The Sovereignty of God

Week Two

The Sovereignty of God

and the Human Will

The Sovereignty of God Over the Human Will

Acts 4:27-28

> "For truly in this city there were gathered together against Your holy servant Jesus, whom You anointed, both Herod and Pontius Pilate, along with the Gentiles and the peoples of Israel, to do whatever Your hand and Your purpose predestined to occur."

The Biblical Testimony of the Human Will #1

- Humans make choices

Deuteronomy 30:19

> "I call heaven and earth to witness against you today, that I have set before you life and death, the blessing and the curse. So choose life in order that you may live, you and your descendants"

The Biblical Testimony of the Human Will #2

- Humans are responsible moral agents

2 Thessalonians 1:6-9

For after all it is only just for God to repay with affliction those who afflict you, and to give relief to you who are afflicted and to us as well when the Lord Jesus will be revealed from heaven with His mighty angels in flaming fire, dealing out retribution to those who do not know God and to those who do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus. These will pay the penalty of eternal destruction, away from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of His power.

The Biblical Testimony of the Human Will #3

- Humans are in bondage to sin

Romans 3:9-12

What then? Are we better than they? Not at all; for we have already charged that both Jews and Greeks are all under sin; as it is written, "THERE IS NONE RIGHTEOUS, NOT EVEN ONE; THERE IS NONE WHO UNDERSTANDS, THERE IS NONE WHO SEEKS FOR GOD; ALL HAVE TURNED ASIDE, TOGETHER THEY HAVE BECOME USELESS;THERE IS NONE WHO DOES GOOD,THERE IS NOT EVEN ONE."

The Issue of Foreknowledge

- Arminianism
- Calvinism
- Open Theism

Defining “Free Will”

- Libertarian Free Will

- Compatibilistic Free Will

A Definition from D.A. Carson

- Compatibilism Defined

The Bible as a whole, and sometimes in specific texts, presupposes or teaches that both of the following propositions are true:

1. God is absolutely sovereign, but his sovereignty never functions in such a way that human responsibility is curtailed, minimized, or mitigated.
2. Human beings are morally responsible creatures—they significantly choose, rebel, obey, believe, defy, make decisions, and so forth, and they are rightly held accountable for such actions; but this characteristic never functions so as to make God absolutely contingent.

(D.A. Carson, How Long O' Lord,
Chapter 11: The Mystery of Providence)

The Biblical Understanding: Compatibilism

- Acts 2:22-23

  "Men of Israel, listen to these words: Jesus the Nazarene, a man attested to you by God with miracles and wonders and signs which God performed through Him in your midst, just as you yourselves know-- 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."

Compatibilism Demonstrated

Genesis 50:19-21

But Joseph said to them, "Do not be afraid, for am I in God's place? "As for you, you meant evil against me, but God meant it for good in order to bring about this present result, to preserve many people alive. "So therefore, do not be afraid; I will provide for you and your little ones." So he comforted them and spoke kindly to them.

Next Week: Election

- Read Romans 9-11

Ask: Why is Paul explaining these things?

What do the “objector’s” questions tell us about Paul’s teaching on election in chapter 9?