened; and another book was opened, which is *the book of life*; and the dead were judged from the things which were written in the books, according to their deeds. ¹³ And the sea gave up the dead which were in it, and death and Hades gave up the dead which were in them; and they were judged, every one of *them* according to their deeds. ¹⁴ Then death and Hades were thrown into the lake of fire. This is the second death, the lake of fire. ¹⁵ And if anyone’s name was not found written in the book of life, he was thrown into the lake of fire.

p. Evil and disaster

Ex 9:12, 10:20, 27, 11:10, 14:8 “And the LORD hardened Pharaoh’s heart,” and he did not listen to them, just as the LORD had spoken to Moses.

Ecclesiastes 7:14 In the day of prosperity be happy, but in the day of adversity consider – God has made the one as well as the other so that man will not discover anything *that will be* after him.

q. Answer to prayer

Isaiah 37:15, 20-21, 34-36 Hezekiah prayed to the LORD saying...²⁰ “Now, O LORD our God, deliver us from his hand that all the kingdoms of the earth may know that You alone, LORD, are God.” ²¹ Then Isaiah the son of Amoz sent *word* to Hezekiah, saying, “Thus says the LORD, the God of Israel, ‘Because you have prayed to Me about Sennacherib king of Assyria...³⁴ ‘By the way that he came, by the same he will return, and he will not come to this city,’ declares the LORD. ³⁵ ‘For I will defend this city to save it for My own sake and for My servant David’s sake.’ ” ³⁶ Then the angel of the LORD went out and struck 185,000 in the camp of the Assyrians; and when men arose early in the morning, behold, all of these were dead.

Matthew 6:32-33 For the Gentiles eagerly seek all these things; for your heavenly Father knows that you need all these things. ³³ But seek first His kingdom and His righteousness, and all these things will be added to you.

r. The good of believers even in trials

Genesis 50:20 You meant evil against me, but God meant it for good in order to bring about this present result; to preserve many people alive.

Romans 8:28 And we know that God causes all things to work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to *His* purpose.

s. The spiritual giftedness of believers

1 Corinthians 12:7 But to each one is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good.

t. Divine illumination

Psalms 119:18 Open my eyes, that I may behold wonderful things from Your law.

2 Corinthians 4:6 For God, who said, “Light shall shine out of darkness,” is the One who has shone in our hearts to give the Light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Christ.

- u. The progressive sanctification and perseverance of the regenerate

John 15:5 I am the vine, you are the branches; he who abides in Me and I in him, he bears much fruit, for apart from Me you can do nothing.

Philippians 1:6 *For I am* confident of this very thing, that He who began a good work in you will perfect it until the day of Christ Jesus.

- v. Great good and compassion on people

Psalm 136:23-25 Who remembered us in our low estate, for His lovingkindness is everlasting, ²⁴ and has rescued us from our adversaries, for His lovingkindness is everlasting; ²⁵ Who gives food to all flesh, for His lovingkindness is everlasting.

- w. Salvation

John 6:65 And He was saying, "For this reason I have said to you, that no one can come to Me unless it has been granted him from the Father."

Ephesians 1:4-5 just as He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we would be holy and blameless before Him. In love ⁵ He predestined us to adoption as sons through Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the kind intention of His will

- x. The daily operation of all things in the universe.

Hebrews 1:3 And He is the radiance of His glory and the exact representation of His nature, and upholds all things by the word of His power.

- y. All future events

*All fulfilled prophecies in Scripture

- i. Jeremiah 25:11-12 (29:10) 'This whole land will be a desolation and a horror, and these nations will serve the king of Babylon seventy years. 'Then it will be when seventy years are completed I will punish the king of Babylon and that nation,' declares the LORD, 'for their iniquity, and the land of the Chaldeans; and I will make it an everlasting desolation.

*Jeremiah spoke this prophecy in 626 B.C. Jewish captivity lasted from 605 B.C., Jerusalem's first capture by Babylonian invasion, to 535 B.C., Cyrus' decree to release the Jews.

- ii. Isaiah 44:28-45:1 "It is I who says of Cyrus, 'He is My shepherd! And he will perform all My desire.' And he declares of Jerusalem, 'She will be built,' And of the temple, 'Your foundation will be laid.' " ¹ Thus says the LORD to Cyrus His anointed, Whom I have taken by the right hand, To subdue nations before him and to loose the loins of kings; To open doors before him so that gates will not be shut

*Isaiah written ca. 700 B.C. and Cyrus decreed the Jews' release in 538 B.C.

- iii. Isaiah 53:5-6 But He was pierced through for our transgressions, He was crushed for our iniquities; The chastening for our well-being *fell* upon Him, And by His scourging we are healed. All of us like sheep have gone astray, Each of us has turned to his own way; But the LORD has caused the iniquity of us all To fall on Him.

*Written ca. 700 years before the death of Christ on the cross

- iv. Daniel 9:25 "So you are to know and discern *that* from the issuing of a decree to restore and rebuild Jerusalem until Messiah the Prince *there will be* seven weeks and sixty-two weeks; it will be built again, with plaza and moat, even in times of distress.

*445 B.C. was the year that the Persian king, Artaxerxes decreed Nehemiah (a Jew in Artaxerxes' court) to return and rebuild Jerusalem. 69 "weeks" (periods of 7 years) = $69 \times 7 = 483$ years of the Jewish 360-day calendar. This appears to be the day in 445 B.C. when Artaxerxes issued the decree: the day that Christ entered into Jerusalem (the triumphal entry, Matt 21:4-11).

- v. Daniel 11:2-35 Multiple fulfillments of the Persian kingdom, the Greek reign, and Antiochus Epiphanes

*See MacArthur Study Bible, pp. 1245-1248 for details.

- a. The crucifixion of Christ for our sins

Acts 2:23 this *Man*, delivered over by the predetermined plan and foreknowledge of God, you nailed to a cross by the hands of godless men and put *Him* to death.

- b. His own exaltation in the universe

Psalm 46:10 Cease *striving* and know that I am God; I will be exalted among the nations, I will be exalted in the earth.

- c. Everything

Psalm 103:19 The LORD has established His throne in the heavens, And His sovereignty rules over all.

Psalm 115:3 But our God is in the heavens; He does whatever He pleases.

Daniel 4:35 "All the inhabitants of the earth are accounted as nothing, but He does according to His will in the host of heaven and *among* the inhabitants of earth; and no one can ward off His hand or say to Him, 'What have You done?'

Ephesians 1:11 ... who works all things after the counsel of His will