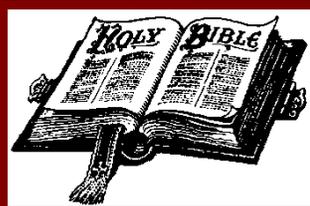


The
**Sovereignty
of God**



And Man's
Free Will

Written By Rev.
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Preface

This eBook will look at man's "Free Will" as it co-exists with "God's Sovereignty." We will explore Biblical definitions, examples and applications of how they operate in our lives.

We will call upon theologians, pastors and bible teachers for their impute so we get a really good picture.

The Bible will, however, be our main reference and when ever possible, we will be using the KJV.

We will try to answer theses questions and more as we get into the discussion:

1. Does God rule with an iron fist?
2. Does man really have a choice?
3. How does God know everything?
4. Can we really know God's will?
5. What does Sovereignty mean?
6. How does the nature of God determine His Will?
7. Why can't we just do our own thing?
8. Is there a way to align our will with God's?
9. Does God choose some and reject others?
10. Are bad things part of God's Sovereign Will?

Introduction

Am I in control of my own destiny or is it all planned out already and I am just a pawn in a much larger scheme? Sometimes I feel like I have no control over my life. Do you feel that way? The issue is of “Free Will” verses the Sovereignty of God. This has been a source of controversy in the church for centuries. Is God in control or am I? Can my will and God’s will operate in the same moment of time?

God is the Potter and we are the clay, and the clay, Adam and Eve, were created with free will to have a loving, meaningful relationship with God and with each other. God did not create man in the image of a robot, without free will. God created Adam and Eve to reflect the most important characteristic of God, which is love. God is love and He is free to show His love to all of His creation. Likewise, He made Adam and Eve in His own image so that they could freely show their love to God and to each other, without sin. However, when Adam and Eve sinned, giving way to the temptation of Satan, their free will became marred by sin. Of course, God knew beforehand that Adam and Eve would succumb to the temptation because He knows the end from the beginning.

God is the supreme Ruler over this universe that He created. His plan affects every detail of this creation. This plan is eternal, and there never was another plan. Thus, terms like purpose, foreknowledge, predestination, and election are logically related, and they are equally timeless.

Sovereignty And Foreknowledge

The **Sovereignty of God** is the Biblical teaching that all things are under God's rule and control, and that nothing happens without His direction. God works, not just some things, but all things, according to the counsel of His own will (see **Eph. 1:11**). His purposes are all-inclusive and never thwarted (see **Isa. 46:11**); nothing takes Him by surprise. The sovereignty of God is not merely that God has the power and right to govern all things, but that He does so, always and without exception. In other words, God is not merely sovereign in principle, but sovereign in practice.

I know what you may be thinking...how can God know everything about every creature. It’s called Foreknowledge. He knows before it comes to pass.

That is one of the ways that makes Him God and separates Him from us. There is a good example of foreknowledge in **Romans 8:29-30**. Here's what it says, "For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren.³⁰ Moreover whom he did predestinate, them he also called: and whom he called, them he also justified: and whom he justified, them he also glorified.

In plain English, this scripture says...God knew all of those who would come to Christ before they came to Christ. Because He knew ahead of time, He pre-determined their destination, which was to be like Christ. He did all of this so Christ could be the 1st born of many, a prototype. That's why we are justified by the blood of Christ and glorified with Him...because it is God's plan of the ages. All of this is done in the sovereignty of God. He alone has done this great thing for us who have believed.

"Although the sovereignty of God is universal and absolute, it is not the sovereignty of blind power. It is coupled with infinite wisdom, holiness, and love. This doctrine, when properly understood, is most comforting and reassuring. Who would not prefer to have his or her affairs in the hands of a God of infinite power, wisdom, holiness and love, rather than to have them left to fate, or chance, or irrevocable natural law, or to shortsighted and perverted self? Those who reject God's sovereignty should consider what alternatives they have left." Loraine Boettner. (There is none)

God created all beings including the angels but some have fallen. Let us be sure that this does not make God the author of sin, for, as man, they fell from their created state. This includes all false gods. But God is over them, whether they be angels, demons, or the god of this world, the devil. The Psalmist said, "..Thou are exalted far above all gods", **Psalm 97:9**, and again, ".. Our Lord is above all gods," **Psalm 135.5**, and also "O give thanks unto the God of gods." **Psalm 136.2**.



