

# Certainties of Sovereignty

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Date: 28 January 2018

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[ 0 : 0 0 ] It always feels like an income of my natural life, if you want it just might be based on the ultimate ambiguity. It always feels like it was or something.

It another lifetime can be used. It never stays with him left away.

Every ten ■■■■■ settle, whatever you excuse when you're four change we also i believe according to scripture are going to have to understand and realize that as mankind we have a responsibility to trust christ that man does have a free will and that god is sovereign and there are some things in the bible that are easy to understand we're all sinners romans 3 23 the bible teaches god loves sinners and provided salvation romans chapter 5 verse number 8 that those who respond to god's love receive eternal life john chapter 3 verse 16 those are easy things to understand but there are some things in the bible that also are rather difficult to understand the subject of god's sovereignty can be very divisive foreknowledge election predestination adoption all of these things can be very divisive now we need to understand they are biblical terms we see those in ephesians chapter 4 verses 1 through 5 romans chapter 8 verses 28 through 30 romans chapter 9 verses 6 through 24 those are all biblical concepts as a matter of fact john wesley and george whitfield were at odds over this very very thing the the issue of the complete and total sovereignty of god and what i find ironic is neither had read the complete works of john calvin and so they assumed what the other believed and because so this can be a very very divisive and people take sides and so we're not going to take a side today matter of fact i trust you don't either because i believe if if we think that we can fully understand the mind of god and how god works it's complete hubris meaning uh we we are jumping to a conclusion that we as mankind know everything and know what god knows the definition of a sovereignty or sovereign is one who exercises supreme authority complete control so in a nutshell the idea of god being sovereign is that god has complete control and that nothing happens that god did not will to be that's what the sovereignty of god truly means that whatever happens god wills to be now as we understand how that sovereignty plays out that's where we get into a little bit of conflict uh this is termed the absolute sovereignty of god those who believe that believe that god wills it and it happens now there are some issues that come out of that uh is god the author of sin uh we won't get into that either because and i believe that suffice it to say that i believe this is my personal opinion i believe that god has chosen i believe god is completely sovereign but i believe god has chosen to limit his sovereignty as it relates to his relationship with mankind and god's ability

to choose his or her own path now does that make sense or did i muddy the waters even more i believe god's completely sovereign but that god has chosen to limit that sovereignty where he says i give you this field to to to play in but you have some choice in where you do and what you do or where you do it and what you do so that is the the the where we're going to spring from this morning and let's take a look at deuteronomy 29 29 this morning as we begin this uh today deuteronomy 29 29 and the bible tells us that the secret things belong to the lord our god now there are things that god says there are things that the apostle paul said that were secret things in the old testament or that were mysteries god had not chosen to reveal them to the old testament prophets but he has revealed to us today primarily the mystery that we who are gentiles could belong to god just as much as the jews did that was a mystery in the old testament that had not been revealed to the old testament prophets they were looking for a messiah but they were not completely understanding what the gospel would encompass or would completely encompass so the secret things belong to the lord our god and i think we are prideful to say that we understand everything that the bible teaches but it goes on but those things which are revealed god has revealed some things very plainly god has revealed some things that are still clouded in a bit of mystery i believe on this side of heaven we will not fully understand until we get to heaven and he says which are revealed belong to us and to our children forever that we may do all the words of this law so this is some heady stuff this is some things that that people stay awake at night trying to understand that theologians have spent many many years trying to to unpack what all of this means and i think for any of us to take a a hard position one way or the other as i said is is not understanding completely or or think we understand god but i believe that god's sovereignty does not conflict with man's ability to choose man's free will and here is we're going to look at three points this morning and the first thing is that we look at the certainties of sovereignty our focus and the first thing we need to know is that god's sovereignty doesn't conflict with the gospel god's sovereignty doesn't conflict with that god loves soul of the world that he gave his only begotten son that whosoever believes in him should believe on him and that we wouldn't have to spend an eternity in the lake of fire we understand that the gospel makes salvation available to all the gospel makes salvation available to all we see that in romans chapter 1 verse 16 where the apostle paul teaches us paul said for i am not ashamed of the gospel of christ he says for it is the power of god up to salvation for for who for how many everyone who believes for the jew first and also for the greek for those of you who have a little bit of of history and in hearing about the different positions on the the complete and absolute sovereignty of god there is there was a man who the 1700s wrote a lot about this john calvin and he had five main points that he taught man's

