

How Big Is Your God Part 4

Steve Berger October 9, 2016

Review

- God's Self-Existence, Transcendence, Eternalness...
- **Point in whole series** — Is your God Big enough to **Worship Passionately, Love Intimately, Trust Confidently, Obey Faithfully, Proclaim Fearlessly?**

If He's NOT, you need a fresh, biblical revelation of Who He Is — because the True and Living God is worthy of your Passionate Worship, Intimate Love, Confident Trust, Faithful Obedience, Fearless Proclamation!

- Today — **God's Sovereignty**

God's Sovereignty

God has the power and authority to do His will, according to His own plans and purposes

Question — What is God's ultimate goal for the child of God?

- **Romans 8:29**
For whom He foreknew, He also predestined to be conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the firstborn among many brethren.
- **Therefore** — in His sovereignty, there will be **times of blessing** and **times of suffering... just like there was for Jesus** — so we'll be conformed into His image.

The sovereignty of God, as it relates to blessing and suffering, is seen the clearest in the life of Job.

- **Job was an incredibly blessed man** — 10 kids, 1 wife, 7 thousand sheep, 3 thousand camels, 500 yoke oxen, 500 donkeys, very large household, greatest man in the east — YES — God's Sovereignty!

Next — God's sovereignty that allowed suffering...

- **Job 1:6-22**
Now there was a day when the sons of God came to present themselves before the LORD, and Satan also came among them. And the LORD said to Satan, "From where do you come?" So Satan answered the LORD and said, "From going to and fro on the earth, and from walking back and forth on it." Then the LORD said to Satan, "Have you considered My servant Job, that there is none like him on the earth, a blameless and upright man, one who fears God and shuns evil?" So Satan answered the LORD and said, "Does Job fear God for nothing? Have You not made a hedge around him, around his household, and around all that he has on every side? You have blessed the work of

his hands, and his possessions have increased in the land. But now, stretch out Your hand and touch all that he has, and he will surely curse You to Your face!” And the LORD said to Satan, “Behold, all that he has is in your power; only do not lay a hand on his person.” So Satan went out from the presence of the LORD. Now there was a day when his sons and daughters were eating and drinking wine in their oldest brother's house; and a messenger came to Job and said, “The oxen were plowing and the donkeys feeding beside them, when the Sabeans raided them and took them away—indeed they have killed the servants with the edge of the sword; and I alone have escaped to tell you!” While he was still speaking, another also came and said, “The fire of God fell from heaven and burned up the sheep and the servants, and consumed them; and I alone have escaped to tell you!” While he was still speaking, another also came and said, “The Chaldeans formed three bands, raided the camels and took them away, yes, and killed the servants with the edge of the sword; and I alone have escaped to tell you!” “While he was still speaking, another also came and said, “Your sons and daughters were eating and drinking wine in their oldest brother's house, and suddenly a great wind came from across the wilderness and struck the four corners of the house, and it fell on the young people, and they are dead; and I alone have escaped to tell you!” Then Job arose, tore his robe, and shaved his head; and he fell to the ground and worshiped. And he said: “Naked I came from my mother's womb, And naked shall I return there. The LORD gave, and the LORD has taken away; Blessed be the name of the LORD.” In all this Job did not sin nor charge God with wrong.

- **There's more** — in Job 2:1-10, God's sovereignty allows Satan to have another go at Job...
 - painful boils form head to toe, scraping with pottery, sitting in ashes

***Question** — Why would God in His sovereignty allow such suffering? Bothers us...*

- **Philippians 3:10-11**

That I may know Him and the power of His resurrection, and the fellowship of His sufferings, being conformed to His death, if, by any means, I may attain to the resurrection from the dead.

- Conformed into His image
- **suffering, like no other thing, reveals to us the depth of our trust in God**
- **suffering reveals to Satan the depth of our love for God**
 - Satan was wrong about Job, God knew it, and showed Job off

Sometimes God just wants to show off to Satan — the depth of our love and trust for God

***Question** — Are you in? Is your God BIG enough to be Sovereign over your life, or is He just your genie fulfilling your wishes?*

**God's sovereignty isn't always easy —
but it is always spiritually beneficial! TRUST!**

Three ways to respond to God's Sovereign hand while suffering

Keep worshiping

- **Job 1:20**

Then Job arose, tore his robe, and shaved his head; and he fell to the ground and worshiped.

- amazing man — in midst of suffering he knew God was still worthy of worship, he knew he couldn't become disillusioned and bitter, he knew where he needed to go!

**In times of suffering there will be a battle for your soul,
to become bitter or to remain a worshiper —
understand God's sovereignty and remain a worshiper!**

Keep spiritual/eternal perspective

- **Job 1:21**

And he said: "Naked I came from my mother's womb, and naked shall I return there. The LORD gave, and the LORD has taken away; Blessed be the name of the LORD."

