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September 2012

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GOD'S SOVEIGNTY DEMONSTRATED

In my opinion nothing demonstrates God's sovereignty (His absolute rule and power over the universe) more than the manner in which He created you and me.

1. God physically created man, Adam, you and me, from dust and water - about 8 to 10 buckets of water and one bucket of dirt. When a human body is cremated, the funeral home delivers to the family a very small package or urn of ashes. (Reflect on this!) God spiritually created man "*in the image of God*," as a tri-partite being, spirit, soul and body.
2. God created you and me totally and completely by His own will. He did not ask for our permission. God created you for His own glory, as stated in many scriptures in both the Old and New Testaments.
3. God chose when you would be born, the particular millennium, century, year, week, and day. You could have been born in 3,000 B.C. or in 300 A.D.
4. God chose the continent, nation, and tribe in which you were born.
5. God chose the family and the mother and father who would give you life.
6. God decided whether you would be male or female.
7. God personally designed your DNA, which means that God decided the color of your skin, hair and eyes; He decided whether you would have a large or small frame, etc.
8. God also assigned to you your particular set of talents, abilities, mental capacities, and potentialities - athletics, math, language, art, mechanical ability, etc.
9. Taking into consideration man's fall into sin, God decreed that man would be born, flourish for a time, decline, and die.
10. God has assigned the date of our coming death, but I believe that He has given to us a certain amount of leeway regarding how long we will live. The 5th Commandment states that if we honor our father and mother it will lengthen our days. If we choose to spend our time sky-diving, base-jumping, smoking, drinking, or using meth, we may certainly shorten our days, but God still knows the day.
11. Within the parameters above, God has chosen to give you and me free will. We are free to choose to seek Him, submit to Him, love Him, and serve Him - - - and we are free to ignore Him and live as if He does not exist (the definition of "godlessness") or to defy Him and defy our conscience, and break His laws (the definition of "iniquity" and "lawlessness.")
12. We are not free to evade the consequences of our choices. "*It is given unto man once to die and then the judgment.*" "*As a man plants, so shall he harvest.*"
13. Again, God in His sovereignty chose to create man for His own glory and purposes. God also chose to love man and to provide for man's salvation. God's nature is love (*God is love*). But God's nature is also holiness (*God is holy*), and God is not weak and sentimental about man. (a) The rich young ruler chose to walk away from Jesus because the young man decided that the conditions laid out by Jesus were too expensive. Although Jesus loved him, Jesus let him go. (b) The prodigal son was free to stay in the pig pen until he decided to go back home to his father. The father loved and yearned for the son to come home, but he left the decision to the son. That is the meaning (the terrifying meaning) of free will. Think about your own sons and daughters.

GOD'S GUIDANCE

One part of God's sovereignty is that He has chosen to personally and individually guide you and me as we humble ourselves before Him and seek His wisdom and guidance. Bill Hybels tells a family story that illustrates this:

"I was driving my kids home one time and they started doing all the things that kids do to push a parent to the edge of sanity. They were picking at each other, raising their voices, kicking the seats, the works. I was growing tired of it, and eventually I let them have it. I went through first gear: "I've about had it with you..." Second gear: "Furthermore..." Then I jumped into third gear...and finally reached the high--pitched fourth gear: "And one last thing...!" My tirade lasted until the car was parked.

My daughter, Shauna, walked by and said almost casually, "I'm sorry about that, Dad." Todd, however, who was just seven at the time, has a very tender heart. He started crying, managed to choke out how sorry he was, and then just about shattered my soul when he gingerly stretched out his little hand to touch my arm. In that moment, God just leveled me. Todd's reaching out for my arm was really a kind of question: Was there any love left in my heart for him? I had been too harsh, and I knew it. The Spirit of God broke through my anger to chasten me: *Be careful, Bill. You have to confront misbehavior, but not that way. Can't you remember how graciously the heavenly Father has treated your misconduct?*

Ten minutes later I went into Todd's room and said, "Todd, you were wrong to behave the way you did in the car." "I know, Dad, I know---" "Let me finish," I broke in. "But I was wrong too. I was way too severe with you. Will you please forgive me?"

Todd wrapped his tiny arms around my neck and wouldn't let go. That kid's thirty-second hug meant the world to me. And it came as a direct result of listening for and receiving God's guidance in something as practical as parenting. The same God who guides me throughout my day wants to guide you."

WHY DO NATIONS GO TO WAR?

During my lifetime, the United States has been involved in the 2nd World War (in which I played a key part), the Cold War, the Korean War, the war in Vietnam, the war to free Kuwait, the Afghanistan and Iraq war, and police actions in Panama, Kosovo, and I forget the rest. There are some 40 wars going on in the world at any given moment, and Jesus said there would be "*wars and rumors of wars*" until the end.

