

# **THE SOVEREIGNTY OF MAN**

## **“THE GREATEST DISRUPTION”**

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In the past weeks there has been an outbreak of the Coronavirus which has exploded into a global pandemic. I started hearing some things about “disruption” very soon after the news broke on the spread of the virus. In fact, a very dear friend from California spoke to me about what she has been hearing about disruption and her words put me on this track.

I have been very measured about what I’ve said about my views and feeling about this outbreak. (Would to God that most of the others out there were as measured – but I think I digress.) I have heard some things in the past week and a half that I believe are from the Lord and specific to the pandemic, and the days that we are in now. I was reminded of a Scripture in the book of Job. In Job 37:5-7 KJV, the Scripture says, “God thundereth marvellously with his voice; great things doeth he, which we cannot comprehend. For he saith to the snow, Be thou on the earth; likewise to the small rain, and to the great rain of his strength. He seaeth up the hand of every man; that all men may know his work.” He “seals up” man’s hand. The Zondervan Classic Amplified Bible says it this way, “and now under His seal their hands are forced to inactivity.” In other words, it is by the command of His decree that man’s hands are forced to inactivity. Wow!

Some would say, “now hold on brother, this Scripture is talking about weather and this pandemic is not about the weather, so this Bible text does not apply.” Ok, I understand that this Bible passage is specific to the weather, but this reference speaks to a much larger truth. It shows us that God can, at times, use the weather to remind us that He is God and we are not. This means that He is in control and we are not in control. Typically speaking, you, even as a believer – a person of faith, do not control the weather. Now, here I am not saying that there aren’t times when God may specifically direct a person to pray in a certain way about the weather and the result is that the weather changes. But I must emphasize that praying for the weather to change really only produces a changed weather outcome when God directs the believer to pray specifically in that certain way. I have personally experienced this. Oftentimes this will happen as a sign to others. Jesus stilled the sea. But do we think that Jesus always made it His business to “produce” favorable weather for Himself and others? No! He only did what He saw His Father doing – only said what He heard His Father saying. It is time for us to grow up beloved! The purpose of the penalty of the cross of Christ is not primarily to satisfy the human need for comfort!!

I have never in my life experienced a time like the one we are in right now! I live in Louisiana, and just two days ago the Louisiana Governor, John Bel Edwards, put into

effect a statewide “stay at home order.” As of today (March 24, 2020), we are being told that approximately 40% of the US population is under this kind of an order. And we are also being told that the “peak” of the coronavirus spread could still be weeks away at the earliest! We have never seen nor experienced this kind and level of disruption in the nation or in the world.

But have you actually considered what the greatest disruption of all in these times actually is? It is the *disruption of man’s sovereignty!* As humans, we tend to live our lives very much in control of what we do, where we go, who we are with, how we spend our time, etc. And as believers in Christ, and as God’s sons, we have been called to live a life being led by the Spirit of God. That is true, but is that really how most of the people of God live out their daily lives? I know that there is a lot of talk about Jesus being Lord of people’s lives, but the truth is more often than not, even in the lives of committed believers, that people do what they want, when they want, how they want, with whom they want. In other words, people so often live as if *they* are sovereign. “I’ll go here and do this, and if that in some way doesn’t suit me, then I’ll go somewhere else and do something else.” “I will be with this one or these for this time, or until this one or these do something that hurts my feelings, or don’t do what I feel they should do in the way that I feel they should do it – and then “the spirit” will lead me somewhere else to be with some others.” “I thought that the Lord led me here, but this is too hard, so I guess I was wrong.” I could pose (or cite) 50 more examples, but I think you get the picture. And at the root of all of this thinking and behavior is a central reality – “I am sovereign.”

Now who would come right out and say such a thing like, “I am sovereign”? Almost nobody! Why? Because such a thing is pretty much unthinkable. But as unthinkable as it may seem, it is actually, at least at some level, the way that many Christians live their life. Now – in this time, though, all of a sudden, our way of life has been disrupted. The restrictions and limitations that have been thrust upon everyone have suddenly disrupted mankind and man’s control over his own activities. And how are people responding to these massive disruptions? Fear, panic, a sense of hopelessness and confusion are sweeping the earth. Runs on the grocery stores, panic in the financial markets, chaos on every turn!

People everywhere are reeling in response to the feeling of the lose of control. Everything that can be shaken is being shaken. The status of “normal” has been ripped out of our hands! And what was normal may actually be gone forever. So why is this so upsetting to people, and by people, I am also including believers. Why is this so upsetting? Because many, if not most, and certainly at some level, have behaved in ways that indicate lives lived out in the context of “I am sovereign!”

So, the question now is how will people “rebuild?” As things are torn down, that is, as systems are shaken how will people respond? How will people rebuild? Incidentally,

many systems will not just be shaken, but they will be shaken and removed – may I remind you of Hebrews 12:25-27, “See that ye refuse not him that speaketh. For if they escaped not, who refused him that spake on earth, much more shall not we escape, if we turn away from him that speaketh from heaven: Whose voice then shook the earth: but now he hath promised, saying, Yet once more I shake not the earth only, but also heaven. And this *word*, Yet once more, signifieth the removing of those things that are shaken, as of things that are made, that those things which cannot be shaken may remain.”

We should in these times not look to the outside for solutions, or even primarily for information. And we should not in these times look to ourselves for solutions. We must lift our heads up and look to God, the maker of heaven and earth! We must look to the hills where our help comes from!! (cf. Psalm 121:1-2) Our help truly comes from the Lord, and only from the Lord. He alone is The Sovereign! There is no other. I urge you to honestly consider the ways that you have acted as your own sovereign. And I urge you to turn, to give up the notion that you can add one inch to your height or one hair to your head. You are not helpless, and you are not hopeless! You have all of the help that you require and that you need in the Living God. You are not now, nor will you ever be at a disadvantage! Nothing can separate you from the love of God in Christ Jesus. All things are working together for your good right now! Your Father is The One and Only True and Living Sovereign God!! Rejoice beloved! Lift up your head – you are the gate through which the King of Glory will enter. You are / we are, as the sons of God, the ingress – the place of entry through which the grace, mercy and goodness of God will enter. We have a living hope. We are the people of God, and God is our Sovereign!!