

Isaiah 45:5-7,21-25; Romans 11:33-36 (tx: 36)

GOD IS THE GREATEST

- I. The awesome meaning
- II. The manifold revelation

INTRODUCION

You know there are fundamental fact of the Christian faith that we may never back down on or tone down.

- these basic truths, like the Trinity, Jesus' virgin birth & divinity, man's sinfulness, Christ's cross & bodily resurrection—
- these truths we must believe & preserve at all cost for our salvation & eternal life with God.

But there is really 1 fundamental fact of all the fundamental truths of faith.

- & that fact is the sovereignty of Almighty God.
- that, as Rom.11:36 says, "From Him & through Him & to Him are all things. To Him be the glory forever. Amen."

Take that basis truth & text out of **Bible** & our faith, then you take away everything else **Scriptures** teach about God & our salvation.

- & all the other fundamentals of the Christian faith & life vanish.
- for we then take the only thing that can help us overcome sin.
 - the only thing that helps us to keep our senses & be strong & sure in our changing world with all its evils & errors, its hardships & heartaches.
 - & the only thing that will help us face a new year with confidence & courage, comfort & security; be able to walk through life & this world with joy & peace.

We consider then this fundamental fact of all fundamental facts:

- that God is sovereign, or THE GREATEST.
- 1st, the awesome meaning; &, 2nd, the manifold revelation.

I. THE AWESOME MEANING

Well, **Bible** & the Christian faith begin with the fact that God is really God.

- & that means He is sovereign—He is God & there is no other.
- for Gen.1:1(the very 1st words of Bible) says: "In the beginning God."
 - that is, before anyone or anything else existed,—
 - before time & this whole universe came into being God was there.
 - He existed eternally as God.

But then He took the 1st step & acted out of His good pleasure & sovereign will.

- He created everything & everybody out of nothing.
- &, when the world fell into sin, before it even occurred to man to turn to Lord, or stirred himself to seek God again, out of love & mercy & grace, God again took the 1st step.
 - He came & sought out man.
 - He stooped down to speak & show Himself to save us human beings.

Now that's what God's sovereignty is all about or means.

- He is 1st & foremost as the only God there is.

(OVER)

- He always take the 1st step in creation & salvation so that absolutely nothing surprises Him or beats Him to the punch.
 - that's because He is the One who is the greatest & rules over & is in control of all.

And so to believe God is sovereign or the greatest is to believe He is God.

- that there is none greater than He, as we read in Isa.45.
- actually there is no other God than Him.

Th'fore, God's sovereignty means He is Lord of all—over this universe & world.

- He is the One who planned everything in eternity before time began.
- & now He is carrying out His plan & purpose in His works of creation & salvation & final judgment.

That's what **Bible** say so clearly & certainly.

- Ps.115 says: "He is God who does as He pleases."
- Dan.4 says: "He does according to His will in the universe & no one can challenge Him or nothing can stop Him."
- Isa.45 says: "He is God & there is none else, none like Him, who knows & determines & declares the end from the beginning. He has purposed & spoken it, & will accomplish & do it."

And so God is sovereign or the greatest in His being.

- He is unique & incomparable, inconceivable & incomprehensible.
- He is so different that He is beyond our wildest imagination & most extreme inventions.

For God is infinite & eternally exalted over all as God.

- as the Creator & King, the Source & Savior; the Beginning & the End & Judge of all.
 - for all is "from Him & through Him & to Him," our text says.

Th'fore, as God, He is sovereignly free & self-sufficient.

- He depends on nothing or no one outside or beyond Himself to exist.
- & He is infinite, for He is not limited whatsoever by time & space.
- He is then everywhere present with His whole being at the same time.

He is also eternal as sovereign God.

- that means He is not strapped by time or controlled by the clock or calendar, for He is above time.
- He is then timeless with no beginning or end, so that He is the eternal "I am who I am."
- & He is unchangeable in His being & work
 - totally faithful & perfect & pure, holy & righteous & just in His being & works.

So then, being sovereignly free with no limits & restrictions, He is almighty to do what He wills & wants.

