

Lesson 14

GOD IS SOVEREIGN

Compiled by Darrell Crow based upon personal studies, notes and prayer.

Darrell Crow
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GOD IS OMNIPOTENT

In short this means God has all authority, power, and position to govern over all things.

Dr. Norman Geisler, author of Systematic Theology, Vol 2., 539, wrote, "Sovereignty is God's control over His creation, dealing with His governance over it: Sovereignty is God's rule over all reality."

Charles Ryrie, in his book, Basic Theology,⁴³ adds this *"The word means principal, chief, supreme. It speaks first of position (God is the chief Being in the universe), then of power (God is supreme in power in the universe). How He exercises that power is revealed in the Scriptures. A sovereign God could be a dictator (God is not). Or a sovereign could abdicate the use of his powers (God has not). Ultimately God is in control of all things, though He may choose to let certain events happen according to natural laws which He has ordained."*

The web page, [www.GotQuestions.org](http://www.gotquestions.org/sovereign-grace.html)³ <http://www.gotquestions.org/sovereign-grace.html> states the following concerning God's sovereignty, *"The sovereignty of God means that He has total control of all things past, present and future. Nothing happens that is out of His knowledge and control. All things are either caused by Him or allowed by Him for His own purposes and through His perfect will and timing. He is the only absolute and omnipotent ruler of the universe and is sovereign in creation, providence and redemption."*

- *Romans 11:36 For from Him and through Him and to Him are all things. To Him be the glory forever. Amen.*
- *1 Corinthians 8:6 yet for us there is but one God, the Father, from whom are all things and we exist for Him; and one Lord, Jesus Christ, by whom are all things, and we exist through Him.*

Pink, A.W. The Sovereignty of God, chap. 1 clarifies further the definition of the Sovereignty of God. *What do we mean by [the sovereignty of God]? We mean the supremacy of God, the kingship of God, the godhood of God. To say that God is Sovereign is to declare that God is God. To say that God is Sovereign is to declare that He is the Most High, doing according to His will in the army of Heaven, and among*

- *Daniel 4:35 "All the inhabitants of the earth are accounted as nothing, But He does according to His will in the host of heaven And among the inhabitants of earth; And no one can ward off His hand Or say to Him, 'What have You done?'"*

To say that God is Sovereign is to declare that He is the Almighty, the Possessor of all power in Heaven and earth, so that none can defeat His counsels, thwart His purpose, or resist His will (*Psalm 115:3 But our God is in the heavens; He does whatever He pleases.*).

To say that God is Sovereign is to declare that He is *"The Governor among the nations"* (*Psalm 22:28*), setting up kingdoms, overthrowing empires, and determining the course of dynasties as pleases Him best.

To say that God is Sovereign is to declare that He is the *"Only Potentate, the King of kings, and Lord of lords"* (*1 Timothy 6:15*). Such is the God of the Bible."

R.C. Sproul, in his pamphlet, Now That's A Good Question says ...

"If there is any element of the universe that is outside of His authority, then He no longer is God over all. In other words, sovereignty belongs to deity. Sovereignty is a natural attribute of the Creator. God owns what He makes, and He rules what He owns."

In his book, *Evangelism and the Sovereignty of God*, J.I. Packer notes

"It [Divine sovereignty] embraces everything that comes into the biblical picture of God as Lord and King in His world, the One who 'worketh all things after the counsel of His own will', directing every process and ordering every event for the fulfilling of His own eternal plan."

Our Sovereign God has a plan for each and everyone of our lives. And He wants to lead us through each step of the way. That is why one of the names of God, Emmanuel, means "God with us."

God wants to be intimately involved in our lives. He wants us to know His voice and follow Him.

In fact, He wanted to be with us so strongly that He sent His Son, a part of Himself, to physically walk the earth. That baby in the manger was God and He is still with us today.