*Application — came with nothing, leaving with nothing, LORD gives and takes,
blessed be... so simple, and yet so profoundly deep and trusting*

You can't let your emotional perspective override your spiritual perspective

- **Job 2:9-10**

Then his wife said to him, "Do you still hold fast to your integrity? Curse God and die!" But he said to her, "You speak as one of the foolish women speaks. Shall we indeed accept good from God, and shall we not accept adversity?" In all this Job did not sin with his lips.

Job refused foolish, emotional perspective, kept spiritual perspective

- **Genesis 50:20 — Joseph**

But as for you, you meant evil against me; but God meant it for good, in order to bring it about as it is this day, to save many people alive.

- **Romans 8:28 — Paul**

And we know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are the called according to His purpose.

- **Mark 7:37 — Jesus**

He does all things well.

KEEP SPIRITUAL PERSPECTIVE, NOT EMOTIONAL, BITTER, DISILLUSIONMENT!

Keep trusting

- **Job 13:15**

Though He slay me, yet will I trust Him.

Application — even if He slays me, I will trust Him that it is well, right, purposeful

- **Matthew 26:36-39 — Jesus**

Then Jesus came with them to a place called Gethsemane, and said to the disciples, “Sit here while I go and pray over there.” And He took with Him Peter and the two sons of Zebedee, and He began to be sorrowful and deeply distressed. Then He said to them, “My soul is exceedingly sorrowful, even to death. Stay here and watch with Me.” He went a little farther and fell on His face, and prayed, saying, “O My Father, if it is possible, let this cup pass from Me; nevertheless, not as I will, but as You will.”

- ... more trust after asking, “why?”

- **Luke 23:46**

And when Jesus had cried out with a loud voice, He said, “Father, ‘INTO YOUR HANDS I COMMIT MY SPIRIT.’ ” Having said this, He breathed His last.

Application — I’m struggling, any other way, not My will, but Yours, into Your hands I commit My spirit! That’s TRUST!

Keep worshipping, keep spiritual perspective and keep trusting,

Listen — so long as we *keep worshipping, keep spiritual perspective and keep trusting*, we’ll **grow and experience God according to His sovereign ways**. It’s when we **get off that course that we lose sight...** as Job did, until **God realigned his thinking**, and then **Job testified...**

- **Job 42:1-6**

Then Job answered the LORD and said: “I know that You can do everything, and that no purpose of Yours can be withheld from You. You asked, ‘Who is this who hides counsel without knowledge?’ Therefore I have uttered what I did not understand, things too wonderful for me, which I did not know. Listen, please, and let me speak; You said, ‘I will question you, and you shall answer Me.’ I have heard of You by the hearing of the ear, but now my eye sees You. Therefore I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes.”

Application — “I know you can do anything you want, I got off track and started complaining, I didn’t get it then, but I do now, I’m not blaming You, I see Who You are, I’m sorry.”

Is this maybe you today? — By the way — God chose to bless Job again, more than He did prior!

Worship, perspective and trust will keep you from bitter disillusionment.

It also positions you to receive God’s power in your suffering!

- **2 Corinthians 12:7-10**

And lest I should be exalted above measure by the abundance of the revelations, a thorn in the flesh was given to me, a messenger of Satan to buffet me, lest I be exalted above measure. Concerning this thing I pleaded with the Lord three times that it might depart from me. And He said to me, “My grace is sufficient for you, for My strength is made perfect in weakness.” Therefore most gladly I will rather boast in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me. Therefore I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in needs, in persecutions, in distresses, for Christ's sake. For when I am weak, then I am strong.

God offers us sufficient grace in our suffering, and power in our weakness, not just to endure suffering, but to be strong in the midst of it!

Closing thoughts

If you are in a season of blessing — steward it well, give thanks to God, use all your resources to glorify Him, don't become arrogant or complacent in your abundance.

If you are in a season of suffering or trial — keep worshiping, keep perspective, keep trusting, receive strength in your weakness for God's purposes to be worked in and through you! He is doing a sovereign, purposeful, eternal work in you.

Discussion Questions

1. What is God's ultimate goal for the child of God? How does that reconcile with your own goals for your life?
2. Have you considered that the suffering in your life has been allowed by God? How has that affected your relationship with God?
3. Read Job 1:21. Why is this simple truth so profoundly deep?
4. Read Romans 8:28. Is the first half of the verse true without the second half of the verse?
5. Are you in a season of blessing, or a season of suffering or trial? What have you learned from today's teaching that will support you in your life's journey?

Before the Throne: Worship Night

Wednesday, October 12th — 6:30 — Sanctuary