total depravity unconditional election limited atonement irresistible grace and the perseverance of the saints now there there are a few of those that are very very troublesome uh now the total depravity we know that we're sinners that apart from the holy spirit there are some things that john calvin i believe understood properly but there are some things that i believe john calvin was not didn't quite get the full picture and then there's the other side complete other side of the spectrum and from a writer called arminius and that's pretty much that eventually we'll pretty much all be uh all kind of come into into heaven and and we have complete responsibility and god pretty much it's not god has no sovereignty in that matter so those are kind of two polar opposites and that's pretty much where george whitfield and john wesley were they were in separate camps but we need to understand that the apostle paul who got was taught directly from jesus christ himself after his conversion understands that we shouldn't be ashamed of the gospel because the gospel is the power of god so that everyone who believes in the gospel and that anyone who believes in the gospel can and will be saved so he says for it is the power of god to salvation for everyone who believes for the jew first and also for the greek so note let's look at paul's explanation of the gospel in first corinthians chapter 15 first corinthians 15 verses 3 and 4 he says for i delivered to you first of all that which i also received jesus received it from christ himself that christ died for our sins according to the scriptures and that he was buried and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures now here's here's the thing he understands that the gospel is the power of god and the gospel is god's power providing salvation to anyone who believes and that christ died for our sins john 3 16 god so loved the world we just learned a little while ago that that he is not ashamed of the gospel for it is the power of god for anyone who believes so the gospel is the power of god bringing salvation to everyone who believes and salvation how do we receive salvation through believing now it's not thrust upon us it's not god saying okay you'll be saved you'll be saved you'll be saved it's god saying if you trust the work of jesus on the cross and believe that jesus is god and died in your place you will be saved so salvation is appropriated through faith through belief and let's get this acts chapter 4 verse 12 the apostle peter knew of no other way to salvation here here we see an act nor is there salvation in any other or there is no other name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved so we understand that there's it's not through buddha it's not through anyone else it's not through the church it's not through the roman catholic church it's not through the baptist church the bible church the methodist church the episcopal whatever there is no other name and the name is jesus christ and he is the one who is the author and the finisher of our faith and so it's only through jesus christ so we understand that the sovereignty of god doesn't negate the gospel doesn't do away with the gospel message jesus died on the cross for our sin and it's our responsibility to believe it because here's the

[ 12 : 39 ]    thing some people say well you know what i don't know you know what to believe and i'll just kind of take my chances well well you just you already made a choice see we make a choice not to choose if a person says well you know what i just don't know and i'll just follow the ten commandments and i will do the best i can you've just made a choice to trust your own works the bible says there is no other name there is no other way other than faith and trust in christ jesus for salvation and if you're not convinced yet let's look at romans chapter five and verse number one where we hear therefore having been justified that that's a two-bit word that simply means made right with god we are made right with god by faith by faith we have peace with god through our lord jesus christ the invitation to salvation is unchanging matthew 11 28 to 30 john 3 16 john 6 37 all john 10 all who call upon the name of the lord shall be saved the bible does not say only only the elect who call upon the name of the lord shall be saved the bible says that all who call upon the name of the lord shall be saved secondly here's here's a second point about god's sovereignty that we will look at so my whole point of this message today is to understand that there are different things that people believe concerning the sovereignty of god but my bottom line is if we can't understand what that really really means then all we need to do is stick with what we do understand and that is we have a responsibility and it's our choice and it's our faith and belief that appropriates salvation so i i just don't waste a lot of time maybe it's just me but i don't waste a lot of time trying to understand things that i know that i'll never understand completely maybe it's just me uh now i i enjoy an argument like like like like some of you do as well i mean what i don't mean like arguing fighting but a debate i enjoy a great debate and you you don't understand you want you know that i really have studied this i have studied both sides and i can argue for calvinism and i can argue for arminianism well certain points of each i can't argue for i can't argue for either one completely but you know what there are some there's some things on both sides that well you know given we may may or may not be able to totally completely understand but i'm not going to waste my time with well this is what i believe i'm sticking with this and because i believe this i don't have to do this so here's the second point god's sovereignty doesn't cancel the great commission god's sovereignty whatever we believe concerning the sovereignty of god doesn't cancel the fact that jesus said we need to go out and make disciples and so it doesn't cancel that some argue the doctrine of election does away with our responsibility to go out and make disciples because some believe the extreme and say god's elected and we have no choice in the matter and so therefore if we're elected we're going to believe and so it doesn't matter whether i share the gospel or not they'll still believe so why send missionaries and so some believe that some believe that to the extreme that they believe that we just need to love everyone and we don't have to share the gospel because they'll believe anyway

