

The Gathering Church
Sonia's message 7/19/26
Know God As He Is – Sovereign – Wk6
The Sovereignty of God

God is Sovereign

The Lord Reigns

Trust Him Completely

Not My Will

Yours Be Done

Hope In Christ

Deuteronomy 32:39-40 "See now that I myself am He! There is no god besides me. I put to death and I bring to life, I have wounded and I will heal, and no one can deliver out of my hand. I lift my hand to heaven and solemnly swear: As surely as I live forever,

Matthew 6:9-10 "This, then, is how you should pray: "Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.

The sovereignty of God is not merely a doctrine to be studied; it is a truth that confronts every human heart. It tells us who God is, who we are, and how we are to live before Him. God's sovereignty is personal and practical because it is exercised through His kingdom. That's why Jesus taught us to pray "Father, your kingdom come, your will be done" in acknowledgement of God's sovereign rule, and fidelity to his reign.

Daniel 7:13-14 In my vision at night I looked, and there before me was one like a son of man, coming with the clouds of heaven. He approached the Ancient of Days and was led into his presence. He was given authority, glory and sovereign power; all nations and peoples of every language worshiped him. His dominion is an everlasting dominion that will not pass away, and his kingdom is one that will never be destroyed.

Psalms 103:19 The Lord has established his throne in heaven, and his kingdom rules over all.

In a world where people want control, where nations rise and fall, where suffering confuses us, and where human will is often treated as supreme, the Word of God declares something greater: **the Lord reigns. He is not reacting to history; He rules over it.** He is not waiting to see what man will do; He knows the end from the beginning. He is not one power among many; He is God alone. And he has a kingdom where he rules. His kingdom is not merely a future hope; it is God's rule breaking in.

That is what Jesus preached throughout his ministry:

Mark 1:15 "The time has come; the kingdom of God has come near. Repent and believe the good news!"

That truth is both comforting and unsettling. It comforts the believer because **nothing can come into our lives apart from the hand, wisdom, and purpose of God.** But it unsettles the proud heart because **it removes the illusion that we are in control.** If God is sovereign, then He cannot be reduced to our preferences, limited by our understanding, or judged by our emotions. **He must be received as he has revealed himself: holy, wise, powerful, free, faithful, and absolute in his rule.**

So before we ask what God's sovereignty means for our circumstances, our choices, our suffering, or our future, **we must first let Scripture correct our view of God.** The question is not whether God fits into our understanding of sovereignty; the question is whether we will bow before the God who declares, "My purpose will stand, and I will do all that I please."

Psalm 2:4 (gives us the biblical picture): when the nations rage and rulers unite against God and His Christ, "He that sits in the heavens shall laugh."

Human rebellion may appear threatening on earth, but it does not shake the throne of heaven.

Because the Lord reigns, His King is installed—and His kingdom will not be stopped.

Psalm 2:6 "I have installed my king on Zion, my holy mountain."

Arthur W. Pink in *The Attributes of God* summarizes: "He is the Most High, Lord of heaven and earth. Subject to none, influenced by none, absolutely independent; God does as he pleases, only as he pleases, always as he pleases. None can thwart him; none can hinder him."

God is God in fact as well as in name. He directs and works all things:

Ephesians 1:11 "after the counsel of his own will"

Charles Spurgeon expressed the same tension when he said, "There is no attribute more comforting to His children than that of God's sovereignty. On the other hand, there is no doctrine more hated by the world. Men will allow God to be everywhere except on His throne. They will allow Him to sustain the earth; but when God ascends His throne, His creatures then gnash their teeth. For God on His throne is not the God they love."

Scripture tells us that human responsibility rests upon God's divine sovereignty and is actually the product of it.

Isaiah 45:9 "But doom to you who fight your Maker—you're a pot at odds with the potter! Does clay talk back to the potter: 'What are you doing? What clumsy fingers!'"