Sovereignty And Omnipresence

The term *omnipresent* has caused trouble in Christian circles for years. Basically, being *omnipresent* means being present everywhere at the same time. Can this term be applied to God? What does Scripture tell us?

Ask yourself: is there any physical location in this universe where we can hide from the presence of God? The answer, according to Scripture, is a resounding “No!” In fact, King David posed this question directly, asking: “Where can I go from Your Spirit? Or *where can I flee from Your presence?* If I ascend into heaven, You are there; if I make my bed in hell [the grave], behold, You are there. If I take the wings of the morning, and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea, even there Your hand shall lead me, and Your right hand shall hold me” (**Psalm 139:7–10**).

David answers the question beautifully: it is futile to search for a place to hide from the presence of God (and it is unwise to try—just ask Jonah!). In this sense, God’s infallible word shows that He is omnipresent—within His vast creation, there is no place where you can hide from His presence.

Still, we must be careful with our terms! Many have tried to twist God’s omnipresence to portray Him as some kind of shapeless “blob”—even though the Bible *clearly* shows that God has a body and a shape—and it is a shape like ours! Consider **Genesis 1:26**, which tells us that man is made in God’s *image* and *likeness*—words that *do* convey a sense of *shape*. We do *not* use human philosophies to avoid the clear statements of Scripture! Consider, as well, the passage in which God says *unambiguously* that He has a face, a hand and a back (**Exodus 33:18–23**)! The only way to understand this passage from Exodus *without making a mockery of God’s word* is to agree that God has a shape and a body!

So, how is God “everywhere”? We already read the answer, in David’s words: “Where can I go from your Spirit?” (**Psalm 139:7**). It is by their Spirit that the Father and the glorified Christ have complete access to their creation! Through His Spirit, God’s reach extends to every nook and cranny of the universe, and there is—as David wrote—no place to flee from His presence. Yet He still retains a shape—a body—ruling in glory from

His throne in heaven. It is *from there* that “His eyes behold” the sons of men (**Psalm 11:4**).

We must also note that although God is omnipresent through His Spirit, we can become separated from Him. In fact, we are warned, “your iniquities have separated you from your God; and your sins have hidden His face from you, so that He will not hear” (**Isaiah 59:2**). Jesus Christ experienced this horrible separation during His crucifixion, when on our behalf He took upon Himself the full penalty of our sins (**cf. Mark 15:34; Isaiah 53:4–5**).

The world’s scholars and theologians often have a wrong idea about God’s omnipresence. But if we let God’s flawless word teach us what God’s omnipresence truly means, our footing is made sure.

Man may fight against God but he cannot win. He often uses evil men to accomplish His will in the battle. Jesus is said to have been slain from the foundation of the world, and the cross is one of the most credible evidences of God’s Sovereignty. “Crucify Him,” “Crucify Him”, was their cry, but when they nailed Him to the cross, they did not realize they were fulfilling God’s will for His Son. Peter said, “Him (Christ), being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken and by wicked hands have crucified and slain.” **Acts 2:23**. But this God of all power was not defeated in this evil act, for the Lord Jesus was raised from the dead. By it the devil was defeated and all his ministers of (self) righteousness. This is also a great example of Sovereignty and free will operating at the same time.

Judas, the one who betrayed him, had betrayed himself, and met his just due. John wrote, “...Jesus knew from the beginning...who should betray him. And he said, .. no man can come unto me, except it were given unto him of my Father .. Have not I chosen you twelve, and one of you is a devil (i.e., slanderer) ... He spake of Judas ... for he it was that should betray him, being one of the twelve.” (**John 6:64-71**.) Our God cannot fail, lie, or sin. Neither is He frustrated at man’s failure.

God is the author of His sovereign grace and mercy. “For he saith to Moses, I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion. So it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy... And whom he will, he hardeneth.” (**Rom. 9:15-16, 18**.)

This idea of God being in every place at all times is mindboggling. Think about it...as a believer, we know that we can walk with God, in His Spirit and communicate with Him in every situation. We trust that this is true because we believe that He is with us in everything we do and everywhere we go.