but as we glimpse the i think the broader picture of god's dealing with mankind we see that his sovereignty doesn't cancel the great commission because god says i'm in control but you still must share the good news of the gospel so others can believe so they were the last words of jesus to his disciples we see that in matthew 28 19 and 20 and jesus came and spoke to them saying all authority has been given to me in heaven and on earth go therefore and make disciples of all nations baptizing them in the name of the father and of the son and of the holy spirit teaching them to observe all things that i have commanded you and lo i am with you always even to the end of the age the great commission sent the early christians everywhere with the gospel all around the world and churches exist today all around the world because of the great commission as a matter of fact we had a missionary family who was here this morning who are on furlough who are here in the states they had to drop something off they were heading to another church this morning and through our faith giving we support them in carrying out the great commission beyond the borders of the united states to other countries to the rest of the world just like we support other missionaries around the world because it's the great commission that plants churches it's the great commission that shares the gospel with those who don't even have the word of god in their language and so they need someone to tell them about jesus but in too many places and in too many churches it's not great commission it's the great omission they say well i don't need to do that i it's not my responsibility or we just don't need to get involved we need to get back and i say we i mean the body of christ needs to get back to carrying the gospel to lost people everywhere and our focus needs to not necessarily beyond programs but on people who need the lord and we go this morning the next passage we're going to look at is the promise at pentecost the promise of pentecost called people to worldwide witnessing let's take a look at acts chapter one verse eight in the words very words of jesus he says he remember he said tarry here stay here but you shall receive power when the holy spirit has come upon you why he says you shall be you shall be my witnesses to me in jerusalem started at home and in all judea the the surrounding geographical area and in all samaria went out a little further and then ultimately he said to the end of the earth all around the globe is where we carry out the great commission so god's sovereign plan again god's sovereignty i believe in his sovereignty he planned so that believers could be empowered to carry out the gospel so that people could hear and people could understand so it does not negate the great commission and then thirdly and lastly god's sovereignty doesn't curtail evangelism it doesn't mean that we shouldn't share the gospel of christ with others because we understand that god is not willing god doesn't want anyone to perish the bible teaches us that second peter three verse nine bible teaches us that the lord is not slack concerning his promise as some count slackness he says i'm going

to return i'm coming back with judgment but he says is long suffering toward us and here's the reason why the bible says that god is long suffering why is christ waiting so long to return early believers in the first century waited for christ to return and they're thinking he's going to come back in our lifetime this was over 2 000 years ago well 1500s 1600s 1700s 1700s 1800s 1900s 20th century 21st century we're still waiting for christ's return and you know what christ could come back in our lifetime so why is christ waiting so long to return well i believe this is what we see in verse 9 he's not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance and god knows when in the fullness of time that everyone how he does it i don't know but when everyone who will believe has believed christ is going to return i don't understand it i don't understand how i don't understand his his mechanism and how he's doing it or how he's going to do it but he says he's not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance so he allows more time for people to make that choice to come to him and repent and as we consider look at the evangelistic fervor of the early church i mean what was their what what motivated them what made them get up in the morning and we see from the new testament that they wanted the apostle paul peter others they spread out and they told others about jesus well look at the the day of pentecost acts chapter 2 verse 41 where we see 3 000 souls were saved 5 000 were saved in the next wave acts chapter 4 and verse number 4 the apostle paul shared the gospel everywhere and in every circumstance that he could the bible says that the apostle paul went from house to house teaching the gospel teaching others he ministered publicly and from house to house when he went into a new area he went into the synagogue and he opened up the scripture and he taught from the old testament he taught what jesus christ had taught him and so he was sharing the gospel so god's sovereignty doesn't curtail evangelism it's still the believers and it's still the church is still the believers responsibility who are encouraged by the local church in act chapter 20 verse 31 the bible says that the apostle paul evangelized night and day with tears you know we often think of the apostle paul as this strong uh kind of uh outdoors kind of uh just mean face stern the bible says that paul evangelized night and day with tears so much he cared so much he had so much compassion for mankind and wanted them to come to christ that he cried he wept over people's souls because he didn't want them to spend an eternity separated from god and so as we pray god motivate me motivate us to have the same kind of of compassion for souls lord motivate us lord motivate me to have the same desire for others to come to know christ and that's what i need to pray that that i would be more motivated by compassion and the realization that we are souls who have a destiny or that we will have we will spend eternity in one place or another separated from god in the lake of fire or with god for eternity and so what's our conclusion in all of