God's sovereignty is not abstract. Its clearest and most glorious display is seen in the sending of His Son. The Father appointed Christ, sent Him in love, and assigned Him the work of redemption. Christ came in the likeness of sinful flesh, magnified the law, bore the sins of His people, satisfied divine justice, died, and was buried. Yet in fulfilling this work, the Savior was promised a people who would share His glory and bless His name forever. Because He took our place, we now share in his righteousness. His standing before God is ours, and his life is ours.

Those who are redeemed are not only forgiven—they are brought under the King's rule.

Colossians 1:13-14 (transferred into the kingdom of the Son): For he has rescued us from the dominion of darkness and brought us into the kingdom of the Son he loves, in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins.

From there, Scripture presses the issue further: Paul writes in

Romans 9:18 (the God who saves is also the God who rules over mercy and judgment.) "Therefore God has mercy on whom he wants to have mercy, and he hardens whom he wants to harden."

"The sovereignty of God and the will of God are bound up together. God is absolutely free—no one can compel him, no one can hinder him, no one can stop him. God has freedom to do as he pleases—always, everywhere, and forever" A.W. Tozer, *The Attributes of God*.

God's sovereignty involves both authority and power. He has the right to command and the ability to carry out His will. So when Jesus said that all authority had been given to Him, we are meant to see the fullness of His rule. Authority without power is useless, and power without authority is restrained. God has both. Who could give God permission? Who existed before Him? At whose throne could God kneel?

Isaiah 44:6 declares, "I am the first, and I am the last; and beside me there is no God."

This means sin never surprised God. When He laid His plans for heaven and earth and created Adam, He already knew the rebellion that would enter his creation, and he had already accounted for it. **Even with the presence of sin, the purposes of God cannot be changed or frustrated.**

Yet God's sovereignty does not erase human choice. Among the things God is pleased to do is to give human beings real responsibility. We make choices *because the sovereign God commands us to choose*. He says,

(Joshua 24:15) "Choose you this day whom you will serve"

God's command to us to have dominion was not merely an instruction; it was His sovereign will for humanity. He called us to rule in the beginning, and for those who believe in Him, He is preparing us to rule in the world to come. As Paul reminds us,

1 Corinthians 6:3 "Do you not know that we will judge angels?"

Our choice is not meaningless. We are commanded to follow Him or refuse Him, to walk in His ways or turn from them, to receive His mercy or reject His rule. The destructive choices we make does not reflect God's loving desire for us; even so, human rebellion can never overthrow His sovereignty because *God's will* is ultimate.

We struggle with the idea of God's sovereign rule because **we see human autocratic powers rise and fall. Rome once seemed unstoppable, yet it eventually declined because of corrupted power. Empires preceding Roman included the Greek, Egyptian, Assyrian, and Babylonian. After the Roman empire came the Byzantine, Ottoman, Spanish, Russian, and British empires. Each had a beginning, ascendance, and decline.** In America, our federal republic divides authority among the legislative, executive, and judicial branches, under the Constitution with checks and balances to limit any one entity from holding absolute power. **We instinctively resist the thought of one ruler having all authority because history has shown how dangerous unchecked autocratic rulers can be to the general population.**

Ancient Israel wrestled with the same issue. **They rejected God as their sole King and asked for a human king like the surrounding nations.** God gave them Saul, but he also warned that imitating the nations would bring heavy consequences: forced labor, lost wealth, and the bitter results of trusting human rule more than divine rule. Against every temporary kingdom, Scripture sets the promise of God's eternal kingdom.

Revelation 21:1-3 Then I saw "a new heaven and a new earth," for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and there was no longer any sea. I saw the Holy City, the new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride beautifully dressed for her husband. And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, "Look! God's dwelling place is now among the people, and he will dwell with them. They will be his people, and God himself will be with them and be their God.

This is kingdom consummation: God's dwelling becomes public, permanent reign.