Now that you have a clearer understanding of the Sovereignty of God, let's talk about the Free Will of man. It's important to see that man is not sovereign. He is rarely in control of the events that shape his life. However, God has still given man a free will to choose his own lifestyle. In effect, we can be evil, nice, straight, gay or be and do anything we want. Our choices, however, comes with consequences. Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap. (**Gal. 6:7**)

A Good Definition of Free Will

Pastor Steve Weaver writes, "A good definition of free will is the ability of the mind to make choices in accordance with our natures." This definition of "free will" also applies to God's free will. He too is bound by His nature. Therefore, He cannot sin! Why? Because it is not His nature! But God does have a free will and, unlike human beings, He has an accompanying good and holy nature."

Jonathan Edwards, a 17th century Christian preacher and theologian, said that the will is the mind choosing: though there is a distinction between mind and will, the two are inseparable in action. We do not make a choice without our mind's approving that choice. We choose according to our strongest inclination at a given moment.

The Bible teaches that I'm not free to choose God because it is contrary to my nature. That's why we need new natures that are given to us by the Holy Spirit at regeneration. Unless a man is "Born Again" he cannot enter or even see the kingdom of God (**John 3**).

Though man is commanded to seek the Lord while He may be found, and to come to Christ, we watch in vain for man to do so. **Romans 3:11** literally reads, "There is no God seeker." **John 6:44** says, "No one can come to Me, (Jesus), unless the Father who sent Me draws him and I will raise him up on the last day." Literally, the verse says, "no one is able."

Gerhard Kittel's Theological Dictionary of the New Testament says that the word translated draw in **John 6:44** means "to compel by irresistible authority." It was used in classical Greek for drawing water from a well. We do not entice or persuade water to leave the well; we force it against gravity to come up by drawing it. So it is with us. We are so depraved that God must drag us to himself." (Chosen by God)

The Controversy

The controversy is in whom God has chosen to be His sons and daughters. Hyper-Calvinists believe that some are chosen and some are not from the foundation of the world. Free Will folks, of which I am one, believe what Jesus said, as recorded in **John 3:16**, qualifies all that accept His invitation. Listen to the verse and pay particular attention to the word, "WHOSOEVER" "For God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that **whosoever** believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life."

Jesus died for the sins of the whole world...every man, woman, boy and girl. The compelling call of God, through Jesus is an open invitation to whosoever will. These are the chosen of God that are pulled out of sin and given a new heart that can believe and worship Him.

Free Will & Sovereignty Working Hand And Hand

Now let's look at how free will and sovereignty work hand and hand in our daily lives to fulfill God's master plan for the ages. Miles Monroe, a famous evangelist, once explained it this way...when God created the earth; He drew up a master plan, like an architect, that took into account every soul and every action that man would take. Nothing was left out.

God is never taken by surprise because He saw it before the world was. It was put into His plan. Then He began to create, taking into account who would accept Jesus and who would not; who would need deliverance; who would need help, etc. Every prayer and every need was seen beforehand. Your provision was made way back then and is waiting for the right time. You just need to grab it by faith.

This pre-design gives us free will to choose without violating God's Sovereignty. I know that some will say, I prayed and believed but didn't get what I asked for. My provision didn't materialize. It could be as **James 4:3** says, "Ye ask, and receive not, because ye ask amiss, that ye may consume *it* upon your lusts." David Wilkerson, the author of *The Cross & The Switchblade*, offers six reasons that prayers go unanswered.

1. Our Prayers Are Aborted When They Are Not According To God's Will.
2. Our Prayers Can Be Aborted When They Are Designed To Fulfill An Inner Lust, Dreams, Or Illusions.
3. Our Prayers Can Be Denied When We Show No Diligence to Assist God In The Answer.
4. Our Prayers Can Be Aborted By A Secret Grudge Lodged In The Heart Against Another.
5. Our Prayers Can Be Aborted By Not Expecting Much To Come of Them.
6. Our Prayers Are Aborted When We Ourselves Attempt To Prescribe How God Should Answer.

It is impossible for us to fully understand the dynamics of a holy God molding and shaping the will of man. Scripture is clear that God knows the future (**Matthew 6:8; Psalm 139:1-4**) and has total sovereign control over all things (**Colossians 1:16-17; Daniel 4:35**). The Bible also says that we must choose God or be eternally separated from Him. We are held responsible for our actions (**Romans 3:19; 6:23; 9:19-21**). How these facts work together is impossible for a finite mind to comprehend (**Romans 11:33-36**).

