

Chapter Two: The God of the Bible is Sovereign None Other by John MacArthur

“We will never wrap our finite intellects around God. His sovereignty is a truth that should provoke wonder and worship. What’s clear is that God is completely sovereign, and He never exercises that sovereignty in ways that conflict with or compete with His righteousness, grace, and justice.”

Warm-Up:

1. **Memory Verse:** The king’s heart is like channels of water in the hand of the Lord; He turns it wherever He wishes (Prov. 21:1).
2. Think back to a time when you were treated unfairly.¹
 - a. How did you react?
 - b. Did your reaction show trust in God?
 - c. Would you like your response to be different next time?
 - d. How did God use it for your good and His glory?

Prepare and Discuss:

3. In your own words, define the sovereignty of God (Ps. 135:6; Eph. 1:11; 1 Cor. 8:6; Rom. 11:36).²
4. From Isaiah 10:5-18, we learn about God’s divine decree of a pagan nation like Assyria as an instrument of judgment against Judah and Jerusalem because of their idolatry. At the same time, we also learn that God pronounces a curse on Assyria for doing so. Although a person’s sinful intent and actions may serve God’s sovereign purpose, do those sinful intents and actions make them any less culpable? Why or why not?³

¹ Jerry Bridges, *Trusting God Even When Life Hurts Study Guide*, (Denver, Co: NavPress, 1990), 34.

² John MacArthur, *None Other: Discovering the God of the Bible*, (Reformation Trust Publishing, 2017), 27-29.

³ MacArthur, 30-33.

5. What is important to understand about God, while thinking through the complex relationship between God's sovereignty and human responsibility?
 - a. Only God can move a person's _____ (Ezekiel 36:26-27).
 - b. God cannot be tempted by _____ (James 1:13-14).
 - c. God uses the sinful actions of men to accomplish His _____ (Gen 50:20; Acts 4:27-28; Rev. 17:17).

6. Read John 6:35-40. From this passage we learn that with respect to salvation, there is a similar tension as it pertains to God's sovereignty and human responsibility. In a similar context as you consider Jesus' conversation with Nicodemus in John 3:1-21 and your reading, do people come to saving faith because they first come to Christ or are they saved because God drew them to Christ? Explain your answer.⁴

7. The Apostle Paul gives us three essentials of salvation in Romans 9-10. What are they?⁵
 - a. Salvation requires God's divine _____ (Romans 9:6, 13-17), (pgs. 41-42).
 - b. Salvation requires _____ (Rom 9:30, 10:11-13), (pgs. 43-44).
 - c. Salvation requires the hearing of the _____ (Rom. 10:12-15), (45-46).

8. Taking to heart what you've learned thus far, how might the knowledge of God's sovereignty and human responsibility impact your conversation with someone who says they want to "enter the kingdom of God?"

Application:

9. Knowledge of God's divine decree and human responsibility, although difficult to harmonize, is meant to be an encouragement to you. In light of these complex doctrines, what should your response be in the midst of various trials you often face?
 - a. I ought to continue to _____ God and do good (Ps. 37:3; Prov. 3:5-6).
 ❖ Write down how you will implement this today.

 - b. I ought to continually _____ God's will (Mt. 6:9-10).
 ❖ How will you incorporate this into your daily routine?

⁴MacArthur, 25-39.

⁵MacArthur, 41-46.

- c. I ought to have _____ that God will hear my prayers (1 Jn. 5:14).
❖ How does this give you encouragement?

10. End your study time by reading and meditating on Romans 11:33-36.

- a. Write down any current concerns you might have. Then pray to your sovereign God and entrust those concerns to Him.

Digging Deeper:

To enhance your study and worship time, we invite you to listen to the following sermon by Pastor John MacArthur, *Sovereignty and Freedom*, <https://www.gty.org/library/sermons-library/90-399/sovereignty-and-freedom>.

You Are God Alone⁶

You are not a God, created by human hands
You are not a God, dependent on any mortal man
You are not a God, in need of anything we can give
By Your plan, that's just the way it is
You are not a God, created by human hands
You are not a God, dependent on any mortal man
You are not a God, in need of anything we can give
By Your plan, that's just the way it is

You're the only God whose power none can contend
You're the only God whose name and praise will never end
You're the only God who's worthy of everything we can give
You are God and that's just the way it is

You are God alone from before time began
You were on Your throne
You are God alone and right now
In the good times and bad
You are on Your throne
And you are God alone

Unchangeable, unshakable, unstoppable
That's what You are
Unchangeable, unshakable, unstoppable
That's what You are

⁶Songwriters Billy and Cindy Foote (Capital Christian Music Group).