I have watched the History Channel's programs on the Civil War, and on the 1st and 2nd World Wars over and over. I am fascinated not by the horrible suffering, inhumanity, and destruction of war, but by the reasons for war. What is it that drives nations to the insanity of war?

I did not review any of the many books on this subject, and I don't pretend to have any deep insights, but following are some of my thoughts:

The Bible never supports pacifism per se, nor does it condemn men who are involved in war as soldiers. Remember that God initiated and guided the wars led by Joshua, King David, and others! God had strong words of condemnation for kings and nations who were involved in evil wars of conquest and pillage. John the Baptist had godly words of advice for soldiers, and Jesus ministered to an officer, a Centurion, in the Roman army.

Romans 13 instructs citizens to submit to their governments, but the book of Acts demonstrates that our submission to government has limits; for instance, when government demands that Christians stop worshipping God. With this as a background, why do nations go to war?

1. There are just reasons for war, such as self-protection. An example would be America's war with Japan after being attacked at Pearl Harbor.
2. Another just reason for war would be to aid a weaker nation that is being attacked by an aggressor nation. America's first war with Iraq to protect and free Kuwait, and our war (as part of the U.N.) with the Serbs to protect Kosovo would be two examples.

There are many more unjust or sinful or questionable reasons that nations go to war:

1. **Pride.** Proverbs compares a king with his army to being like a strutting rooster.

Prior to the Civil War, both North and South felt themselves to be morally superior and believed that they would "Whip those Yankees," or "Whip those Rebels" in a few weeks. The war dragged on for four brutal years, costing the lives of over

670,000 men! (Compare that to the lengthy war in Iraq and Afghanistan where 3,000 men have died.)

2. **Glory of conquest/Nationalism.** This is tied in closely with pride. *Thor* was the Saxon god of war. Thursday is named in his honor! The deception of the devil leads men to believe that war leads to glory, whereas it leads to destruction, death, poverty, and despair.
3. **Greed.** This is one of the main reasons for war. Time and again, strong nations have invaded weak nations to seize fields of grain, ports opening to the sea, oil fields, etc.

I believe a combination of these three reasons led America into many of its wars. If you think that all of America's wars were righteous, you have been misled. Read about our war with Mexico. (I can't honestly say I am sorry we invaded Mexico and seized the land that would become Texas, New Mexico, Arizona, Nevada, and California. If that had not happened, I would be a Spanish speaking Catholic.) Also, I have just read a book by James Bradley, The Imperial Cruise, about America invading and conquering the Philippine Islands under President Theodore Roosevelt. This is one of the most disillusioning books I have ever read. Our treatment of the Philippine natives was comparable to what the Nazis and Japanese did to their conquered nations. Also, our fire-bombing of civilian populations, mostly women and children, of German and Japanese cities during the 2nd World War would be branded "war crimes" if another nation did it. (Something to reflect on as we pray for our nation.)

4. **Alliances with "allies."** These alliances can be voluntary or involuntary; that is, they can be the result of friendship or of pressure and threats from more powerful neighbors. Many of the nations that allied with the allies or the axis in World Wars 1 and 2 became involved for this reason. 2 Chronicles 18 reports of an alliance between good king Jehoshaphat of Judah and evil king Ahab of Israel when they went to war against Ramoth-Gilead. That war was a disaster.
5. **Fear and self-protection.** An analysis of World War 1 reports that nations on both sides of the conflict justified their entrance into the war because of their fear of being attacked and destroyed by their enemies. (Can you perceive the work of the enemy in this scenario?)
6. **Vengeance against ancient enemies/remembrance of past wars and deeds.** Think of the Arab/Israeli wars; the European wars; the Asian wars; etc. Lack of forgiveness traps nations into never ending cycles of war and despair.
7. **Religious and racial hatred.** Muslims and Jews, India and Pakistan, etc.
8. I believe you could sum up the reasons that nations go to war as

First: **The fallen nature of mankind**

Second: **Demonic influence and deception.**

We are presently in a war in Asia, and a War on Terrorism that seems to be never ending. Let us earnestly pray that God shield and protect us from any more wars!

SPIRITUALLY ROOTED DISEASE

My friend Jo Ann Atherton wrote on this subject recently, and I have greatly abbreviated her teaching: "After 33 years of ministry in the area of healing and deliverance I have discovered that our negative feelings and emotions greatly influence our health. (Pastor Henry Wright says that 80 to 90% of all diseases have a spiritual root, and only about 5% of God's people are getting healed!)

When ministering in our Sunrise Seminar in France I prayed for a woman with breast cancer. She had bitterness against her mother and sisters. I led her to forgive them, and she was healed! She reported she did not need surgery! Other experiences include healing of skin disorders after dealing with fear, anxiety and stress connected with perfectionism, and healing of heart problems after repentance and deliverance from a spirit of fear.