People can take one of two extremes in regard to this question. Some emphasize the sovereignty of God to the point that human beings are little more than robots, simply doing what they have been sovereignty programmed to do. Others emphasize free will to the point of God not having complete control and/or knowledge of all things. Neither of these positions is biblical. The truth is that God does not violate our wills by choosing us and redeeming us. Rather, He changes our hearts so that our wills choose Him. "We love Him because He first loved us" (**1 John 4:19**), and "You did not choose me, but I chose you" (**John 15:16**).

What are we to do then? *First*, we are to trust in the Lord, knowing that He is in control (**Proverbs 3:5-6**). God's sovereignty is supposed to be a comfort to us, not an issue to be concerned about or debate over. *Second*, we are to live our lives making wise decisions in accordance with God's Word (**2 Timothy 3:16-17; James 1:5**). There will be no excuses before God for why we chose to disobey Him. We will have no one to blame but ourselves for our sin. *Last but not least*, we are to worship the Lord, praising Him that He is so wonderful, infinite, powerful, full of grace and mercy—and sovereign. (Got/Questions.org)

The Devil's Final Strategy

The devil's final strategy in deceiving believers is to make them doubt the faithfulness of God in answering prayer. Satan would have us believe God has shut His ears to our cry and left us to work things out for ourselves. *That's just not true.*

If you do not see the hand of God, you can bet that the problem is with you, not God. I'd suggest that you go back before the throne of God and stay there until you get an answer. Don't forget to take your Bible with you. "Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need." (**Hebrews 4:16**)

God dignifies us with free will, the power to make decisions of our own rather than having God or fate predetermine what we do. He desired freely given allegiance rather than robotic response to His will. Voluntary love and obedience are much better than automatic, predetermined responses. God created humankind with the option of loving and obeying Him, even though it meant that some would choose not to give allegiance to His rule. Freely given love is more valued than forced or parroted expressions. Since God has chosen to give humankind a free will, His sovereignty is not destroyed.

Consider now what the Bible teaches.

1. God created humans in his image. (**Genesis 1:26**) Unlike animals, which act mainly on instinct, we resemble our Creator in our capacity to display such qualities as love and justice. And like our Creator, we have free will.

2. To a great extent, we can determine our future. The Bible encourages us to “choose life . . . by listening to [God’s] voice,” that is, by choosing to obey his commands. (**Deuteronomy 30:19, 20**) This offer would be meaningless, even cruel, if we lacked free will. Instead of forcing us to do what he says, God warmly appeals to us: “O if only you would actually pay attention to my commandments! Then your peace would become just like a river.”—**Isaiah 48:18.**
3. Our success or failure is not determined by fate. If we want to succeed at an endeavor, we must work hard. “All that your hand finds to do,” says the Bible, “do with your very power.”(**Ecclesiastes 9:10**) It also says: “The plans of the diligent one surely make for advantage.”—**Proverbs 21:5.**

In God’s great design for His creation, Free will is a precious gift from God, for it lets us love Him with our “whole heart”—because we want to.—**Matthew 22:37.**

The Trap of An Erroneous Conclusion

The devil will always seek to lead us into confusion where he suggests a course of action that is not correct. The trap of an erroneous conclusion is his first weapon of choice. Here’s an example of an erroneous conclusion with a rebuttal.

Erroneous Conclusion: *God cannot be trusted. He wasn’t there when I needed Him. He is all-powerful, all-knowing and yet he did nothing. Trusting Him now seems pointless.*

Rebuttal: Blaming God when things go wrong is a clear indication that you never really put your trust in Him to start with. God is in full control of His creation. Part of that control is to allow man to have a free will to also be in full control.

When you gather thousands or even a few folks together that are all exercising their free will, things can get ugly. Some will get drunk, others will kill or steal and yet others will exercise good judgment in life. All this

interaction of free wills brings on different opinions, different lifestyles and different attitudes.

If God intervenes to stop the flow of our free will decisions, He tampers with the future and denies man his right to be a free moral agent. His actions would contradict His own will and plan for mankind. Man must be free to choose his own way in order to escape a robotic existence that is not what God or man wants.