Revelation 22:3-5 (God's throne; servants will reign) "No longer will there be any curse. The throne of God and of the Lamb will be in the city, and his servants will serve him. They will see his face, and his name will be on their foreheads. There will be no more night. They will not need the light of a lamp or the light of the sun, for the Lord God will give them light. And they will reign for ever and ever."

Every earthly kingdom will pass away, but God will establish His everlasting kingdom on the earth. His rule is not temporary, and His will *shall* be done.

So what are God's plans? We do not have to guess; we can read them in His Word. He will keep his promises to Abraham and to Israel. He will redeem a people from every tongue, tribe, nation, and people

Revelation 5:9-13). "And they sang a new song, saying, "Worthy are You to take the book and to break its seals; for You were slain, and purchased for God with Your blood men from every tribe and tongue and people and nation. 10 You have made them to be a kingdom and priests to our God; and they will reign upon the earth. 11 Then I looked, and I heard the voice of many angels around the throne and the living creatures and the elders; and the number of them was myriads of myriads, and thousands of thousands, 12 saying with a loud voice, "Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power and riches and wisdom and might and honor and glory and blessing." 13 And every created thing which is in heaven and on the earth and under the earth and on the sea, and all things in them, I heard saying, "To Him who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb, be blessing and honor and glory and dominion forever and ever."

He will judge sin and establish righteousness. **What God has spoken, God will accomplish.**

When we consider the decadence around us, we must acknowledge that if not for the sovereign God, his decrees, and his involvement in the world, the human race would have long ago destroyed itself.

Matt 24:22 CJB "Indeed, if the length of this time had not been limited, no one would survive; but for the sake of those who have been chosen, its length will be limited."

Because He is omnipotent, God is unstoppable. Because He is omniscient, no unforeseen circumstance can alter His plans. Because He is holy, **evil has only a set time to appear powerful before it is brought to nothing.** And because He knows the beginning from the end, He needs no witness to tell Him what is in man, for He knows every heart.

John 2:25 "He did not need any testimony about mankind, for he knew what was in each person."

Hebrews 4:12 "For the word of God is alive and active. Sharper than any double-edged sword, it penetrates even to dividing soul and spirit, joints and marrow; it judges the thoughts and attitudes of the heart."

All of this leads us to a necessary question: if God reigns over creation, redemption, human choice, kingdoms, history, and the human heart, then how should we live before Him?

What God's Sovereignty Means for Us

First, **God's rule calls us to trust Him** when life does not make sense. We do not have to understand everything in order to obey Him today. When the diagnosis is frightening, the money is uncertain, the relationship is strained, the door closes, or prayers seem delayed, we can still say, "Lord, I do not see the whole picture, but You do." **Trust looks like taking the next faithful step, refusing to let fear make our decisions, and bringing our questions to him without accusing his character.** His silence is not absence, and his delay is not defeat.

Second, **his reign humbles us.** **We stop demanding that God explain Himself before we worship Him. We lay down the need to control, the habit of judging God by our feelings, and the pride that says our wisdom is enough.** In prayer, humility says, **"Not my will, but Yours be done."** In conflict, humility admits, "I may not see this rightly." In suffering, humility bows before the God whose character is greater than our circumstances. Job did not receive every explanation he

wanted, but he did receive a greater revelation of who God is. And when Job saw God rightly, he bowed.

Third, the **sovereignty of God strengthens obedience**. If God rules over all things, then His commands are not suggestions; they are **the decree of the King**. So we do not use sovereignty as an excuse for passivity. **We repent, forgive, witness, serve, endure, and walk faithfully because the sovereign God who ordains the end also commands the means.**

Fourth, **God's authority gives power to prayer**. That's why Matthew 6:33 tells us to "seek first his kingdom." Some may ask, "If God is sovereign, why pray?" But the better question is, "If God is *not* sovereign, why pray?" Because he rules, prayer is not wasted breath. We pray for the lost because God can save, for healing because God can restore, for provision because God owns all things, for wisdom because God knows all things, and for strength because God sustains His people. **Prayer is fellowship with the sovereign Father who invites his children to ask, seek, and knock.**