- He is all-knowing & wise so that nothing catches Him off guard.
- & what He says & does are always the best, as He determines & directs everything to go His way according to His good pleasure.

II. THE MANIFOLD REVELATION

Now the fact God is sovereign is revealed in His various works.

- 1st of all, in His sovereign work of creation as the sole Source & Sustainer of this whole, gigantic universe & everything in it.
- that's what Rom.11 means when it says: "From Him & through Him all are all things."

For Gen.1 says He brought everything & everyone into being out of nothing by His powerful Word, as Ps.33 also says.

- Acts 17 say God made the world & all that is in it so that He is the sovereign Lord over all.
 - the One who give life & breath & boundaries & places to all.
- th'fore He is sovereignly free—not limited or restricted to human ideas & idols, so that He carries out His will

Not only that, Bible also says all things are “by” Him.

- God is then also sovereign or the greatest as the Stay & Sustainer, the Keep & King of all creation & its contents.
- you see, all things & all creatures & all peoples are totally dependent on Him & His creative Word for every moment they exist.
 - as Acts 17 also says: “In Him we live & move & have our being.”

But too, as sovereign God, He is also personally & powerfully interested & involved in His creation.

- He has freely, out of love & goodness decided & designed & directs all that happens in it
- so there is nothing that ever gets out of hand from God's perspective or sight.

Everything—the laws of nature, the course of the planets, history, human beings—they all exist & go according to Lord's government & guidance.

- all are somehow within His will according to His plan & purpose, Eph.1 says.
- & according to Rom.8 the glorious truth is He works it all for the good of us who love & serve Him.
 - that's the blessed comfort & confidence & courage we have, even as we enter a new year.
 - that God is absolutely sovereign over & in all creation as its Maker & Maintainer & Master.
- th'fore nothing happens that He isn't in control & isn't with us, even in the middles of the storms of life.

2nd, the fact God sovereign is seen in the truth He has revealed Himself to us.

- you see, as human beings, we may have great knowledge & possess tremendous power to do fantastic things.
- so we may be the greatest of all created beings, except for the angels.

However, when it comes to knowing sovereign Lord, man is bewildered & baffled & lost.

- we can't ever discover & know Him by our own efforts.
- we can never climb to heaven to find Him by our own research & investigations because we are finite creatures & sinners.
 - our minds are too small to contain or comprehend God, even as King Solemn said:
 - “this whole, huge universe can't contain Him.”

Besides, Bible says, as sinners, we don't even want to know Lord.

- Rom.1 says sinful human beings refuse to respond to Him.
- instead we desire to serve false gods that we can contain or control, & we live in all kinds of sin.

Th'fore, the only way we are able to know & live with God is, if He takes the 1st step, stoops & speaks to us.

- & that He has done--1st in creature & nature.
- Ps.19 & Rom.1 say that, ever since the universe began, it has been revealing God's eternal nature & power & glory, His faithfulness & wrath.

But, since sinful mankind refuses to listen to this revelation & can't find God as Father & Friend, He has spoken a 2nd time.

- He has now spoken in a very special, supernatural, saving way to be our Savior.

- & to take away our sin & blindness & rebellion, & bring us back into His fellowship. (OVER)
- He has given us His Word, a revelation of Himself, Bible.
 - His inspired, infallible Word of salvation to a sinful world.

But even more amazing & awesome this Word is centered & climaxed in God's saving acts in history.

- He put His Word in human flesh & form.
- for with a mighty, marvelous miraculous act, He stepped down onto this planet.
 - He became totally & truly a human being like us as Jesus Christ of Nazareth.

God did that to tell us face to face about Himself & show us the way out of sin & death into eternal life.

- & He actually made that way a reality by Himself suffering & dying & arising again to destroy Satan & sin & death once for all.

Now that brings us to the 3rd way we see God's greatness or sovereignty.

- for He has come to accomplish salvation for us, for Bible also teaches all things are from Him.
- all things depend on Him & His sovereign, saving act of grace & love.

For after all, **Bible** teaches, as sinner apart from Christ, we are slaves to sin, destined to eternal death.

- so left to ourselves all we can do is sin.
- & Eph.2 says we are dead in sin—utterly unable by our own wills & workings to live again.
 - to do good or chose God.