The blame really lies with the free will decisions of mankind. That's why we have so many laws. We try to govern man's free will to diminish bad decisions that cause pain and suffering among the populace.

When you put your trust in God, you surrender your free will. He now is sovereign over your life. This is a huge commitment because you now desire to do the will of God and are willing to fore-go any and all self-rule. We call this, "Making Jesus Lord" over your life.

Allowing God to be sovereign over you does not stop the evil reign of Satan or eliminate bad things from popping up in your daily routine. It does, however, give you access to divine wisdom needed to handle a situation, power to withstand the temptations of the devil, weapons to wage war against the enemies of God and an assurance of ultimate victory.

You become a partner with your sovereign in the battle of the ages. Your faith in Him is essential. Without it, you cannot please him. **Hebrews 11:6** The apostle Paul said this, "For now we see through a glass, darkly; but then face to face: now I know in part; but then shall I know even as also I am known." **I Cor. 13:12**

To make judgments and assign blame when you do not see clearly is wrong. Sometimes it takes more faith to believe that God knows best than to draw an erroneous conclusion that blames God for the outcome of a life situation.

Just for the record, here's what the dictionary says about the word, "**Erroneous**" wrong; incorrect: "employers sometimes make erroneous assumptions" **synonyms:** wrong · incorrect · mistaken · in error · inaccurate · untrue · false · fallacious · unsound · specious · faulty · flawed · way out · full of holes

Man's Free Will Can Keep God From Getting His Way But it'll All In His Master Plan

Listen to Kenneth Boa from Bible.org...The Bible assumes that people made in the image of the free Creator are capable of freely creating on their own. This is at least part of what Scripture means when it says that humans are made in God's image (**Gen. 1:26–27**). We reflect God's self-determination. We think, act and determine our destinies out of our "heart."

The Lord sets before us the possibilities of life or death. But we freely actualize whatever possibilities our "heart" desires. We can use our freedom of choice in ways that directly contradict the Lord's will or in support of His will. People are not puppets that God secretly controls, but free agents who possess significant control of their own lives, and can either cooperate with, or resist, the will of their sovereign Creator.

This contradicts the popular notion that everything in history reflects God's sovereign will. History rather frequently reflects the will of creatures who opposed the sovereign will of God. The Bible clearly teaches that God unequivocally does not will sin. But obviously sin still occurs. Similarly, the Bible explicitly states that it is not God's will that any person would perish (**1 Tim. 2:4; 2 Pet 3:9**). But many nevertheless do perish. Hence, it is clear that God's will is not always accomplished, and God's heart is frequently grieved. Only in this light does Jesus' lament over Jerusalem make any sense: Jerusalem, Jerusalem, the city that kills the prophets and stones those who are sent to it! How often I have desired to gather your children together as a hen gathers her brood under her wings, and you were not willing! (**Matt. 23:37**)

The heart of God, clearly, is a heart which grants freedom, and which sometimes suffers profoundly because of it. In the case of **Matthew 23:37**, what the Son of God longed for He didn't get!

The fact that most theologians in the classical tradition found it necessary to attribute this lament not to the heart of the eternal God but only to the humanity of Christ simply testifies to the strength with which a non-biblical philosophical concept of God has held biblical truth hostage. However, It's all in God's Master Plan.

Reality In A Society of Free Wills

In any event, it is clear that the worldview of Scripture does not permit the assumption that the present reality (including sin and evil) can ultimately be explained by referring to a single divine will or mind. While the world as a whole has been created by God, the world as it is at any given moment is the result not only of God's will, but also the many other free will thinkers who possess the God-given ability to exercise their own wills, and thus to some extent determine the flow of world history.

The idea of reality or "the way things are" does not rest with God alone, but rather in the myriad of human wills that interact to shape the way things are at any given generation. This is not in contradiction to the Sovereignty of God that would say the God is in absolute control. He is, however, His control is self-determined by a nature of Love that allows man to think, make decisions and plan his own destiny, whether right or wrong.

