

Grace & Truth Inside Out
The Sovereignty of God, Part 2: His Purpose & Design
Various Passages

[Intro/NLR; Read Job 38:1-41; 40:1-14; 42:1-6; EB poem/Prayer]

I. God's Purpose

- A. Why (and why that is best for us)
 - GOD'S GLORY!!! (Isaiah 48:9-11; 49:6)
 - Why best for us is that it is ultimate satisfaction and glorification
[*Piper quote*; cf Romans 8:28-30]
- B. What
 - Glorification through Redemption
 - Genesis 3; 12; Isaiah 49ff; Luke 2; Romans 8; Revelation 21:22-27
- C. When
 - Eternity Past through Eternity Future
 - Psalm 90:2 (I AM); John 1:1-3; Revelation 22:13

II. God's Design - Genesis 1-3 is foundational

- A. Intentional
- B. Complete
- C. Good...Very Good

- Physical world, Man/Woman, Human responsibility, Original sin, Jesus' foretold, Birth of peoples, Cultivation of planet, etc.

III. Resulting Questions to ask regarding Cultural Hot Topics

- Who tells us I AM...before all of this, during all of this, after all of this?
- Whose world are we living in anyway?
- If God is acting perfectly in accordance with His purpose and His design, should we be afraid?
- If God does have purpose and design, shouldn't we desire to be in line with them?

IV. Applications

- Recognize God is alive and well
- Submit to His rule
- Be confident in Him
- Seek to stay in alignment with Him

GMD²

Pick your favorite secular news source (e.g., Tulsa World, USA Today, NPR, Fox News, New York Times, BBC, Huffington Post, Vox, The Blaze, Reddit, Other). Reflecting on the Scripture passages we covered today, spend some time developing your own list of questions about the stories you see. Don't make these questions, though, based on your opinions, your fears, your biases, etc. Instead, make them questions that prioritize God's sovereignty - His purpose and His design.

After you have your list of questions, pray through them. As you pray, focus on God, His purpose and His design. Commit - and submit - your personal opinions, fears and biases to Him. After you've spent time praying and pondering, find another person with whom you can share your takeaways from the process you've just gone through.

Where were you, O FBC, when I established my purpose and design in eternity past?
 Where were you, O FBC, when I numbered each one of your days when there was not yet one of them?
 Where were you, O FBC, when I set in motion my plan to bring glory to my name among all peoples?
 Where were you, O FBC, when out of the nations of ancient past I brought forth this nation you now call your home?
 Where were you, O FBC, when I set your rulers upon their thrones, all the while knowing their ways and reigning over the work of their hands?
 Am I surprised by the state of affairs in 2015? Is it beyond my grasp? Is it too far out of my reach? Though the path indeed is overtaken by the encroaching night, have I somehow lost control of the morning? Do I not rule over the day as well? And will not the sun rise yet again?
 Who are you, O young and vigorous student, to take measure of your strength and consider it for self-seeking ends?
 Who are you, O employee, to be mindful of personal status and advantage?
 Who are you, O business owner, to look out across the balcony and marvel at the wonder of your position and worth?
 Who are you, O woman, to strive for a place of prominence only granted by Me?
 Who are you, O man, to glory in that which can never fulfill or sustain?
 Who are you, mankind, to rest in the promise of eternity the essence of which is dying to self, yet living life in the here and now driven by the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes and the boastful pride of life? Indeed, living life that is not only not abundant, but is hardly distinguishable from those worshipping in an idolatrous wasteland?

O Lord, we know that You can do all things, and that no purpose of Yours can be thwarted. You have said, "Who is this that hides counsel without knowledge?" Therefore we have declared that which we did not understand, things too wonderful for us, which we did not know. You have said, "Hear, now, and I will speak; I will ask You, and You instruct me." We have heard of You by the hearing of the ear; but now our eyes see You; therefore we retract, and we repent in dust and ashes.

For the sake of My name I delay My wrath, and for My praise I restrain it for you, in order not to cut you off. Behold, I have refined you, but not as silver; I have tested you in the furnace of affliction. For My own sake, for My own sake, I will act; for how can My name be profaned? And My glory I will not give to another...[God] says, "It is too small a thing that You should be My Servant to raise up the tribes of Jacob and to restore the preserved ones of Israel; I will also make You a light of the nations so that My salvation may reach to the end of the earth." (Isaiah 48:9-11; 49:6)

- God's exaltation of his own glory is not narcissistic but loving, because it directs our attention away from ourselves to the one glorious reality that can satisfy our souls forever.
- God's self-glorification is not the alternative to our glorification but the foundation and goal of it, as Schreiner will make plain.
- The real cultural bondage today is not that too many people are making God radically God-centered, but that most people cannot conceive of his being loving unless he is man-centered.

John Piper, from <http://www.desiringgod.org/articles/gods-loving-self-exaltation-a-response-to-ben-witherington>

And we know that God causes all things to work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to His purpose. For those whom He foreknew, He also predestined to become conformed to the image of His Son, so that He would be the firstborn among many brethren; and these whom He predestined, He also called; and these whom He called, He also justified; and these whom He justified, He also glorified. (Romans 8:28-30)

I saw no temple in it, for the Lord God the Almighty and the Lamb are its temple. And the city has no need of the sun or of the moon to shine on it, for the glory of God has illumined it, and its lamp is the Lamb. The nations will walk by its light, and the kings of the earth will bring their glory into it. In the daytime (for there will be no night there) its gates will never be closed; and they will bring the glory and the honor of the nations into it; and nothing unclean, and no one who practices abomination and lying, shall ever come into it, but only those whose names are written in the Lamb's book of life. (Revelation 21:22-27)

Before the mountains were born or You gave birth to the earth and the world, even from everlasting to everlasting, You are God. (Psalm 90:2)

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things came into being through Him, and apart from Him nothing came into being that has come into being. (John 1:1-3)

I am the Alpha and the Omega, the first and the last, the beginning and the end. (Revelation 22:13)