

Should We Make an Issue of the Sovereignty of God?

by Charles Woodruff

It might not be realized in the average church today, but God's Sovereignty is a very real issue indeed. Though many preachers never mention it, many don't understand it, and many try to hush it up (to "avoid controversial subjects"), it is still a very real issue. The reason I say this is because most of our modern churches are the fruit of modern, or man-centered, evangelism. This is evangelism that is based on the sinner's mental assent to a particular Bible verse or verses: a "decision" to follow Jesus. It is rarely (if ever) mentioned what *God* designs to do and His love is exalted over and above all of His other attributes. God's holiness is practically unheard of in our day. Yet, holiness is the central attribute of God. The seraphims, in the presence of God, cry one to another, "Holy, holy, holy, is the Lord of hosts" (Isaiah 6:3). They do not cry, "Loving, loving, loving, is the Lord of hosts." Unless God's love is preached with His holiness in view, it is a warped concept of love.

It is no wonder that churches are filled with so-called "Carnal Christians." They have been taught that God is some kind of old grandpa in a heavenly rocking chair saying, "I know you have been naughty, but I love you, and if you will just accept my Son as your Savior, everything will be alright between us." And where would this deity of modern evangelism be if he did not have his little helpers, the "soul winners" with a "Romans road map to heaven," and their canned sales-talk "plan of salvation"? Of course, this "god" could not do without them! I get so tired of hearing preachers

say, "We're the only arms and legs God has." Hogwash! These preachers ought to know better than this. God made our arms and legs, and He is not in need of our hands, but we sure need His: "The Lord's hand is *not* shortened, that it cannot save . . ." (Isaiah 59:1). God Almighty needs no one or anything (Acts 17:25), for John the Baptist said: "And think not to say within yourselves, We have Abraham to our father: for I say unto you, that God *is able* of the stones to raise up children unto Abraham" (Matthew 3:9). Is this Sovereign God, this absolute Monarch of the universe, *your God?*

How we need a modern John the Baptist to cry out against the sins of today's religious people! See Isaiah 58:1 and Matthew 3:2. Instead of our pulpiteers preaching like John the Baptist, they are more concerned about splitting hairs over prophecy and "dispensational truth." Yet, God says, "*Cry aloud.*" So many today, are not experiencing true conversion and a conforming to the blessed image of Christ Jesus.

Meanwhile, churches figure out new ways to entice more to come (so they can have the world's largest Sunday School). Getting more people to attend Sunday School has become an end in itself. What about the true Gospel being taught the ones already coming, then these being grounded and fed, before so much emphasis is laid upon "winning others." I heard one preacher say that the minute you are saved you are to be a "soul winner," and go "get" somebody else "saved." I will grant that you will want to see others saved, but first you need to "desire the sincere milk of the Word, that ye may grow thereby" (1 Peter 2:2). To be an effective witness, one that pleases God, you need power, which comes only with yieldedness to the Holy Spirit (see Acts 1:8 and Romans 12:1).

Because so many, In the religious world are playing a "numbers game," there are many folks who just become a statistic on a church roll in these days. Too many profess, but do not *possess* Christ! Too many who are

joining our modern churches have not been instructed in Christian dress or Christian conduct. How many ever raise objections to receiving anyone into the membership of the average church? The quality has been sacrificed for quantity. Anyone should be welcomed in any true gospel-preaching church (to *hear* the gospel), but not be accepted as a member until they bring forth those fruits which prove their repentance (Matthew 3:8).

Yes, the Sovereignty of God is *already* an issue. If more of our modern churches and preachers believed in God's Sovereignty, their methods would drastically change. When men become convinced and certain that salvation is 100% of the pure, sovereign grace of God, preaching takes on a new light. Men who believe this great truth don't go around trying to help God, but *beg His help* for them and their hearers!

"Not unto us, O Lord, not unto us, but unto thy name give glory, for thy mercy, and for thy truth's sake." (Psalm 115:1).