I know what my Bible study friends will say next... They will refer to this scripture, "So shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth: it shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper *in the thing* whereto I sent it." **Isaiah 55:11**

It is true that God's word is supreme and absolute in every way. It is the very expression of His will. When He spoke in the beginning, it all came to pass. When He spoke through the prophets, it all came to be. Jesus is the Word incarnate or manifested in flesh. However, all of this does not alter the fact that God is sovereign and His will rules. The greatest thing I see is that, as recorded in Genesis, God rested on the 7th day from all, not some, but all His works. He saw you and me in all our rebellion, trying to shape our destinies but continually messing them up with a lack of vision and eternal insight. He rested from wrestling with our free wills in one big swoop, "But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us." **Romans 5:8**

God's sovereign will placed us in His Master Plan for redemption before He rested. If we realize this, we too can rest in the sovereignty of God's will that He knew what would befall our lives and how to help in times of need. We can rest in His love and trust in His will for us. When we do this, we come into agreement with God's will for us and immediately fall under His protection, provisions, counsel and grace.

Some Questions And Answers

1. Can we in any sense alter God's plan or will for our lives through our choices or our prayers?

God in His providence always desires what is best for His children, in fact, for all of His creation. But He still recognizes our freedom to make choices, even when they are not in our best interest or in keeping with His desire that all persons would be saved. While our choices may keep us from reaching the high design God has for each of our lives, such willful failure in no way defeats God's greater design for His kingdom. He will accomplish His larger purposes through other vessels if we choose not to respond to His loving overtures of salvation and righteousness. God is still sovereign, and neither Satan nor human free will can thwart that sovereignty. But God does not use His omnipotent sovereignty to violate the free will He has chosen to give all humankind. (Assemblies of God belief)

2. Do our prayers change God's mind or compromise His sovereignty?

Certainly not! God's foreknowledge of all that is going to happen assures that, while at the same time it does not negate the free will of humankind. It may appear to some that God changed His mind when in response to Abraham's request He promised to spare Sodom from judgment if there were sufficient righteous souls left in the city. But God knew all along how many there were, and His original intention was fulfilled. If prayer is made on behalf of a dying cancer victim, and healing comes, has God changed His mind? Again, certainly not. Into His relationship with His children, God has built a number of contingent promises. An example is **2 Chronicles 7:14**: "If my people...will humble themselves and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, then will I hear from heaven and will forgive their sin and will heal their land." God in no way changes His mind nor gives up any of His sovereignty when He answers a prayer like that. And He tells us in His Word to pray for healing (**James 5:14,15**). His answer, whether yes or no, in no way changes His mind or threatens His sovereignty. (Assemblies of God belief)

3. What does divine sovereignty mean?

Divine sovereignty means that God is God in fact, as well as in name, that He is on the Throne of the universe, directing all things, working all things

'after the counsel of His own will' (**Eph. 1:11**).” “God's supremacy over the works of His hands is vividly depicted in Scripture.

4. Did God choose me or did I choose Him?

“But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.” **Romans 5:8**

John 6:44 says, "No one can come to Me, (Jesus), unless the Father who sent Me draws him and I will raise him up on the last day." Literally, the verse says, "no one is able."

God first chose us and we responded. “For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.” **John 3:16**

Before creation, God chose us and made the provision, which was His only Son, to be the penalty for our sin. Then He left it up to us to respond to Him by exercising our free will.

5. How do we really know that God has a plan for us?

Jeremiah 29:11 gives us this insight: “For I know the plans I have for you,” declares the LORD, "plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future.”

Now this sounds like a really good plan and one that I want to be a part of. But is this plan one that will be carried out by God and unfold before us without us having to do anything? Do we just sit back and wait for good things to happen for us? God forbid!

Even though God wants great things for us, it is up to us to take the first steps to realizing the benefits of his plan. God may give us an initial push in the right direction but after that we are free to choose our own course. It is up to us to live up to our side of the plan.

There are many areas of the bible that we can look to and see how God wants us to hold up our side of His plan but one of the more pointed areas is in **Micah 6:8** where we are told: He has showed you, O man, what is good. And what does the LORD require of you? To act justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God.

God has given us His ten commandments, which basically tell us to lead a morally pure life. He has asked us to take care of our fellow man and keep Him (God) foremost in our lives.

