

Problem with that?

- Reality and nature of sin
- Free-will for sinners always means what?
- Salvation by works (Jesus has done 99% but no use unless I respond – its down to me)
- Think about how you pray/what you pray
- What is our spiritual condition before we become Christians – according to the Bible? (Eph 2)

Are we spiritually: neutral, spiritually ill or spiritually dead?

What does that mean?

- God makes us alive (Eph 2 – example of Lazarus)
- Confidence in gospel and greatness of scope of gospel (Revelation 7:9)
- Rightly understood gives us great freedom, hope and power in evangelism

“All that the Father gives me will come to me and whoever comes to me I will never cast out” John 6:37

Preach the ‘whoevers’ – trust in the resurrecting power of God”!

Leadership Course: 2 April 24th 2013

Doctrinal Basis b:

“God is sovereign in creation, revelation, redemption and final judgment”

Q: What does it mean to say that God is ‘Sovereign?’

A: That God is in complete and ultimate control of all things.

“What God intends to do, he accomplishes....he is sovereign over everything that happens in the universe.” John Frame

‘This doctrine has very often appeared exceedingly pleasant, bright and sweet. Absolute sovereignty is what I love to ascribe to God” Jonathan Edwards

Yet not always so:

“From childhood up, my mind had been full of objections against the doctrine of God’s sovereignty”

- Every article of faith – is controversial
- We react against it because of human pride and autonomy
- Even more so because not only our culture, but 21st Century Western Church culture rejects it.

So we can especially at first, react quite strongly against it

“We need to take great care and sensitivity in those areas where Biblical truth cuts against the prevailing views of our culture. We must not compromise biblical truth but neither must we be harsh and shrill. The Bible calls us not to be quarrelsome but to teach with great patience. We recognise that the transformation from the prevailing views of the culture

to accepting biblical truth is only possible when we embrace the Lordship of Jesus Christ. This can and does take time”.

The doctrine of the sovereignty of God is the historic teaching of the Church of England enshrined in the 39 articles.

God is sovereign in: 1) **CREATION**

He created the universe according to his good will and pleasure and continues to reign sovereignly over it

Psalm 24:1 “The earth is the Lord’s and the fullness thereof, the world and those who dwell therein”

Psalm 93:1 “The Lord reigns; he is robed in majesty”

Psalm 97:1 The Lord reigns, let the earth rejoice; let the many coastlands be glad!”

Big problem – existence of evil:

Solution – God isn’t in control or God isn’t good

NO he is in control – ‘mystery’ – as with Trinity – Deut 29:29

Fail to embrace this – error and problems

The Bible both affirms the existence of evil(yet that God is sovereign even over that) and that he is so sovereign he can and does even use evil to accomplish his plans and purposes (without either – being evil himself or rendering evil good)

Joseph “As for you, you meant evil against me, but God meant it for good, to bring it about that many people should be kept alive, as they are today” (Gen 50:20)

The cross “This Jesus, delivered up according to the definite plan and foreknowledge of God, you crucified and killed by the hands of lawless men” Acts 2:23

If God is sovereign then we can trust his promises – tremendous security because he cannot be thwarted.

Reasons we may struggle:

- Fail to grasp not only is He sovereign – but wonderfully good
- If we have been violated by abuse of authority.

What do you make of Romans 8:28?

Rejoice in Romans 8:31-39

God is sovereign in: 2) **REVELATION**

God is sovereign in: 3) **JUDGMENT**

He and He alone is the judge of all (the living and the dead) – he will judge with utter righteousness and without error. (No one will ever legitimately complain that his judgments are unfair or wrong)

God is sovereign in: 4) **SALVATION**

Who ultimately is responsible for your salvation – you or God?

Are you sovereign or is he?

Popular view:

Jesus died on the cross for our salvation – gives us the ‘free will’ to accept or reject his salvation. (Not loving to ‘force’ us to accept Christ)