THE SOVEREIGNTY OF GOD by Andy Diestelkamp

 God is sovereign (i.e. supreme ruler). He is King of kings (1 Tim. 6:15). God can do what He wills to do because He is God, and all of His ways are perfect. God’s sovereignty is inherent as the Creator (e.g. Rom. 1:20; Rev. 4:11). I acknowledge it. I believe in it. I submit to it (imperfectly). I am *not* sovereign, and I am in no position to challenge His authority.

 Knowing that His ways are higher than mine, He is patient with my doubts and welcomes my laments about why things happen as they do in this life under the sun. He is perfectly faithful in His love, justice, and mercy. Indeed, these grand characteristics are not bigger than He is. He is not subject to them. He defines them.

 Therefore, I must follow and teach what He has revealed. However, I do so with the understanding that my interpretation and application of His revelation can be as imperfect as I am; and I am in no position to challenge God’s sovereignty based on my limited understanding. Rather, I must do my best to conform my understanding to His revelation and immutable character.

 Also, God is not subject to His revelation or to my conclusions about His revelation. His revelation is neither infinite nor sovereign. There is much more to God than He has revealed (cf. Deut. 29:29).

 Therefore, respect for and submission to the sovereignty of God takes seriously what He *has* revealed while acknowledging that God may extend grace in ways that are beyond my ability to imagine. Conversely, respect for and submission to the sovereignty of God takes seriously what He has revealed so that I do not, in any way, alter or diminish the necessity of faithful obedience on the presumption of His grace.

 I am gracious to others because God has been gracious to me (cf. Mt. 6:12; Eph. 4;32; Col. 3:13). However, God’s grace is not mine to extend except as He has revealed in His Word.

 As I wrestle with whether or not some teaching in Scripture is “necessary” in order to be saved, to be faithful, or to be sound, I must beware extremes. While I must not assume that *my* understanding of Scripture requires God to act accordingly, I am also not at liberty to declare some doctrine “unnecessary” on the basis that God can do whatever He wants. Belief in the sovereignty of God requires me to obey what He has revealed and to acknowledge that God is perfect in justice and will judge in whatever way is consistent with His character.

 God is sovereign; I am not. Vengeance is God’s, not mine (Rom. 12:19). He extends mercy according to *His* will, not according to mine (9:14-18). "Oh, the depth of the riches of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are His judgments and His ways past finding out!" (11:33).