Fifth, his providence **gives meaning to suffering**. Evil is evil. Pain is painful. Grief is real. But suffering is never ultimate. Cancer is not sovereign. Betrayal is not sovereign. Poverty is not sovereign. Death is not sovereign. **God is sovereign**. Therefore, the believer can grieve honestly without despair, lament deeply without unbelief, and wait patiently without concluding that God has lost control. Joseph could look back over betrayal, slavery, false accusation, and prison and say,

Genesis 50:20 "You intended to harm me, but God intended it for good."

The same God is able to hold our pain without wasting it.

Finally, God's throne **anchors our Hope in Christ**. The throne of God is not empty, and the Lamb is not defeated. Jesus did not stumble into the cross; **he came for it**. At Golgotha, human sin did its worst, and God accomplished his greatest work. So we do not measure hope by what we can presently see; we measure hope by the risen Christ.

Hebrews 12:28 — Therefore, since we are receiving a kingdom that cannot be shaken, let us be thankful, and so worship God acceptably with reverence and awe,

If God could bring salvation out of the darkest day in history, then there is no darkness in our life beyond His reach.

Closing Exhortation

So what shall we do with this truth? We must not leave it as a doctrine on paper, a debate for the classroom, or a kingdom phrase we repeat only when life is easy. We must carry it into the hospital room, the courtroom, the workplace, the family table, the secret place of prayer, and the daily practice of seeking His kingdom and doing His will.

When pride rises, we bow.

When anxiety speaks, we rest.

When temptation calls, we obey.

When suffering comes, we cling.

When the future feels uncertain, we rejoice that heaven is not uncertain because the King reigns and His kingdom cannot fail.

We stop trying to rescue God from his own throne and we surrender to His kingdom King—

**worshiping him as great enough to trust,
wise enough to follow, and
faithful enough to obey.**

If the Lord reigns, then

Our life is not random.

Our tears are not wasted.

Our waiting is not meaningless.

Our obedience is not unnoticed.

Our prayers are not unheard.

Our enemies are not ultimate.

Our future is not uncertain.

So we surrender the burden we were never meant to carry. We lay down the need to control what belongs to God. We bring him the unanswered question, the unfinished story, the difficult person, the hidden grief, the secret fear, and the next step of obedience. **The God who began the good work is the God who will complete it.** The hand that holds the universe is not too weak to hold us.

So the church can say with confidence: **God is Sovereign.**

Let the suffering believer say it through tears while holding fast to promise.

Let the weary servant say it while continuing to serve.

Let the repentant sinner say it while running to mercy.

Let the anxious heart say it while choosing peace.

Let every idol fall, every proud argument bow, every fearful thought be brought captive, and every redeemed heart rise in worship.

Our God is in the heavens; He does whatever pleases Him, and what pleases Him will end in His glory and our good. Since He reigns, let us worship fully, ... and follow Christ until faith becomes sight and the Kingdom we trust becomes the Kingdom we see.

Hebrews 12:28 “Therefore, since we are receiving a kingdom that cannot be shaken, let us be thankful, and so worship God acceptably with reverence and awe,

Closing Prayer

Father, we confess that you are God and there is no other.

You reign over creation, history, kingdoms, suffering, salvation, and every hidden corner of our lives.

Forgive us for the times we have resisted your rule, questioned your wisdom, feared man more than we trusted you, or trusted our own understanding more than your Word.

Teach us to bow before your sovereignty with reverence, to rest in your providence with peace, to obey your commands with courage, and to pray with confidence because you are able.

Strengthen the weary, comfort the grieving, humble the proud, save the lost, steady the anxious, and glorify your Son in us.

We trust you because you reign, we follow you because you are faithful, and we worship you because you are worthy.

In Jesus' Name, Amen.