Even though God has asked these things of us, God does not control every aspect of our lives. We do have free will and we have the ability to exercise that free will. With that ability, when we chose to exercise our free will, we must also live with the consequences even if those consequences can be hurtful to us and those around us. (Excerpts from The Whisper of God)

6. How does God make all this happen?

Remember **Romans 8:28**? It says, “And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose.” Here’s what it means to me:

- I am called by God according to His purposes.
- I do Love God and have exampled it by my faith in Jesus.
- Even though I fall short of God’s glory because of my sinful actions, He works it all together for good so I do not miss His blessings and that I stay on tract to inherit eternal life.

7. What role, if any, does Fate play in the Sovereignty of God?

A Full Definition of fate. 1 : the will or principle or determining cause by which things in general are believed to come to be as they are or events to happen as they do : destiny. 2 a : an inevitable and often adverse outcome, condition, or end b : disaster; especially : death.

There are those in Christian circles that believe that what happens in life, good or evil, is ordained by God. It is His Sovereign will. They say that God is responsible for all of life’s situations. In this train of thought, Fate fits in well because, by definition, it is the cause of everything that happens and thus is another word for God’s will. This type of thinking is not biblical. It has no place in reality.

Can you imagine God being the cause and responsible for over 50 million abortions, 29+ million killed by Hitler, a family’s death in a house fire, and people killed in a plane crash? These things are not the work of God nor are they caused by His sovereign will. God allows man to think for himself and

holds him accountable for his actions. If man does stupid things, it is not God's fault. It is man's fault.

Now let's look at Fate again. It has no foundation. It has no substance. It has no intelligence. It has no personality, compassion, love or even hate. It is only a hook for atheists to hang their hats on. They can say that they believe in Fate and not have to acknowledge the existence of God.

Conclusion

There should be no doubt in anyone's mind that the God of the Bible is absolutely sovereign over all. He is the creator of all things, living and non-living.

There is absolutely nothing that exists or can exist outside of God's sovereignty, including Satan. Good and evil are seen by God before they happen and are part of His plan for redemption or final judgment.

So, if your definition of 'free will' is the ability to make free choices, totally independent or outside of God's sovereignty, then there is no such thing as 'free will'. However, this is not how the Bible defines 'free will'. The Bible defines 'free will' as the freedom to make choices within the confines and boundaries set by God in accordance with His sovereign purpose for each individual and for all. Those who ignore God's Sovereign right and attempt to color outside the lines end up in a place the Bible calls, The Lake of Fire."

To believe that man has no free will is not an option because there are many verses in the Bible that support the concept of free will, for example: **Deuteronomy 30:19, John 7:17, 2 Corinthians 9:7, Galatians 6:7-10 and James 4:7-8**. It is important to believe in free will as taught in the Bible. Remove the concept of free will and we create a huge problem in understanding many aspects of life, including the understanding of God's love and His judgments. Without free will, our prayers and our relationship with God would become meaningless and we really would be reduced to mere robots. Yes, a robot can make choices, but it cannot have relationships.

The Bible makes it clear that we are not pawns in the hands of a deterministic and fatalistic universe. Every command in the Old and New Testaments is proof of the reality of human responsibility from God's perspective.

Though the human mind is inadequate to understand or explain the ways or mind of God, we have been given sufficient basis for placing trust in our sovereign, providential, personal, free-will granting Lord. He asks only that we trust Him, living by faith. We can confess with Paul, "We walk by faith, not by sight" (**2 Corinthians 5:7, KJV**). "Since we have been justified through faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have gained access by faith into this grace in which we now stand. And we rejoice in the hope of the glory of God" (**Romans 5:1,2, NIV**). Therein lies our answer to whatever questions we have concerning God's sovereignty and providence in relation to our free will. (Assemblies of God belief)

One final thought. You may not be hearing the Lord because you are not "Born Again." Listen to what Jesus said, **John 10:26-27**, "but you do not believe because you are not part of my flock. My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me." If you are not hearing His voice, well, what can I say? You are not of His flock? Only you can determine that.

It's a total life-changing commitment to follow Jesus. Maybe you did not make that kind of commitment. He must be Lord of all or He is not Lord at all. Here are a few scriptures to look up. I also have another eBook called, How To Be Born Again that can be downloaded free at www.ministryandmarketingservices.com.

Check these out...John 3:16, Romans 3:3 and 3:23, Romans 5:8 and 5:12