The truly good news is that God is not a distant God, a God to be feared and avoided, a God of revenge, but a God who is moved by our pains and participates in the fullness of the human struggle. . . . God is a compassionate God. This means, first of all, that God is a God who has chosen to be God-with-us. . . . As soon as we call God "God-with-us," we enter into a new relationship of intimacy with him. By calling God Emmanuel, we recognize God's commitment to live in solidarity with us, to share our joys and pains, to defend and protect us, and to suffer all of life with us. The God-with-us is a close God, a God whom we call our refuge, our stronghold, our wisdom, and even, more intimately, our helper, our shepherd, our love. We will never really know God as a compassionate God if we do not understand with our heart and mind that *"And the Word became flesh, and dwelt among us, and we saw His glory, glory as of the only begotten from the Father, full of grace and truth."* (John 1:14).

In the prophecy of the virgin birth, Isaiah 7:14, the prophet Isaiah declares, *"Therefore the Lord Himself will give you a sign: Behold, a virgin will be with child and bear a son, and she will call His name Immanuel."* This prophecy had an initial fulfillment during Isaiah's day, but it ultimately refers to the birth of Jesus, as we see in Matthew 1:22–23: *"All this took place to fulfill what the Lord had said through the prophet: Now all this took place to fulfill what was spoken by the Lord through the prophet: (23) 'BEHOLD, THE VIRGIN SHALL BE WITH CHILD AND SHALL BEAR A SON, AND THEY SHALL CALL HIS NAME IMMANUEL,' which translated means, 'GOD WITH US.'"*) This does not mean, however, that the Messiah's actual given name would be Immanuel.

There are many "names" given to Jesus in the Old and New Testaments, and Immanuel is one of them. Isaiah elsewhere prophesied of the Messiah, *"For a child will be born to us, a son will be given to us; And the government will rest on His shoulders; And His name will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Eternal Father, Prince of Peace."* (Isaiah 9:6). Jesus was never called by any of those "names" by the people He met in Galilee or Judea, but they are accurate descriptions of who He is and what He does. The angel said that Jesus *"He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High; and the Lord God will give Him the throne of His father David;"* (Luke 1:32) and "the Son of God" (verse 35), but neither of those was His given name.

The prophet Jeremiah writes of "a King who will reign wisely" (Jeremiah 23:5), and he gives us the name of the coming Messiah: *"And this is the name by which he will be called: 'The LORD is our righteousness'"* (Jeremiah 23:6, *"In His days Judah will be saved, And Israel will dwell securely; And this is His name by which He will be called, 'The LORD our righteousness.'"*). Jesus was never called "The Lord Our Righteousness" as a name, but we can call Him that! He brings the righteousness of God to us. He is God in the flesh, and the One who makes us righteous.

- *1 Corinthians 1:30 But by His doing you are in Christ Jesus, who became to us wisdom from God, and righteousness and sanctification, and redemption,*
- *2 Corinthians 5:21 He made Him who knew no sin to be sin on our behalf, so that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.*

George Herman Ruth was named George, of course. But we can call him other things, and we're talking about the same person: "Babe," "the Bambino," "the Sultan of Swat," or "the Colossus of Clout." The names for Babe Ruth multiplied due to his personal history and his signature talent on the ballfield. In a similar way, we can call Jesus by His given name, but we can also call Him "Immanuel." Or "Wonderful," "Counselor," "Prince of Peace," or "The Lord Our Righteousness." The names of Jesus Christ multiply due to His divine nature and miraculous work.

To say that Jesus would be called "Immanuel" means Jesus is God and that He dwelt among us in His incarnation and that He is always with us. Jesus was God in the flesh. Jesus was God making His dwelling among us (John 1:1, 14). God keeps His promises. The virgin Mary bore a son. Two thousand years ago, in Bethlehem, we see that baby born and lowered into the hay for a resting place. That baby, as incredible as it seems, is God. That Baby is God with us. Jesus, as our Immanuel, is omnipotence, omniscience, perfection, and the love that never fails—with us.

No, Joseph did not name Jesus "Immanuel," but Jesus' nature makes Him truly Immanuel, "God with us." Isaiah told us to watch for Immanuel, the virgin-born Son of God. He will save us; He will reconcile people to God and restore creation to its original beauty. We know Him as Jesus, but we can also call Him "God with us," because that's exactly who He is.