

The Biblical Harmony Between the Sovereign Will of God and the Free Will of Humankind

“He who does the will of God abides forever” (1John 2:17).

[Part One]

Background

- From about 350 years after the first Gospel sermon was preached until the present day, there has been an ongoing and apparently irreconcilable conflict in Christendom: the absolute sovereign control of God and the self-determination of humankind.
- Pelagianism advocates that free will means human beings do not need grace and can defy and frustrate the plans of God.
- Augustinianism demands that a sovereign God controls all aspects of human will, and that people are incapable of choosing good without God controlling their will to believe and obey.

Background

- Augustinianism was taken by John Calvin who developed it into Calvinism.
- Calvinism has five tenets of doctrine, two of which have been adopted by Catholicism, and three that have been adopted by the majority of mainstream Protestant denominations.

Background

- The Bible mandates a harmonious coexistence between the sovereign will of God and the free will of humankind.
- The Bible doctrine of predestination in no manner interferes with the exercise of human free will, a gift given when God created humankind in His image.

The Sovereignty Of God

- He existed before anything else.
 - Psalm 90:2 - “Before the mountains were brought forth, or ever You had formed the earth and the world, even from everlasting to everlasting, You are God.”
 - 1Tim. 6:16 - “Who alone has immortality, dwelling in unapproachable light, whom no man has seen or can see, to whom be honor and everlasting power.”

The Sovereignty Of God

- He created all things.
 - Gen. 1:3 - “Then God said, ‘Let there be light’; and there was light.”
 - John 1:3 - “All things were made through Him, and without Him nothing was made that was made.”
- He sustains all things.
 - Acts 17:28 - “In Him we live and move and have our being.”
 - Col. 1:17 - “In Him all things have being.”

The Sovereignty Of God

- He is above all things.
 - Isa. 46:9-10 - "...I am God, and there is no other; I am God, and there is none like Me, 10 Declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times things that are not yet done, Saying, 'My counsel shall stand, and I will do all My pleasure.'"
- He knows all things.
 - Psalm 139:1-4 - "O LORD, You have searched me and known me. 2 You know my sitting down and my rising up; You understand my thought afar off. 3 You comprehend my path and my lying down, And are acquainted with all my ways. 4 For there is not a word on my tongue, But behold, O LORD, You know it altogether."

The Sovereignty Of God

- He can do whatever He pleases.
 - Psalm 135:6 - “Whatever the LORD pleases He does, In heaven and in earth, In the seas and in all deep places.”
- He orchestrates all things.
 - Isa. 14:24 - “The LORD of hosts has sworn, saying, ‘Surely, as I have thought, so it shall come to pass, and as I have purposed, so it shall stand.’”
 - Eph. 1:11 - “In Him also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestined according to the purpose of Him who works all things according to the counsel of His will.”

The Sovereignty Of God

- He rules over all things.
 - Daniel 4:34-35 - “And at the end of the time I, Nebuchadnezzar, lifted my eyes to heaven, and my understanding returned to me; and I blessed the Most High and praised and honored Him who lives forever: For His dominion is an everlasting dominion, And His kingdom is from generation to generation. 35 All the inhabitants of the earth are reputed as nothing; He does according to His will in the army of heaven And among the inhabitants of the earth. No one can restrain His hand Or say to Him, ‘What have You done?’”

The Sovereignty Of God

- He controls material concerns among human beings.
 - Prov. 21:1 - “The king’s heart is in the hand of the LORD, Like the rivers of water; He turns it wherever He wishes.”
 - Psalm 33:9-11 - “For He spoke, and it was done; He commanded, and it stood fast. 10 The LORD brings the counsel of the nations to nothing; He makes the plans of the peoples of no effect. 11 The counsel of the LORD stands forever, The plans of His heart to all generations.”

The Sovereignty Of God

- He controls material concerns among human beings.
 - Amos 3:6 - “If a trumpet is blown in a city, will not the people be afraid? If there is calamity in a city, will not the LORD have done it?”
 - James 4:13-15 - “Come now, you who say, ‘Today or tomorrow we will go to such and such a city, spend a year there, buy and sell, and make a profit’; 14 whereas you do not know what will happen tomorrow. For what is your life? It is even a vapor that appears for a little time and then vanishes away. 15 Instead you ought to say, ‘If the Lord wills, we shall live and do this or that.’”

The Sovereignty Of God Profoundly Impacts Our Lives

- God's sovereignty calls for our submission. He rules in wisdom and love.
 - In His love, He will give us only that which is in our best interests.
 - In His wisdom, He knows what is in our best interests.
- We humbly trust His love and accept His wisdom.
 - Rom. 8:32-33 - "He who did not spare His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not with Him also freely give us all things? 33 Who shall bring a charge against God's elect? It is God who justifies."

The Sovereignty Of God Profoundly Impacts Our Lives

- God's sovereignty provides us with comfort and security in a terribly uncertain world.
 - 2Cor. 1:3 - "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies and God of all comfort."
- God's sovereignty compels us to worship Him.
 - Psalm 42:1-2 - "As the deer pants for the water brooks, So pants my soul for You, O God. 2 My soul thirsts for God, for the living God. When shall I come and appear before God?"

The Sovereignty Of God Profoundly Impacts Our Lives

- Psalm 24:1 - “The earth is the LORD'S, and all its fullness, The world and those who dwell therein.”
- Psalm 23:1 - “The LORD is my shepherd; I shall not want.”
- Psalm 32:8 - “I will instruct you and teach you in the way you should go; I will guide you with My eye.”

The Sovereignty Of God Profoundly Impacts Our Lives

- God's sovereignty compels us to serve Him.
 - 2Cor. 5:14-15 - "For the love of Christ compels us, because we judge thus: that if One died for all, then all died; 15 and He died for all, that those who live should live no longer for themselves, but for Him who died for them and rose again."
- God's sovereignty compels us to come to Him. for salvation.
 - John 12:32 - "And I, if I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all peoples to Myself."