God Is Sovereign

Tony Mauck · Acts 16:14–15

INTRODUCTION

- What does it mean that the Lord opened Lydia's heart?
- What is God doing in our salvation? This is an important verse.

1 Misguided Theology: A Direct Operation on the Heart

Acts 16:14; 1 Corinthians 2:14; 2 Peter 3:9

- The Lord opened her heart to respond to the things spoken by Paul.
- If God has to flip some levers in our minds before we can accept the truth, why isn't he flipping the levers in everybody's mind so that they can embrace the truth?
- The issue is not God's activity in her salvation. The issue is by what means or agency he employed to bring about her salvation.
- Whatever activity I might be required to perform in order to be saved, God deserves the full credit and the full glory for that response.

2 This Passage Is About the Sovereignty of God

Romans 11:33–36; 1 Corinthians 15:10; Luke 17:10

- This passage is about the sovereignty of God.
- He reigns over everything. He has no rival in regard to his reign. He exercises supreme or permanent authority.
- Who has known the mind of the Lord? No one could unless he revealed it. See how dependent we are on God?
- For from him and through him and to him are all things, To him be the glory forever.

3 God's Opening and Hardening of Hearts

Exodus 4:21; Acts 11:17–18; Romans 9:16–18

- He opened Lydia's heart, but he hardened Pharaoh's heart, did he not? Oh, what's that about? It's about sovereignty.
- If God's sovereignty determines everything, why not just eliminate soils one, two, and three? Why encourage people to pursue a good and honest heart?
- Everything involved in our salvation, God has granted to us in his goodness and in his sovereignty.
- May I suggest that divine hardening and self-hardening are interwoven things.

4 His Power, His Providence, and His Purposes

Isaiah 45; Isaiah 40; Daniel 4

- God wants a certain outcome that works with his purpose, but also incorporates man's free will.
- God's sovereignty is about his power, it is about his providence, and it is about his purposes.
- While men follow the inclinations of their own hearts and do what they want, everything ultimately works to the purposes of God.
- God causes all things to work together for good to those who are called according to his purpose.

5 God Can Determine When He's Done

Revelation 22:11; Revelation 22:17; Matthew 13:11

- God has the right, because he is a sovereign God to extend his offer of salvation as long as he wishes. And he can determine when he's done.
- Let the one who does wrong still do wrong. And let the one who is filthy still be filthy.
- The Spirit and the bride say come, and let the one who hears say come, and let the one who wishes take the water of life without cost.
- It's not that God is encouraging the doing of wrong. But if you're bent to reject him, so be it.

6 Divine Opening and Self-Opening Are Interwoven

2 Peter 2:20; Titus 3:5

- To this one I will look. To the one who has a humble and contrite heart. And who trembles at my word.
- Some passages emphasize what God is doing, and some passages emphasize what man is doing. But ultimately, God deserves the glory.
- He saves. Not on the basis of deeds that we have done in righteousness. But because of his mercy.
- Why is God's work so often emphasized, do you think? Because we get carried away with ourselves and think it's all about us and what we did.

THE CHALLENGE

Is that your inclination of mind? Do you have the heart of Lydia? God wants to open your heart tonight. Will you pursue the good and honest heart that brings salvation?

MY NOTES