I have discovered in my daily life when I have issues of anger, fear and stress my body responds physically. It might be an upset stomach, joint pain, or a headache. Other symptoms of stress may include sinus infections, heart palpitations, migraines, etc. If the stress continues, serious health issues like arthritis, MS, diabetes, etc, may occur. We must deal with these heart issues quickly - Jesus will help us - so that no root of bitterness will spring up.

Note: **I (Glenn) will start my fall seminar, PATHWAY TO FREEDOM, on Wednesday evening, September 26. We will be dealing with the very issues that Jo Ann is writing about. Plan to attend.**

PREACH IT, BROTHER!

The word for preach in Greek (New Testament) is *kerusso*. It means to herald, tell abroad, publish, publicly proclaim, call out with a clear voice. We think of Paul and Peter going about proclaiming the Good News. Aren't you glad someone came and told you the good news that changed your life and saved your soul?

The word for preach in Hebrew (Old Testament) is *nataph*. It means to drop down as water or rain, to fall in drops, to cause words to flow as water, rain, honey, sweet wine, or words. I just found this Hebrew definition, and I love it!

I am regularly praying with a friend who is shriveling up with cancer and will soon die unless God intervenes. I have learned that cancer causes a condition called *cachexia*, which simply means that the food and nutrition taken into the body is stolen by the cancer cells to feed and nourish the cancer. Horrible! The inevitable outcome is that if we don't eat, drink, and get nourishment, then we will starve and die.

A couple of weeks ago I prayed with a young man in his 30's. He seems to be a nice young man, but he is suffering severe depression that has lasted for several years and seems to be getting worse. When I talked to him about his Christian life, I learned that he had an apparently genuine born-again experience several years ago. He has a testimony that he truly believes in Christ. But when I asked about his present relationship with a body of believers, I learned that he had been offended by a church experience and hasn't attended church for about 6 years. He doesn't belong to a small Christian group. He does not read the Bible. He does not pray. He makes no conscious effort to serve Christ. He has spiritual *cachexia*! He is truly and literally starving to death spiritually!

Jesus tells us that He is *the living bread that came down from heaven*. (John 6:50). He tells us *to feed on His body and blood!* He said that *If you don't eat my body and drink my blood you have no life in you!* We are told to drink the milk of the word, eat the meat of the word, and grow strong!

If it is time for my friend with cancer to depart this life and go and be with the Lord, that is a very good thing. But unless he is healed of the cancer, my prayers and ministry are not going to save his physical life. He is slowly starving. By the same token, my prayers and ministry to that young man may give him some temporary relief, but so long as he is starving himself of the bread of heaven, the word of life, his prognosis is not good.

(There may be a point to these thoughts hidden in there somewhere.)

DAVID AND GOLIATH

When the giant Goliath was taunting the army of Israel in the Valley of Elah, everyone was afraid to go and face him except a young shepherd boy named David. Was David out of his mind? Where in the world did he get such courage? David explained to King Saul where he got his courage. He said that as a shepherd, he had defended his flock and had killed by his own hand both a lion and a bear when they came to take a lamb. He said, *The Lord delivered me from the paw of the lion and the bear, and He will deliver me from this giant.* (1 Samuel 17) I have reflected many times about how God gave this young man the courage to stand up against a lion and a bear, and how God gave him the supernatural strength to kill those ferocious animals. Wow! That is an amazing thought. I wish I could get more revelation about how it happened.

When David stood up all by himself and faced the giant, Goliath (a type of the devil), in the Valley of Elah, he represented Israel, he represented the people of God, he represented you and me. After David killed Goliath with a stone from a slingshot, he took Goliath's own sword and decapitated him. He bound up the head and brought it with him to Jerusalem. What happened to the head? According to Jewish Rabbinical sources, David buried the head in Jerusalem on a mountain called "Gol-Goliath," or "Mount of Goliath." Later, Gol-Goliath was called Golgotha, which was also called Mount Calvary.

A greater Son of David would be crucified on Golgotha. The giant would *Bruise his heel, but He would crush his head.* Jesus represented you and me on Golgotha. The victory he won, he won for you and me. His victory is our victory. Jesus said to us, *You will tread on serpents and scorpions and over all the power of the enemy.* He has won the victory for us. Glory Hallelujah!

MINISTRY

When you receive this newsletter, I will be in Haiti on a ministry trip with Lynne Cumming and Fred Feller. Please pray for us.

Reminder: For those living in the Grand Junction area - I will start an 8-week seminar titled **Pathway to Freedom** on **Wednesday evening, September 26**. The final session will consist of a personal ministry session led by a team trained by June Fellhauer and her daughter Jolene. Please let family and friends know about this opportunity.

Blessings to you all,

Glenn

WEBSITE: glennbrownministries.com

I would like to thank each of you for your support of this ministry.

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