

What is the Reformed Faith? (1) The Sovereignty of God

Dearly beloved brothers and sisters in the Lord,

When I think of the Reformed Faith what is the first thing that comes into my mind? My God is sovereign. Other doctrines also come to mind: the 5 points of Calvinism represented by the acrostic T.U.L.I.P. or Predestination but they are not the distinctive doctrine of the Reformed Faith. Yes, the Sovereignty of God distinguishes the Reformed Faith.

As God's children, one of the most important thing is that we should to know our Heavenly Father and have a right understanding of Him. This will ensure that we do not have the wrong idea who God is otherwise we might have idols of our own imaginations. Worse still, we have our own conceptions of God when He is not really what we think He is. But, where do we learn who God is? Can we learn from creation. No, from creation we see the power and majesty of God revealed but it does not tell who God really is. The only reliable place is from the Holy Scriptures which is God's Word to us. .

How do I explain God's sovereignty. It is His absolute authority and rule over all things. I Tim. 6.15 says, "Which in his times he shall shew, *who is* the blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings, and Lord of lords." To say that God is sovereign is to confess that God is God! To say that God is sovereign is to confess that He has absolute authority and rule and there is no one who has greater sovereignty than Him. Psalm 115.3, "But our God *is* in the heavens: he hath done whatsoever he hath pleased."

Furthermore, there are no one and nothing outside the control of God. To say that God is sovereign is to confess that He is the one who ordains all things in creation and all events to take place in this world. Even, the fall of Adam into sin, the Tsunami and all the calamities that occur in this world are under the plan of God.

God is Sovereign in Salvation

This means God saves us whom He has chosen in eternity. We deny this truth when we teach that through the death of Christ on the cross, salvation is only made possible. Then, it is up to man to make the final decision in order to be saved. In other words, salvation is a cooperative effort. We believe that God's sovereignty is seen in Him saving us without the works of men and nothing can thwart the purposes of God. Why did God save me? Why me?

God is Sovereign in His Love

It is God's particular love upon His people whom He has chosen and none else. We deny God's sovereignty when we teach that God loves everybody head for head. The issue is: if God loves everyone, why is then so many who go lost in eternity? Then, what we have is a weak God; a God who is unable to accomplish His will because God's will is dependant upon the will of man. We believe God saves us effectually and irresistibly. Why did God love me? Why me? What is it about me that deserves all these? God loves me according to His love and pity.

God is Sovereign in His Mercy

God shows mercy upon us because He wills to save us. And if anyone are to protest against God. We answer with the words of the apostle, "Thou wilt say then unto me, Why doth he yet find fault? For who hath resisted his will? Nay but, O man, who art thou that repliest against God? Shall the thing formed say to him that formed *it*, Why hast thou made me thus? Hath not

the potter power over the clay, of the same lump to make one vessel unto honour, and another unto dishonour? *What* if God, willing to shew *his* wrath, and to make his power known, endured with much longsuffering the vessels of wrath fitted to destruction: And that he might make known the riches of his glory on the vessels of mercy, which he had afore prepared unto glory, Even us, whom he hath called, not of the Jews only, but also of the Gentiles?" Rom. 9.19-24.

Beloved, God is Sovereign. Have you experienced that God is your Sovereign or are YOU the sovereign over your own life?

By Pastor Paul Goh