But the good news of **Bible** & the uniqueness of the Christian faith are that, since sinners can't & won't take the 1st step to believe & be saved, God Himself has.

- Eph.1 says in eternity, out of His good pleasure He sovereignly planned our salvation.
- without any compulsion & conditions He chose whom to save & bring to faith & obedience to Him.

Then in time, when man became a sinner & fell away from God, He sovereignly acted 1st to accomplish His program of salvation.

- He came after fallen human kind with His promise of salvation down through the Old Testament.
- & then in the New Testament He fulfilled His saving promise & accomplished His plan of salvation.

God sent His Son, God Himself, into this world as Jesus Christ to be our Savior.

- to seek us sinners.
- & He accomplished our salvation by His Christmas virgin birth, His death on Calvary's cross, & His resurrection from the grave.

But even more glorious, God didn't just accomplish & gain salvation for us.

- He also continues to sovereignly work through His Word & Holy Spirit to apply salvation to us sinners.
- with His sovereign grace Lord calls sinners by His Word.
 - & through the regenerating work of Holy Spirit He puts new life into our hearts so we can & do respond in repentance & faith to Him as our Lord & Savior, & we are saved.

But even more wonderful, God is sovereign because He continues to savingly keep us safe & secure through life & death & on into eternity.

- Scripture says we are kept by His 3-fold grip.
- for John 10 none one will snatch us out of Christ's hands or the Father's hands.
 - Eph.1 says we are sealed by Holy Spirit until the day of our full & final end in eternity.

And then it is God who will bring our salvation to its perfect completion when Christ returns.

- Hebrews says He is not only the Author of faith, but also the One who completes it.
- & so Rom.8 says those He lovingly chose for salvation, He calls, justifies, & will glorify.
- th'fore God is working to save His people, & will bring them to eternal glory in the new heaven & earth.
 - & He will renew & reconcile His whole creation to Himself for His glory.

So, you see, God is the greatest in salvation too.

- it is from Him—He planned & accomplished it.
 - it is by Him—He applies it.
 - & it is to Him—He completes it for His praise.
- th'fore, praise the Lord: He is sovereign & salvation doesn't depend on us so that we are saved for sure all the way to & into eternity!

Now there is a 4th truth by which God's sovereign greatness is seen.

- it is the fact He is the final Judge of all things.
- He has to be if all of His creation & revelation & salvation are His works as the sovereign Source & Stay & Savior & King.

There has to be & there is a final authority & end of it all.

- & His Word & will are the final standard by which everything is done & judged & brought to completion.
- in other words, as sovereign God He has the final word as He brings it all completion as He planned.

That means then God isn't a casual observer to what is going on here in this world.

- but He is watching us to judge us according to what we are doing with His Word & will, & with His Son, Jesus Christ.
- & what He sees we will have to give an account of it & be judged by it at the end of time.

So then God, as our sovereign Lord & Judge, will have the final say.

- He will judge & reward everything & everybody.
- & Bible says, as in Isa.45, before Him eventually & eternally every knee will bow & every tongue will swear He is Lord.
 - all will willingly or unwilling acknowledge Him as the greatest of all—sovereign Lord of all.

CONCLUSION

Well, that's the God of **Bible**, the One we Christians believe & trust & obey.

- & it is only this God, who only is God, who can make any sense out of life.
- only with Him, as our only Savior & Lord, do we have any sanity & assurance in this world with all its crazy, confusing events & experience.
 - & with confidence & courage & comfort we can enter this new year & face anything it brings.

We can, because we know that our God is absolutely sovereign or the greatest so that nothing happens that He isn't on top of it.

- & so no matter what happens, as Almighty Lord, He uses & bends it all for our good.
- that is, if this big God is our Father & Friend by faith in Jesus Christ.

For then this sovereign God is always with us.

- He is personally interested & involved in our lives—in our pleasure, & in our pain too.
- & He is always able & willing to save & strengthen & secure us now & forever.

For **from** Him & **through** Him & **to** Him are all things.

- to Him be the glory forever & ever!

AMEN