

# Peace Adult Sunday School

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## *Chosen by God*

*Chosen by God* - R. C. Sproul

### Session 3 – God’s Sovereignty

God’s sovereignty is at the core of who He is. If God isn’t sovereign, then God isn’t God.

#### **God Rules!**

*God from all eternity, did, by the most wise and holy counsel of His own will, freely, and unchangeable ordain whatsoever comes to pass; WCF Chapter 3 opening*

Do you think this is true?

Do you think this is limited to the reformed faith?

- You could have a notion of god that is like the Greek gods who are essentially human in temperament and proclivity to sin but with superpowers - but not all powerful
- The lack of sovereignty is incompatible with our understanding of God
- If God is not sovereign, how could you trust that his plans will come to pass?

Sovereignty as it comes to salvation

God could save none	God could save all (universalism)
God could save some by moving their hearts to turn to Him (reformed view)	God could save some by providing the opportunity to believe (semi-Pelagian – Arminian view)

Most Christians fall into the 3rd and 4th camps; they are the primary difference between the reformed view of salvation and the semi-Pelagian (Arminian) view. Taking the last view first, the Reformed view is that if God presented the gospel in some way to every human being on earth, none would accept it without a regenerated heart. In our sinfulness, we are incapable of choosing God and responding positively to the gospel

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message. The only way we can be saved is if God intervenes by moving us to desire Him. Was God obligated to save any? See Hosea 1:2 Hosea 1:2

[2] When the LORD first spoke through Hosea, the LORD said to Hosea, “Go, take to yourself a wife of whoredom and have children of whoredom, for the land commits great whoredom by forsaking the LORD.” (ESV)

### **God’s sovereignty and the problem of evil.**

1. God foreordains sin.
  - a. Evil could not come into the world against God’s sovereign will (or He wouldn’t be sovereign.
  - b. So we must conclude that, “...in some sense even evil is foreordained by God.” Sproul, p. 17

Well, the answer is that his free creatures, Adam and Eve, allowed sin into the world: “Man is that author of sin, not God.” Sproul, p. 18. But alas, that begs the question – why did Adam and Eve sin – from whence did that desire come? They weren’t born in sin – Sproul (and I agree) have no idea. It’s a mystery.

So, for His own good reasons, God allowed sin into the world. No some argue that a loving God could not do so: “*If God knew we would sin but could not stop it, then he is neither omnipotent nor sovereign. If he could stop it but chose not to, then he is neither loving nor benevolent.*” Sproul, 21

We believe God could stop us from sinning (indeed that will be the culmination of his redemptive plan) but he is under no moral obligation to do so. I don’t know why he chooses some but not all, but He is under no obligation to save any and His choosing some doesn’t create such an obligation.

### Sovereignty and Human Will

Some this that the Bible contains a contradiction – God is sovereign and man is free.

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How can this be?

Free but not absolutely free not

At a human level we readily see that people can enjoy a real measure of freedom in a land ruled by a sovereign monarch. It is not freedom that is canceled out by sovereignty; it is autonomy that cannot coexist with sovereignty (see James 4:12).

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To be autonomous means to be a law unto oneself.

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One does not have to be autonomous to be free. Autonomy implies absolute freedom. We are free, but there are limits to our freedom. The ultimate limit is the sovereignty of God.

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Does the law of God place restrictions on human freedom? Is God not permitted to impose limits on what I may choose? Not only may God impose moral limits upon my freedom, but he has every right at any moment to strike me dead if it is necessary to restrain me from exercising my evil choices. If God has no right of coercion, then he has no right of governing his creation.

God is free. I am free. God is more free than I am.