this well god's sovereignty doesn't compromise his grace god's sovereignty doesn't compromise his grace and that will he wills that all should come to repentance and he is giving optimum amount of time for everyone to trust him he's giving us an optimum amount of time an optimal amount of time to share the gospel and to bring the gospel to the ends of the earth i had an opportunity to talk we i talked i talked about this before the end of the year about ways that we can outreach i got a chance to sit down and speak with our fire chief earlier this week i got a chance to reconnect with him and hopefully sometime march or so we can go in homes throughout our area and they will provide or the red cross will provide as many smoke detectors as we want and the actual firefighters are going to install the smoke detectors for anyone who wants them and then we'll have the opportunity to ask do you all have any prayer requests can we pray with you here here's here's who we are we we love to provide you whatever you need introduce ourselves to them and maybe someone will want to know about jesus maybe someone is going to want to trust christ as their savior so so we will be providing a physical a physical device and at the same time being able to provide some type of burden bearing by helping them pray but also being able to hopefully be able to share the gospel if they would like to hear or at least have another opportunity to say if you'd like we can come back and tell you about what the bible says about how you can have peace with god and know that your sins are forgiven it's just one way it's not going to be the only way but it's one way for us to get into the to the homes in our community and provide a felt need so something that actually the chief was excited about doing that with us he said this is awesome that you guys are willing to do this he said i'll provide the manpower and he said if you all want to provide some volunteers he said we'll do this and we will make this happen so god's sovereignty doesn't compromise his grace and salvation is available to all who believe and i would like to close with with these two verses ephesians chapter 2 verses 8 and 9 ephesians chapter 2 verses 8 and 9 for by grace you have been saved and it's by grace that anyone will be saved through faith and that not of yourselves it is the gift of god not of works lest anyone should boast not of works lest anyone should boast you know i find it interesting that coming back to the to the whitfield and wesley clash that they had they were dear dear dear friends who got divided over this issue but wesley preached for whitfield's whitfield's funeral and one of the things that he said even though they never kind of came together in life he talked about he said mr whitfield and mr law one of the others that was involved in this controversy he said we'll be at the throne of grace or we'll be with god and he says that whether or not we had an agreement or disagreement here on earth you know they love god they will be forever with him and really i think both of them wish they would have cleared matters before before they died so the reality was he said even though we don't agree on this we agree that we're trusting the same christ we're trusting the same jesus and i think that's the

whole point god loves the world so much he sent his son jesus christ who died on the cross in our place salvation is available by grace through faith for all who believe and i do believe god is in control because if god were not in control we would be in a world of hurt but i believe god has given us that that space that freedom for us to choose because if we if we had no freedom we would be robots if we had no freedom we would be it would be like mechanical but god gives us that space for us to have that choice to say because when we really follow christ it's our decision to follow christ wouldn't you rather someone love you because they want to love you rather than you forcing them to love you and i think that's a true picture of the love of god he loves us unconditionally but he wants us to come to him and trust him because we choose and we want to follow so this morning i trust that we will understand maybe a little bit more clearly that we have a responsibility and i think it is upon us to share the gospel and if nothing else just to show people show the world that god is real that prayer is answered and that jesus christ loves them so much that he doesn't want them to spend it to turn spend an eternity apart from the father let's pray lord god this morning we are so so thankful that while we may not be able to fully understand the the intricacies of election and free will lord we do understand that we do have a choice and you allow us that choice to trust christ as our savior or to reject the gospel and spend an eternity apart separated from you father this morning i pray that you would help us and motivate us to to love you even more because you've given us that choice you've given us that freedom to come to you albeit on your terms but that we can come to you in faith trusting that our sins are forgiven and that we are justified and made right with you through the death and the resurrection of our savior jesus christ and we're so thankful for the new life you give to us that all of our our past is wiped away our sins are forgiven and we've been given a brand new life we thank you for this and i pray for each one here this morning we pray in jesus name amen amen amen and if we all stand amen amen