

God Is Government

Isaiah 33:22

*“For the LORD is our judge, the
LORD is our lawgiver, the LORD
is our king; he will save us.”*



THE SOVEREIGNTY OF MANKIND

PART FIVE

We have taken some Bible examples of sovereignty and have showed you that God in all of His Sovereignty gives each of us the same right – the right to choose – our free will - our sovereignty. But I wish it was that easy. As we study the Bible, we need to be more and more sensitive to the interplay between the Two Sets of Sovereignty. There is the sovereignty of God, His power and His eternal plan, and then there is orders in Numbers 20, but we see that Moses had a choice. It was not pre-ordained that he would screw up.



This leads me to the little cliché about three things that God cannot do. There are many but I have provided only three. I like to stand up before a group of conservative Christians and announce, “There are three things God cannot do!” I usually get gasps and looks of consternation when I do this. I then go on to list the three things. First, we know that God cannot lie. I am not a heretic. It is true; God cannot lie.

Second, God cannot learn. Why cannot He learn? Because He already knows everything already. That should be a source of comfort for us, because that means He cannot be disappointed by our behavior, but God’s not surprised. He already knows all things in advance, and that is why Jesus had to die.

There is a third thing that God cannot do. He cannot make us love Him. That is a contradiction in terms.

We think of love as an emotion, but it is actually a commitment. Real, solid agape love is an unconditional commitment. If I say, “I love you because you are beautiful,” that is a conditional kind of love. What happens when you are not beautiful anymore? If I say, “I love you because you take good care of me.” What happens when you do not take care of me? Humans love tends to be conditional, but God’s love does not depend on emotions. There are differences between our human version of love and God’s unconditional love.

God can treat us kindly. He can give us everything we need. He can protect us and lavish us with a home, family, good health, and a job we enjoy. None of that will make us love Him. In fact, it is often the case that living in comfort leaves us forgetting about God and not thinking about Him at all. When we love God, it is truly the response of our personal sovereignty. We have all stood at a crossroad where we have had to decide whether to obey God or to do things our own way. A multitude of thoughts and emotions and desires go through us when we reach these moments, but when we obey Him because we are committed to Him, that is loving Him. When we make a decision that we are going to trust God, that we are going to believe the best of Him at all times, no matter what our circumstances look like, that is loving Him. God can send us reassurances, but we have to decide whether or not we will trust Him. We are loving God when we believe He loves us just because He says He does.

God does not make us love Him, and therein lies the gigantic predicament of all time. As we go through the Bible, we discover virtually on every page a dance between His initiative and our response. We see His instructions to Moses, and we see Moses' response. Sometimes the Bible's characters respond properly, in His blessing. Sometimes they disobey and cause problems.

We see all through the Bible that man's sovereignty shows up. For instance, God had purposed to bring the descendants of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob into the land of Canaan. He had made that promise. However, one whole generation of Israelites died in the wilderness while they wandered for forty years because they did not trust God to bring them into the Promised Land. We can make the case that the Israelites were not predestined to wander the desert for forty years. That punishment was the result of their unbelief. If they had trusted God, they could have entered the Promised Land right away, but God waited until the unbelieving generation died off so that their faith-filled children could take the land. This is the interplay we see throughout the Bible, the jig of God's will with man's will.

Remember each one of salvation experiences is written in stone and sealed. However, the inheritance of God – that which we receive from Him like we would our father or mother – sits there and doled out based upon our obedience. Think about it is way. When you are obedient you get a reward – God's inheritance. When you are disobedient you have a reward taken away. The choice is total ours. You can live in complete abundance of God, or you can live next to the pit of hell. While your salvation gets you into heaven you do not live the eternal life here on earth in the Kingdom of Heaven.